

The Friendly Companion



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

January 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

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

Volume 135

January 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	3
Our Front Cover Picture	4
Editor's Postbag	5
For The Very Little Ones: His Father's Business	6
Colouring Text: Matthew 3. 17.	7
Bible Lessons: Christ Foretells His Death	8
A Boy From Stavenisse	10
Israel (1)	12
Watch A Glasswing Passing	14
For Christ's Sake	16
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XIII)	18
Old Books	19
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
The Epistles: Introduction	20
The Epistle To The Romans (I)	21
Bible Questions: Lot	23
Poetry: The Secret Of A Happy Life	24

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

January 1st is a time when it is traditional to make New Year resolutions. Why we should wait until the New Year to amend something wrong in our lives is questionable! If we know something needs putting right, then surely *now* is the time, rather than wait.

We are taught in God's Word a very important lesson about resolutions by Joshua. He was at the end of his life and made a very precious resolution: "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Lest we should think this was a self-confident assertion, in the same chapter, when confronting the children of Israel on the same point he said: "Ye cannot serve the LORD." Why did he say that? Because he had learned over many years that to serve the Lord we need His grace and strength, and that without that, we will not be able to keep, rightly, any resolution we may make, however sincerely made.

So, children and young people, whilst it is good to resolve to do well and to amend our ways, yet it must be done remembering our weakness and our need of divine help. Paul said: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

As this New Year begins, and we look forward, not knowing the future, may we prove, as it unfolds, the truth of Paul's words. Then it will be God who will have all the praise if we are enabled to walk worthily of Him.

May the Lord give you each a New Year, blessed with His presence.

With every best wish for 2009 from your sincere friend and Editor.

One leak will sink a ship, and one sin will destroy a sinner.

Bunyan

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The Chronophage Clock

A very strange clock has recently been placed on the outside of the new library at Corpus Christi College of Cambridge University. This interesting clock is almost five feet in diameter but has no hands. The time is shown by three lights which tell the hour, minute and second, by shining through markers on the face.

The most unusual feature of the clock is what is known as its escape movement. It is not hidden inside, as those familiar with traditional watches might expect, but it sits outside on top. It is in the shape of a fearsome-looking creature, like a giant grasshopper or locust, almost five feet long, with its mouth open, its tongue moving, and its teeth bared. As it rocks to and fro, its feet release the time, second by second. Then every sixty seconds it rolls its eyes and closes its mouth as if eating yet another minute. That is why the maker of the clock, Dr. John Taylor, has called it a “chronophage” or “time-eater.” He explained: “I wanted to depict that ... once a minute is gone, you cannot get it back.”

How true it is: “Once a minute is gone, you cannot get it back.” Our time in the world is eaten up minute by minute, hour by hour, and is gone for ever. Then, one day, our very last minute will be eaten up. Suddenly we will be in either the happiness of heaven or the misery of hell.

The Book of Ecclesiastes speaks of “a time to be born and a time to die.” We do not know how long we will have between these two times, but we do know that our time is very valuable. So, surely, we ought to make good use of it before it is taken away for ever. The Bible tells us to be “redeeming the time”: that is, we must buy back the time, as it were, so that we do not waste it – so that we make good use of it and benefit from it. Of course, the greatest benefit we can have is to be saved from our sins by being blest with faith in the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Without this blessing we cannot have the happiness of heaven.

At what time should you seek this blessing? Many will answer: “Some day, away in the future.” Then one day they

will find that all their days have been eaten up and it is too late. We must listen to what God says: "Now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6. 2). God also states in the same verse: "Now is the accepted time" – as if to say: 'Now is the most favourable time, the best time.'

Here are two other Bible verses about how we should put our precious time to good use: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Ecclesiastes 9. 10), and "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Ecclesiastes 12. 1).

N.M.R.

The Young People's Magazine, November 2008

(Slightly adapted)

May it please God to lay the importance of our soul and eternity on each of our hearts that we may truly seek this grace. Editor

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **JOSHUA IZZARD**; **EMILY RAMSBOTTOM** and **NATHANAEAL WILTSHIRE**.

We are sorry that the name of **JACOB COTTINGTON** was inadvertently omitted from the September List of Names.

Thank you to Maria Sayers for explaining so well that January and February were added to the Gregorian calendar which explains how October became the tenth month.

Many thanks to all the many friends who have so kindly sent greetings cards.

We wish well to those who have written to say that they have reached the age to finish doing the monthly questions. May the Scriptures searched and verses read, remain in each heart and be a light to you in this dark world.

Also heartfelt thanks to all those who sent good wishes to us when we travelled to Canada and the USA in October.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**HIS FATHER'S BUSINESS**

As the Lord Jesus grew in the home of Joseph and Mary, He was *"filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him."* Even as a child, Jesus was without sin and holy. He was always kind, loving, and obedient.

When He was twelve, Jesus went with Joseph and Mary to the feast of the Passover at Jerusalem. After it was over, Jesus stayed behind. How eager He was to be doing the work of His Father in heaven! When Joseph and Mary could not find Jesus among their relatives and friends, they returned to Jerusalem. After three days they found Him in the temple with the great teachers: *"both bearing them, and asking them questions."* All who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and answers.

Mary asked why He had done this. Jesus answered: *"How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"* He was reminding them that God was His Father, and He had come into the world to do His work.

QUESTIONS:

1. What was Jesus filled with?
2. Where did Joseph and Mary find Jesus?
3. What did Jesus say He must be about?

Please 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. The angel Gabriel.
2. Favour with God.
3. Nothing.

Contributed

*“This is My
beloved Son,
in whom I
am well
pleased.”
Matthew
3. 17.*

BIBLE LESSONS**CHRIST FORETELLS HIS DEATH**

When Peter made the wonderful confession of Jesus: *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,"* he little knew the fulness of the truth which he spoke. The Lord told him that upon this truth – that He (Christ) was the Son of God – He would build His church. And although Satan and all the powers of hell should fight against Him, they would never prevail or overcome His church.

Then Jesus spoke words which have been misunderstood by many. He said: *"I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* These words were not meant for Peter only but for all the disciples.

Does this mean that Peter and the rest of the disciples have authority to let souls into heaven or keep them out? Indeed not! That authority belongs to none but Jesus.

Very simply, it means that the keys given to the disciples were the doctrines of the gospel, which they were commanded to preach. By opening up the truth of the Word of God, souls would be delivered from the power of sin and Satan to follow after Jesus.

That is why it is important that you and I should attend the services of God's house and pray that the Holy Spirit would bless the preaching of His Word to our souls. We read in the Bible: *"These men (apostles) are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation."* (Acts 16. 17). This is the key given to all the Lord's true servants.

Such words made the disciples think that very shortly Jesus would set up His Kingdom on the earth. How disappointed they were when Jesus told them that He must shortly go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the hands of sinful men.

They could hardly believe what He told them next! He would be killed. He also told them that He would rise again on the third day. They were so overcome with sorrow at the

thought their Master would be killed that they hardly heard the word that He would *“rise again.”*

Peter was so overcome that He took Jesus aside and began to rebuke Him. He told Jesus that this would never happen to Him. He was sure that he and the other disciples would never let anybody do such a thing to their Master. Poor Peter did not know that he was coming against the eternal purposes of God. What is man?

Jesus perceived that someone else was speaking through Peter. He turned toward Peter and said: *“Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offence unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God but those that be of men.”*

Jesus told the disciples that if any man would follow Him, he must deny himself and take up the cross: *“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.”* Then the Lord asked them two of the most solemn, searching questions in all the Bible: *“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”*

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 16 verses 16 to 26 and in Mark chapter 8 verses 31 to 37.

QUESTIONS:

1. What would Christ build, on the truth that He was the Son of God?
2. What awful thing did Jesus say would happen to Him at Jerusalem?
3. Which disciple rebuked Jesus?
4. Who did Jesus perceive was speaking through this disciple?
5. What two things must a man do to follow Jesus? (7 words)

Please 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. That of the prophet Jonah.
2. Three.
3. Bethsaida.
4. Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.
5. The Father.

G.L. TenBroeke

A BOY FROM STAVENISSE**Chapter 13: Little Maria**

A week later, another sad event takes place in the village. A few streets further on, a little child has died. The father and mother are very sad.

Leen can understand this very well. He misses his mother every day. After the child's funeral, he feels that he has to go to the mother. He first pushes that feeling away. Would it not be strange for a twelve-year-old boy to go to such a sad mother?

One day at suppertime, Grandmother relates that the mother almost cannot eat any more, because of grief. "If this carries on, she will get sick, soon. Her grief is too great."

Leen does not dare to look at his grandmother. He keeps his eyes on his plate and eats with slow bites.

He thinks: "If the Lord would not help such a person, such a woman would die of sorrow."

Father does not say much. He usually does not talk very much. Since Mother is no longer here, they almost never hear his voice.

After supper, Leen pushes his chair back forcefully. He cannot stand it in the warm kitchen any longer. He has to go to that woman. Now!

When he knocks on her door, his heart beats violently. He looks up at it. Is the Lord sending him? He cannot do otherwise but come here. She opens the door and does not even look surprised. He silently follows her into the half-dark house.

"Just go and sit at the table beside the window: I always sit here."

He slides into his seat across from her at the table. At first he does not know how to begin. The woman is pale. She has dark circles under her eyes. Leen feels sorry for her.

"Maria was such a special child," the mother suddenly says.

Leen nods. He believes this at once. What mother would not think her child is special?

“Do you know why? I will tell you. You are young enough to understand.” She looks at him intently. “It is nice that you came. I love talking about Maria.” She bends towards Leen. “Do you know that she would never eat one bite unless I first prayed, giving thanks for it? And also she was not satisfied if I did not give thanks after her meal. She always wanted me to pray and give thanks.” The mother stares outside, and then continues. “She was a sweet child. She became ill and had pain, but she always lay in her little bed patiently. I had to sing, sing much and pray with her often.” Now the mother had to stop, her grief was too great. “I loved this child so much because she was so sweet. My love was great. This is why my grief is great.”

While she talked, a happy joy came into Leen's heart. He heard the mother talking about a child who was not happy until the mother prayed. Leen is sure: this child is with the Lord. She was a sheep of the flock and the Lord Jesus has taken her Home. Then Leen begins talking: “I lost my mother a few weeks ago. I had grief: just like you. I did not know if my mother was with the Lord in heaven. I kept struggling about this. I actually did not believe that the Lord was doing it right this time. Do you know what happened then? The Lord saw that I had too much sorrow about my mother. That is not good. You must not do this either. The Lord knows what is good and we do not. The Lord makes no mistakes.” He smiles at the mother.

“The Lord is just in all His ways and works. He makes the heart of man sorrowful: not to tease him, but to teach him to be still; that we leave everything to the Lord and learn to trust in Him; that we may surrender everything into God's safe hands, for He never does anything wrong, never.”

The woman sighs deeply. She closes her eyes for a moment. What this boy says is so special. She has to think deeply about it. “I feel you are right, that I have to go to the Lord with my grief about Maria. I often think about it that she loved the

Lord. It could not have been otherwise. She could not talk yet, otherwise I would have known for sure."

Leen nods. "We would like to know things for sure. The Lord is saying to you: 'Trust Me, that I did that which is good. Be still and put everything into My hands.'" Leen gets up.

The mother gets up too and looks at him. Leen sees tears in her eyes. "I believe that the Lord sent you to me. I was in such an awful condition this morning. I wanted to die, too. But now it looks a lot different. It is just as if my eyes are opening. No, the Lord surely makes no mistakes. I have to think a lot yet, but it is a lot lighter within me already." She takes hold of both his hands and squeezes them softly. "Thank you for coming."

Leen becomes warm and shy. He greets her and goes home. His heart rejoices with a song of praise.

(To be continued)

Slightly adapted

ISRAEL (1)

The following interesting account of a journey to Israel was found amongst the writings of the late Mr. Roy Hambridge. They are a little memorial to the memory of a dear friend of the people of God.

Editor

After many weeks of anticipation and thoughts about our journey to Israel, May 15th 1989 came, and the various members of the party started their journeys to Heathrow. No doubt there had been, and were still, many prayers regarding the journey, especially the flight of approximately 2200 miles, but we were encouraged by words from the Bible brought to our remembrance by various friends and our own reading: "And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest" (Genesis 28. 15). "The LORD thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Deuteronomy 31. 6).

Everybody having passed through customs and the various checkpoints went to the waiting area, where after a short while we all assembled, and our leader spoke in prayer. We then moved to the departure lounge to await the call to board the plane, which was a Boeing 757. Take off was very smooth and on time, and it was not so very long before a very acceptable meal was served. Watches were advanced two hours to agree with the time in Israel and after this, darkness was soon around us. Those who did not doze or read, moved along the gangway to talk with various friends.

Upon landing at Tel-Aviv, the temperature seemed just nice and warm, but not too hot – 77°F (25°C). The only staff at the airport seemed to be checking and stamping passports. We then moved outside to the bus stand where a coach was waiting with a sign in front indicating our party. How nice to see, after going all that way.

It was about an hour's ride to Jerusalem, and although it was dark, I had to ask myself: "Am I really in the Holy Land?" Of course, we were all wanting to catch our first glimpse of "Salem." As there was not much traffic about, we soon arrived at the Panorama Hotel, where rooms were allocated to everyone. It was 1.30 to 2.00 a.m. before we were settled in our comfortable rooms, and, of course, we all had in mind our early start next morning, God willing, 8.00 a.m. We gave thanks to the Lord for bringing us safely on our way.

However, it seemed that we had only just got off to sleep when we were awakened by the call for prayer from a nearby mosque. This wailing noise went on for about fifteen minutes, and at 4.00 a.m. we were not very pleased!

After our first breakfast, we were ready to meet our guide and to depart by coach up to the Mount of Olives, which could be seen easily from our hotel. There certainly is a panoramic view of Jerusalem, and we were reminded of the words in Mark 13. 1-3, when Jesus was questioned by His disciples regarding the overthrow of "these great buildings."

Whilst on the Mount of Olives, I thought of the words in Mark 14. 12-26 regarding the preparation of the Passover. What a wonderful story! How it shows that everything is in God's order: the man bearing a pitcher of water sent to meet the disciples; the large upper room furnished and prepared. We could say with reverence that it is as though Jesus said to them: 'Everything is arranged, just make ready for us.' This reminds us, in a figure, of a much greater and much higher room prepared for all God's family. John 14 verse 2: "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." And in Mark 14 verse 26: at the Lord's Supper it seems so appropriate to conclude with a hymn, as set forth in that verse, also to think of Jesus singing. One of our ministers has said: "Think of your Saviour singing. He was singing with His disciples."

Our next stop was the Wailing Wall, known to all who have been to Jerusalem or who have read about it. We stopped there for a while and thought how sad it is that so many orthodox Jews weep and pray and rock to and fro, as is their custom. I thought of Nehemiah who said: "So I prayed to the God of heaven." I then thought, 'May I be helped to pray to God in heaven, and also to try and pray for those Jews.'

The exposed part of the wall is some 200ft long, but it does also extend inside for some long way. It is considered a most holy place by very many Jews, and I have read that some believe that God has said that the Wall will never be destroyed. The prayer area is divided into two sections – one for men and one for women.

We then moved on to the Temple area to see the Dome of the Rock and El Aksa Mosque. It was a very beautiful morning and by this time the temperature was beginning to build up.

(To be continued)

WATCH A GLASSWING PASSING

(without flying colours)

Glasswing butterflies (e.g. the *Pteronymia*) have large clear patches on their wings. Many would claim they 'evolved'

transparent wings (to minimize their visibility to predators). Christians might retort that only a *Creator* could have made these beautiful see-through wings. Who is right?

Actually the 'glass' wing areas are *missing* a feature of coloured butterfly wings – *scales*. Both glasswings and colourful butterflies have transparent wing membranes, but colourful butterflies have pigmented or translucent scales covering them. In iridescent butterflies, by diffracting the light rays in a complex manner, the translucent scales (not pigments) produce the vivid colours, more vibrant than any painting. The electron microscope reveals 'how complex the structures are and difficult to fabricate.' Such complexity, which man with all his technology struggles to copy, was surely constructed by Someone even more intelligent (Romans 1. 20).

So, *colourful* (and especially iridescent) butterflies reflect more strongly the Creator's handiwork than do *glasswings*. In this post-Fall 'bondage to decay' (Romans 8. 19-22), glasswings have evidently *lost* genetic information (for scales) – in common with other observed mutations. Such mutations demonstrate '*devolution*,' not evolution. Natural development sometimes produces defects – e.g. the glasswing is likely less visible to predators than are colourful butterflies. But this is *not* evolution – no new information has been produced, notwithstanding that *Pteronymia* has been given its own species name, separate from other (coloured) types of Lycaenid butterflies.

And the fact that the glasswing can fly, just like butterflies with scales, confounds evolutionists on two counts. Firstly, the aerodynamic intricacies of butterfly flight defy evolutionary explanation, pointing instead to a Creator. Secondly, the glasswing proves scales are not needed for flight.

So why did the Creator make *colourful* butterflies? So that we can appreciate their beauty and admire His handiwork.

September-November 2008 Creation Magazine
(Slightly adapted)

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE

The following extract is from a remarkable book: "Stooped at Bricks" relating the life of Mr. Dick Vermeer. Mr. Vermeer worked in a brick-works and after he was converted, suffered great persecution from his fellow workers, the only reason being that he was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Sadly Mr. Vermeer's son, who wrote this book, suddenly passed away in November. We send our deep sympathy to his wife and family.

From that time on everything changed for Father at the factory. Now he got many opponents. He had to go his own way and become the aim of vexations. The enmity ran high. His workmates were bent upon vexing the devotee. He was persecuted, chased all over the place. The workmen were very profane and wicked. "I had to work with forty lions and bears," he told us later. When he was praying before having lunch, they threw rotten fish or other litter at his head, so that he was forced to hide. They did not allow him any rest for they were looking for him. You might say he was the prey of the gang. But now and then he had to hide away behind a heap of bricks and weep, asking the Lord why He aimed at him.

In Danger of Murderers

The following event appealed to me much. It must have taken place about this period, because of the fact he mentioned his parents. So he certainly lived at home with his parents.

"One day I had gone into a long kiln which is about twenty metres in length. But even there they did not leave me alone. Yes, they even tried to kill me by opening the stopcocks, so that, as a result of the high pressure the hot steam could find me. Being frightened, I ran away, thankfully in the right direction, for you cannot see anything when the kiln is filled with steam. As soon as I was outside the kiln, my old nature came back. I seized a broken handle of a wheelbarrow which lay nearby and wanted to hit out. I saw four men with a steel crowbar in their hands, dashing towards me, all the while cursing and raging. I was frightened because of the curses more than of the men. However, at that very moment the Lord

spoke to my soul: 'Dearly beloved ... give place unto wrath ... Vengeance is Mine; I will repay.' The piece of wood fell out of my hand. I was just like a lamb. Remarkable was the fact that they came with the crowbar only as far as the button of my waistcoat. They cursed, but they could not move. I already took pity on them. How I could submit. I said: 'If I did wrong, strike me down, but do take me to my father and mother.' I had just spoken these words when they turned away, cursing and swearing. But how they came to grief! God took revenge. Two out of the four met with a terrible accident. The others fell seriously ill. Lying on their beds they sent for me. They wanted to beseech my pardon. They already saw the flames of hell at the foot. What a terrible end!"

Zechariah 2.8 was put into practice: "for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." Perhaps this serious event caused the fact that Psalm 3 became so very significant to Father. As it were, God had protected him by a shield. We often heard him sing this psalm. We might say it was his favourite psalm:

"Yet Thou my Shield and glory art,
The uplifter of mine head." (*Dutch version*)

A Companion

After some time Father was given support. He said: "One day it happened that I besought the Lord if it might please Him to call somebody out of the darkness into His marvellous light, so that I might have a companion in this vale of tears. What happened? While I was thinking for a moment, it looked as if the Lord said: 'Look to the other side.' I turned round and to my great astonishment I saw a man shedding hot tears. Actually I did not know what was going on. Then the Lord spoke to my soul: 'They shall come [and be brought by divine light]' (Psalm 22). When I joined him I asked what the matter was. With tearful eyes he said: 'Oh, Vermeer, will you forgive me for what I have done to you? Will there be any escape for me? Can I ever be saved?' I wept for gladness, for now someone joined me on the path of life. Closely united we could go on together. That man was Hendrik Schrijvers, my employer's father."

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XIII)**Justify**

The word “justify” means to make something just or right. You will probably come across the word in printing or word processing where words or numbers are all aligned or made straight together. To make a page tidy you would justify the writing to the left so that all the lines begin one underneath another. When you write a column of numbers to be added together, they will be justified to the right so that the hundreds, tens and units are in their correct columns. The text in this magazine is justified to both the left and the right; and the headings are centre-justified so they appear in the middle of the page.

In the Bible, to justify means to be shown or declared righteous. Job asks: “How should man be just with God?” (Job 9. 2). This is an important question, and he means, how is man made straight or righteous in God’s sight? God is Almighty and Holy; Job goes on to describe His greatness. God created man good, but man fell. Man is sinful and has broken God’s holy commandments. Therefore, man is not right with God.

Can man make himself just with God? Job continues: “If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.” Man can do nothing to make himself just in God’s sight.

Yet a holy God has made a way to make the sinners just in His sight. God the Son, the Lord Jesus, gave Himself for His sinful people. He died in their place, and so removed their sin. He rose again for their justification.

Justification is greater than the removal of sin. It is God giving His righteousness to His people, so that they are made as righteous and as just as God is just. What a tremendous thing, that a sinner is made the righteousness of God in Christ! John Kent says:

“In Thy Surety thou art free;
His dear hands were pierced for thee;
With His spotless vesture on,
Holy as the Holy One.”

Justification is received by faith, and faith only. A sinner called by grace and taught by the Holy Spirit to know his lost and ruined state, is given faith to believe God has a righteousness to give, and that He justifies the ungodly. By faith he believes that God has done the work, and like Abraham who believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, so the sinner receives justification.

This truth is what godly men stood for in the days of the Reformation, and some were martyred for it. At that time, and sadly it is increasingly evident today, it was wrongly taught that justification comes by man's deeds, either his own works or through so-called sacraments. The Lord's people are shown that they are justified by faith, and they “have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” May the Lord teach us this truth, and grant that we may be among His called ones, for: “whom He called, them He also justified.”

Contributed

OLD BOOKS

Do you like visiting different towns and cities when you are on holiday? It can be very exciting; especially if you are visiting an area you have not been to before. To see all the different buildings and shops are things we like doing. I wonder if when you are walking around, you have ever seen a shop with the grand name of Antiquarian Bookshop above the door? So perhaps, with Mum and Dad, you have gone inside and seen the hundreds and hundreds of books which are for sale. But perhaps it is the very large old books with their fine leather binding which catch your eye. These old books can be very beautiful works of art and very well made. Maybe you have an old family Bible at home, which is made in the same way.

Have you ever noticed the big thick raised bands on the end of the book that we call the spine? Hidden underneath these bands are cords which are glued in and hold the big heavy covers to the book itself. Yes, the cords which do the essential work are hidden beneath the raised bands.

Many years before the time of the Lord Jesus, there was a prophet in Israel called Hosea. The words which God gave him to preach to the people of Israel are found in our Bible in the book called by his name. In chapter 11 verse 4 we read of “the cords of a man” and “bands of love.” There are in God’s Word to us many interesting statements and I think this is one of them. It speaks of God’s people, Israel, in their wandering, rebellious state, as they were when they came out of Egypt those many centuries before Hosea. As we read our Bible we can see Israel in a peevish, rebellious state. Yet, like those hidden cords in an old book, unseen, yet holding the book together, so God was showing mercy and love, unseen to His people of old.

So what about ourselves? Are we any better than Israel of old? God’s mercy and love still surrounds His people in 2009 as much as in those far off days of the exodus from Egypt. The greatest blessing we can ask for the readers of this magazine is, that they will experience God’s love in salvation to them, and just as the raised bands on the outside of the book show the presence of the cords beneath, so by grace, our young readers will show in their lives that the cords of everlasting love are underneath, keeping and holding them.

Contributed

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE EPISTLES

Introduction

My dear young friends, I thought it might be profitable to look at the epistles of the New Testament. An epistle is a letter. Not counting the seven letters to the seven churches of Asia in the third and fourth chapters of the Book of the

Revelation, there are twenty-one letters written by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul wrote fourteen of these letters and the others have the name of the person that wrote it as their title. Nine of Paul's letters are to churches; the letter he wrote to the Hebrews appears to be addressed to Jewish believers in the early church. The remaining five are to individual ministers. It is easy to remember Paul's letters, as they all bear the name of the church or the individual addressed in the letter. These letters are placed in order: the first nine are addressed to churches and named after the city where the church was situated; followed by four to individuals, and then the one to Hebrew believers throughout the Christian churches. Then the letters from the other apostles follow.

As with all Scripture, these letters were written under the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit, making them an integral part of the canon of the Holy Scriptures, which is the inerrant, infallible Word of the one living and only true God. The word "canon" means that the Christian church from its very early days received it as authoritative or as a genuine part of the inspired Word of God. Genesis to Revelation are canonical books. The books known as the Apocrypha are not received by Protestant Reformed churches as canonical. They may be useful as history but they are not the holy inspired Word of God. I have a copy of the Apocrypha and it does not have the authority of the Word of God, but reads as any other book, some places grossly exaggerating facts and in other places almost ridiculous fairy tales. The Holy Bible has the weight, gravity and authority of the Word of the living God.

The Epistle to the Romans (I)

The Apostle introduces himself in the first verse and then sets out the very foundation of our faith. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (which He had promised afore by His prophets in the holy Scriptures,) concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1. 1-4). He then sets out his calling and claim to their attention because they also were called with the same calling, making them brethren. "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for His name: among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 1. 5-7).

At the close of the Epistle we are informed where it was written and who conveyed it to Rome. "*Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea.*" Cenchrea was a place near the city of Corinth.

Phebe was obviously a gracious and very active woman in the church at Corinth. May we take note of this. Very sadly, and wrongly, it is often said that Paul did not like women. The only reason this is said is because he lays out in his epistles the clear distinct role of women in the church: the headship of the man over the woman; that women were not permitted a leadership or teaching role in the Christian church; they were not to take the office of the ministry of the Word, nor to be deacons or elders; their dress was to be different to a man's dress; their hair was to be long and a man's short. We shall look at this more closely as we progress through the epistles. But note this, women were highly esteemed and active in the early church. May this be an encouragement to God-fearing women in the churches to be active in the service of the Lord. Look how graciously the Apostle commends Phebe to the church at Rome: "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also" (Romans 16. 1-2).

(To be continued)

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about LOT whom you can read about in Genesis chapters 11-19. 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 relationship was Lot to Abram? (Genesis 12. 5)
2. Why did Lot and Abram separate? (Genesis 13. 6-9)
3. Where did Lot go and why? (Genesis 13. 10-11)
4. Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom." Why was this a wrong move? (Genesis 13. 12-13)
5. Later we read that Lot was taken captive in war. Where was he living at that time and who saved him? (Genesis 14. 12-16)
6. Sadly Lot returned to live in the same wicked place. How do we know that he was not happy there? (2 Peter 2)
7. When the LORD was going to destroy Sodom because of its wickedness, Abraham remembered Lot and prayed for the city. What argument did he use in his prayer? (Genesis 18)
8. In answer to Abraham's prayer, God sent two angels to fetch Lot out of Sodom. Which of Lot's family were brought out with him? (Genesis 19)
9. The Lord Jesus spoke a solemn warning: "Remember Lot's wife." What happened to her and why? (Luke 17. 32, Genesis 19)
10. Explain simply the difference between Abram's and Lot's choices in Genesis 13, showing how their choice affected what happened to them later.

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS

1. To pray.
2. The Lord Jesus spoke with authority.
3. A wise son, a fool.
4. Paul had learned in whatsoever state he was, to be content.
5. Nebuchadnezzar.
6. "The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Daniel 4. 25 or 32). "Those that walk in pride He is able to abase" (Daniel 4. 37)

7. The LORD's way; in a plain path." (Psalm 27. 11)
8. A bishop; the servant of the Lord. (1 Timothy 3. 2, 2 Timothy 2. 24)
9. Come unto Him. (The Lord Jesus). (John 6. 45)
10. Laban. (Genesis 30. 27)

Contributed

THE SECRET OF A HAPPY LIFE

Ye children, come, give ear to me

And learn Jehovah's fear:

He who would long and happy live,

Let him my counsel hear.

Restrain thy lips from speaking guile,

From wicked speech depart,

From evil turn and do the good,

Seek peace with all thy heart.

Jehovah's eyes are on the just,

He hearkens to their cry;

Against the wicked sets His face,

Their very name shall die.

The Lord may suffer many griefs

Upon the just to fall,

But He will bring them safely through,

Delivering them from all.

By evil are the evil slain,

And they that hate the just;

But all His servants God redeems,

And safe in Him they trust.

William Arnold

The Friendly Companion



“How long halt ye between two opinions?”
(1 Kings 18. 21)

February 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

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

Volume 135

February 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	27
Our Front Cover Picture	28
Jesus Affirmed Scripture!	29
For The Very Little Ones: A Great Prophet	30
Colouring Text: John 1. 23.	31
Bible Lessons: Jesus Transfigured In The Mount	32
A Boy From Stavenisse	34
Israel (II)	36
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture XIV	39
The Person Of Christ And The Koran	41
A Remarkable Conversion	42
Him Only	43
Bible Study For The Older Ones: The Epistles:	
The Epistle To The Romans (II)	44
Bible Questions: The Beginning Of The World	46
Poetry: "God Is Everywhere"	47
"Perception" (A New Magazine)	48

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

A young boy was told by his mother to go and look in the mirror, and wash his face. "I already have," was the indignant reply, but his dirty face proved either that he was not telling the truth, or that he had not looked closely enough at what the mirror told him!

The Apostle James tells us that those who hear God's Word but do not obey it, are just like that boy. They are living a lie! They are hearers of the Word only, forgetting what the Scriptures tell them of their need as sinners and of the Saviour.

But the best hearers are those who are not forgetful hearers. They look into the mirror of God's Word and they lay to heart what it reveals. They know that just as a mirror tells us the truth about our face, so does the Word of God tell us the truth about ourselves. That is a wise person and an honest one, who is not afraid to use God's Word as a mirror, and to seek God's grace to act upon what it tells of them.

Once, King David had sinned very greatly, but he had not confessed his wrong before the Lord. So eventually God sent Nathan, the prophet, to describe a man who had sinned like David had. At first, David was very indignant against the man whom Nathan described, until Nathan turned and said: "Thou art the man." Then David had to look into the mirror of God's Word and then he saw himself. Read Psalm 51, and you will see what the mirror showed and taught David.

"May we receive the Word we hear

Each in an honest heart;

Hoard up the precious treasure there,

And never with it part."

Joseph Hart

"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1. 25). Jesus said: "My mother and My brethren are these which hear

the Word of God and do it" (Luke 8. 21).

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The signpost shown on our cover this month shows several destinations, and the way to get to them. Signposts, preceded by the milestone, have been the necessary part of travelling over the centuries. They need to be accurate in their direction and the distance to the places named. Travellers have trusted them over many generations. However, as soon as a traveller reached his destination he would forget the signposts that led him there.

There was a man in the Bible, who was content to be a *signpost*! He was the man whom God appointed to tell his generation that Jesus Christ had now come. Sometimes he is called a *voice*, and also he is known as the *forerunner* of Jesus. His name is John the Baptist.

How humble this man was! He was content that people, having heard his sermons directing them to Christ, should leave him and follow the Lord Jesus. When he was questioned by others about this he said: "He must increase, but I must decrease." In other words, he was content to be the signpost pointing the way to Christ.

I wonder if our lives are like that? Do they point to Christ or ourselves? Jesus said that John was a burning and a shining light. He Himself said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Those who are possessors of grace will understand the prayer of one who said:

"So let our words and acts express
The holy Gospel we profess."

But also, as the signpost in the picture, our lives, like John the Baptist, must be a true direction. If the signpost in the picture had not been well rooted, it would have swung round

in the fierce winds on the moors where it stands. Then it would have misled travellers. So may we be well grounded and not double-minded in our lives, or else we are living a lie. Elijah asked his hearers: "How long halt ye between two opinions?" They were like an unstable signpost that could not be trusted. May God deliver us from such deceitful lives.

Editor

JESUS AFFIRMED SCRIPTURE!

Jesus affirmed the reality (historicity) of the following people and events, often the targets of most sceptical and liberal mockery:

- Matthew 19. 3-6, Mark 10. 5-9 – God created Adam and Eve as the first man and woman, "from the beginning of the creation"; and this was the basis for marriage.
- Luke 11. 51 – Abel.
- Matthew 24. 37-39; Luke 17. 26-27 – Noah and the Flood.
- John 8. 56-58 – Abraham
- Matthew 10. 15; 11. 23-24; Luke 10. 12 – Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Luke 17. 28-32 – Lot and his wife.
- Matthew 8. 11; Luke 13. 28 – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- John 6. 31, 49, 58 – Manna from heaven.
- John 3. 14 – Moses and the brazen serpent.
- Matthew 12. 39-41 – Jonah and the whale.
- Matthew 12. 42 – Queen of Sheba.
- Luke 16. 31 and John 5. 46-47 – Moses as inspired author of the Pentateuch.
- Matthew 24. 15 – Daniel the Prophet as author of the Book of Daniel (citing Daniel 9. 27).

Selected

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***A GREAT PROPHET**

While Jesus was quietly living at Nazareth, a man named John lived alone in the wilderness. His clothing was made of camel's hair, and his food was locusts and wild honey. He was the great prophet, John the Baptist. John began to preach, saying: "**Repent** ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

People came from all over the land to hear John. He spoke of the Son of God who would soon appear. He told the people that they must repent of their sins. This meant they were to be sorry for them and turn unto God. John was sent by God to prepare the way for the Saviour. In a short time the Lord Jesus would come among them to teach and to give His life for the sins of His people. Those who confessed their sins were baptized by John in the river Jordan.

QUESTIONS:

1. Which great prophet began to preach in the wilderness?
2. What did he say the people must do? (one word)
3. What was he sent by God to do?

Please 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. Wisdom.
2. In the temple.
3. His Father's business.

Contributed

*“He said, I
am the voice
of one crying
in the
wilderness,
Make straight
the way of
the Lord.”
John 1. 23.*

*BIBLE LESSONS***JESUS TRANSFIGURED IN THE MOUNT**

One day Jesus went up into a mountain to pray. Sometimes we read that Jesus was alone when He went to pray. However, on this occasion He chose three of His disciples to go with Him. One of the three was Peter, and the other two were James and John. These three were favoured to witness the raising of Jairus' daughter. Now they would witness a scene that would excel all they had seen and heard before. The three disciples became very sleepy. If they had known what was about to take place, how they would have watched!

As Jesus continued in prayer, a great change came over Him. His face began to shine brighter than the sun at noon. His clothing became exceeding white. It glistened like new fallen snow. How glorious must have been the sight!

Suddenly there appeared two other shining figures, talking with Jesus. One was Moses and the other was Elijah. Moses was the great leader of Israel who received the Law of God on Mount Sinai and gave it to the people. Elijah was the great prophet who was so revered by the people. He was carried up to heaven by a whirlwind.

What wonder and astonishment filled the hearts of the disciples when they awoke from their sleep! How different their Master appeared from the form of a Servant that He had in His human flesh! It over-whelmed them to see their Master in the glory of heaven, along with the two heavenly visitors.

What were Moses and Elijah talking to Him about? They were speaking about the decease of the Lord Jesus at Jerusalem. What did that mean? It meant that Jesus was going to suffer, bleed, and die a most awful death. Just six days before this, Jesus had told the disciples that He was going up to Jerusalem and would be put to death. You may remember how Peter rebuked Him, saying that would never happen. Now they heard Moses and Elijah speaking with the Lord about it. (What a difference between the heavenly saints and the earthly saints here below!)

As Moses and Elijah departed from Jesus, Peter called out: *"Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."* The Bible tells us that the disciples were afraid and did not know what to say. What a lesson for us! When we are afraid and don't understand, it is better to: *"Be still, and know that I am God."*

While Peter was speaking, a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice was heard in the cloud, saying: *"This is My beloved Son: hear Him."* Whose voice was this? Yes, it was God the Father. The disciples were so afraid that they fell upon their faces to the ground. (What a rebuke was this word! Again they would be reminded that, just six days before at Cæsarea Philippi, they resisted their Master as He spake of His death.)

Soon they felt a hand gently touching them. It was the hand of Jesus. What a wonder that He was still with them! He spoke so kindly: *"Arise, and be not afraid."* When the disciples looked up: *"they saw no man, save Jesus only."* They would never forget that moment when they saw Jesus in His heavenly glory.

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 17 verses 1 to 9, Mark chapter 9 verses 1 to 9, and Luke chapter 9 verses 28 to 36.

QUESTIONS:

1. Which three disciples did Jesus take up into the Mount?
2. Who appeared unto Jesus in the Mount?
3. What did they talk to Jesus about? (8 words; see Luke 9. 31)
4. What did the voice of God say from the cloud? (7 words)
5. Who did the disciples see when they looked up?

Please 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. His church.
2. He would be killed.
3. Peter.
4. Satan.
5. Deny himself and take up the cross.

G. L. TenBroeke

A BOY FROM STAVENISSE**Chapter 14: Leen Becomes a Soldier**

Leen's greatest joy is going to the people of God. He has many friends there, even though he is still a boy.

The years go by. Leen has become a young man. Most boys of his age have to go into the military service. One day, Leen goes to an old friend: "I do not think that I have to go into the service, Van Oeveren," he says.

This man looks at him. Would the boy be right? "Why do you think this, Leen?"

"The Lord told me this. I received the words that I must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

It remained quiet for a little while after he said this. Van Oeveren gives him a long and intent look.

"Did I not experience many tribulations?" Leen asks. "You must know how everything went in my life? I have already had a difficult time as a child. Does not the Lord want to tell me with this that I may soon go Home? Oh, I firmly believe this."

The man still looks at the young face across from him in silence. He reads the longing for the Lord in Leen's eyes. Then he slowly shakes his head. "Shall I tell you something? You will soon be conscripted and then you will become a soldier."

Leen gets up. "Oh no, you do not know anything about it. The Lord Himself told me that I may enter in. I have already had my tribulations."

Van Oeveren keeps shaking his head. He does not believe that Leen will die soon. He does not believe a thing of it.

Leen goes away. He has to talk to Sammarina about this. She has been like a spiritual mother to him for all those years. She knows him in and out. Yes, that is what he will do. He will still go to Sint Maartensdijk tonight.

Sammarina is always glad when he comes. As soon as he sits down, she pushes a cup of tea across the table. "Here, have a nice drink and tell me what is the matter. You look so restless."

Leen sighs. He does not feel at ease. It is not nice that his old friend acts like this to him. "The Lord gave me a promise," he says at last.

Sammarina patiently waits for him to continue speaking.

"Yes, the Lord promised me that I must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. I was so wonderfully happy. Soon there will be a draft for who has to go into the military service. I do not have to go into the service. The Lord will take me up into His glory."

Sammarina squints her shortsighted eyes to little slits and stares at the boy, while thinking deeply. She has known him since he was a child. She knows how much he loves the Lord and how he fears the sinful life as a soldier. But she does not believe that he now understands the Lord's intention. It could well be that he still has to undergo many tribulations before He may go to the Lord in heaven. The more she thinks about it, the clearer it becomes. Leen is mistaken. He will have to go into the service, and she will have to carefully tell him about this. "Sometimes a person thinks wrong, Leen," she begins. "There are things our sinful mind misunderstands. This is what you are doing now. You think that the Lord will keep you from the rough life as a soldier because He spoke to you."

Leen looks sad. Does Sammarina doubt, too? "He has spoken, I had many tribulations. Now I may enter."

Sammarina grasps his hand, which is lying on the table. She softly presses his fingers. "You are going to be a soldier, my boy," she says seriously.

They intently look into each other's eyes. Leen slowly feels his certainty ebbing away. Do many tribulations have to come yet? Does the Lord still have work for him to do here on earth?

"You know that He is faithful. Entrust yourself to His wise guidance."

Leen bows his head. It is storming within him. Does he have to live among those rough, oftentimes wicked soldiers, then? That will be so difficult.

Sammarina sees him struggling. The boy must bow. Bow for the Lord.

When the names are drawn a few days later, it indeed appears that Leen is among the boys that have to become a soldier. He feels lonesome between the boisterous fellows. They curse and rave.

"They cannot spare me at home for the work," one rages.

Another clenches his fists: "It is a waste of my time. I want to build a house. I am marrying next year."

Others think it is nice to be a soldier for two years. They accompany each other to the bar at the corner of the street. They go there to drink and have fun.

Leen silently goes home. He now understands what the Lord meant: he must first suffer tribulations, and then enter the Kingdom of God. When he arrives home, he goes to a quiet spot to pray. If the Lord wants him to go into the service, he will go obediently and full of trust, for he does not doubt that the Lord will go with him.

Leen leads a totally different life among the soldiers. The rougher the boys are, the more he misses God's people. They soon notice that he prays, giving thanks for his food, and before he goes to sleep. Sometimes his plate of food has disappeared by the time he opens his eyes. Or else they play silly pranks while he is kneeling in front of his bed. These are the tribulations and they last for two years.

(To be continued)

Slightly adapted

ISRAEL (II)

Our next stop was St. Anne's Church. I was very impressed with the plainness of this church and the gardens surrounding, which are very beautiful. The church has excellent acoustic properties, and when we entered, a group was singing, which sounded very impressive. After a short while, our guide

indicated that we also could go to the front, which we did. We sang together the hymn: "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah." The flowers were very lovely in the church garden, which included some very large palm trees. It was here that we noted how large the geranium plants were, and, in fact, some were like bushes three to four feet high.

The Pool of Bethesda is adjacent to this church, and here we spent some time in looking and meditating on John 5. 2-11. As we stood there, I thought of the wonderful healing properties of the waters after they had been "troubled" by the angel. A great multitude awaited the coming of the angel: blind, halt, withered; but only the first to touch the waters was cured. Of course, we know that had it been the Lord's will, all could have been healed, but it was only for one. This man, who had been afflicted thirty-eight years, was now made whole by a word from Jesus: "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." There was no need for the waters to be "moved." The words of Jesus were all-powerful, just as we read of the centurion in Matthew 8. 8 who said: "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed."

After lunch we went to Bethlehem and the Shepherd's Fields. We did not have much time to look around the town itself, but it was to go to the place that they call the Shepherd's Fields and to remember the event that took place nearly 2,000 years ago. What a great and memorable day it was for those shepherds, minding their sheep, as they would have done many times before, and then to have the glory of the Lord shining upon them; the angel speaking to them, and to be told that Jesus the Saviour was born nearby in Bethlehem! He is the Saviour of all His own people, and that includes the shepherds. "For unto you is born this day" Later we read that they returned to their place "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen."

Wednesday was designated as "The Desert Experience," and this it certainly was. To see the desert and wilderness for the

first time is really something, and after leaving Jerusalem for Jericho, we stopped briefly at the Good Samaritan Inn, so called, where there was a Bedouin family and tent. We were reminded by our leader that these people choose to opt out of society and live entirely off and by the land. From here we left the main road and went towards St. George's Monastery, and on this road it could easily be seen how "a certain man" fell among thieves.

After this, we soon came to the Tell of Jericho, but could not go very near as excavation work was proceeding at that time. Then we could soon see the "City of Palm Trees," Jericho. What a wonderful sight after the barren desert! I should have liked to have spent a long time in Jericho, which has such a wonderful connection with the Lord Jesus. Just as we read that Jesus "must needs go through Samaria," so we could say that Jesus must needs go through Jericho. He went to meet Zacchæus, to speak to him, to call him and to stay in his home. What a truly wonderful day that must have been – for when he was called he "received him joyfully."

After this, we proceeded some way to Masada, where it was very hot. Some friends stayed in the coach while most went to the top by cable car. Herod the Great enlarged this fortress, which stands 1,440 ft (440 m) above sea level. After this, it was to En-gedi for lunch, which was enjoyed by all as we had been out for some hours, having left Jerusalem at 7.30am.

En-gedi is right by the Dead Sea, so after lunch quite a few friends "tried" the sea for a swim, and enjoyed the experience. We first read of this Sea in Genesis 14 verse 3. It is about twenty miles south east of Jerusalem. It is forty-six miles long and ten miles wide. An interesting fact is that Jerusalem is about twenty miles from the Dead Sea, but is about 2,500 ft (760 m) above sea level, so that it can be frosty in Jerusalem, but warm and humid in Jericho.

We then travelled a short way to Qumran, site of the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls. As we climbed down from the coach,

we all noticed that the temperature was higher still, so a few friends decided again to stay in the coach. To read of the ancient settlement in Qumran is very interesting. Before we leave this area and return to Jerusalem, the following facts are very interesting: The average maximum temperature in July is 102°F (38°C); the average minimum temperature in January is 52°F (11°C); the average number of sunny days in July is 31!

(To be continued)

R.H.H.

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XIV)

Mediator

This is an important New Testament word, and is found six times in the epistles. The first part of the word is “medi-” which means between or middle. A number of other words have the same origin. For example: when we say someone is of medium height we mean they are middle-sized, not tall or short. The media is a word to describe the means by which communications are sent between people. In mathematics, the median is the number in the middle of a series of numbers.

A mediator is therefore someone who is in the middle, and is between two people or two opposing sides. We sometimes hear of someone mediating between two sides, perhaps between two nations in conflict, or between a company and its employees. Someone acceptable to both sides comes between them and brings them together, hoping to reach agreement.

When God created man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, at first God and man communed directly together. There was no need of a mediator then. That is until man fell by breaking the commandment of God in taking the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve knew they had sinned and were now afraid of a holy God, and so they hid themselves amongst the trees of the garden.

Our God is a consuming fire. He is infinitely holy. If a sinner were to approach God directly, he would be condemned. So the sinner needs a mediator, someone

acceptable to God to stand between. The mediator must be someone without sin to be acceptable with God. The word “mediator” is not found in the Old Testament, but there is a word which means the same thing in Job 9. 33. The word is “daysman.” Job is speaking of God’s holiness and righteousness, and of his own sinfulness. He says: “Neither is there any daysman betwixt [or between] us, that might lay his hand upon us both.”

Thanks be to God, God has given His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be the Mediator of His people. It was ordained before time began, that God the Son should take into union with His divine nature the nature of man, yet without sin. He was made like unto His brethren. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, His Father declared: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” As God, the Lord Jesus has union with the Father. As Man, He was like unto His people, and could therefore lay His hand upon both God and His sinful people.

Since the Lord Jesus stands between God and His people, they are accepted in God’s sight, and may safely draw near to God.

“But since my Saviour stands between
In garments dyed in blood
'Tis He, instead of me. is seen
When I approach to God.”

J. Newton

There is no other way to approach a holy God, but through the Lord Jesus Christ. “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life,” says Christ. No mere man is good enough. There is One, and One only, Mediator between God and man: Christ Jesus.

This too, is why we should ask our prayers “for Jesus’ sake,” and why we should pray in the name of Jesus. Otherwise, prayers cannot be accepted in God’s sight.

May we be taught by the Holy Spirit to know something of our state before God, and may we also be brought to know the Lord Jesus as our Mediator.

Contributed

THE PERSON OF CHRIST AND THE KORAN

It may be of interest to the readers of the *Friendly Companion* to know what the Koran, the book of Islam, teaches about the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be helpful also for the reader to keep in view two lines in Gadsby's Hymn 1149 by John Newton which concerns our Saviour God, and the way of salvation:

"I durst not confide in His blood ...
Unless I were sure He is God"

which sums up harmoniously the truth of the whole Bible.

The Koran represents Christ as one of the greatest Prophets after Mahomet. It declares Christ as the 'Spirit from God,' the 'Prophet of God,' the 'Servant of God,' the 'Word of Truth,' and a 'Divine Being,' but not the Son of God, for they say that 'God could not take to Himself a Son.' Yet the miraculous conception of Jesus, the annunciation of the virgin Mary, and the sinlessness of Jesus are taught. Jesus is described as the greatest miracle-worker of all the prophets. His crucifixion, and His return to God are mentioned, with this singularity: the Koran falsely claims that the Jews did not crucify Him in reality, but only 'His likeness,' God having taken Him up to Himself, which was also the belief of some heretics in the early church. Jesus is falsely represented in the Koran as denying His own divinity, and threatening with hell-fire those who embrace Him as God. The doctrine of the Trinity is specifically denied. It can be easily deduced from the Koran that Mahomet considered, falsely, that the Christian Trinity consisted of Father, Son, and virgin Mary.

A. Randalls

QUESTION: How does Christ execute the office of a prophet?

ANSWER: Christ executes the office of a prophet in revealing to the elect, by His Word and Spirit, the will of God in their salvation.

John 1. 18 and 6. 33, 45, 63 and 10. 27-28 and 13. 19 and 14. 26 and 15.15.

A REMARKABLE CONVERSION

Every conversion of a lost sinner from the darkness of spiritual death to the light of the gospel is a remarkable conversion! It is indeed a miracle which those who experience it have reason to ask:

“Why me, why me, O blessed God,

Why such a wretch as me?

Who must for ever lie in hell

Were not salvation free.”

D. Herbert

However, it is also true that in some cases God has seen fit to use strange means to bring about the great change which only His grace can make. The following account is just such a case. It took place during the fruitful ministry of George Whitefield.

A very rebellious young man from Norwich, who had deliberately turned away from God and His Word, went out one day with his friends for a day's entertainment. As he and his comrades passed through the countryside, they met a gypsy woman who professed to be a fortune-teller. This young man thought it would be fun to see what was in store for him, although we know that such activities are forbidden by God, and are a solemn deception.

The old woman predicted that he would live many years and that he would have lots of children and eventually many grandchildren too. The young man was greatly taken by this prophecy and resolved that if this was indeed his future, then it was his duty to obtain as much knowledge as he could to endear himself to his expected family.

“Let me see,” he said, “what I can acquire first? Oh, here is the famous Methodist preacher, Whitefield; he is to preach tonight, they say. I will go and hear him.”

Few people have entered on worship with such a strange reason as this, but in the purposes of God, it was to be the time for the appointed change.

George Whitefield's text was: “Flee from the wrath to come!”

He first of all described the Sadducees and how they needed to flee, but this did not affect this strange hearer. Then Whitefield described the Pharisees, which did shake him a little. However, at this point in his sermon the preacher suddenly broke off and burst into floods of tears; then lifting up his hands Whitefield cried out: "O my hearers, the wrath is to *come*; the *wrath* is to come!"

These words took fast hold of the heart of the young man, according to his own words "as lead in the waters."

Leaving his companions at the earliest opportunity he wept for the sake of his endangered soul. Wherever he went the words followed him: "the wrath is to *come*; the *wrath* is to come."

History has not recorded how he obtained his deliverance but he did become an able minister of the New Testament. Truly he was "a brand plucked from the burning."

Editor

HIM ONLY

Read: Ezra 4. 1-5.

"We ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us" (Ezra 4. 3).

A Christian organisation which helps young people in Singapore learned that the local horse-racing club wanted to donate a significant sum of money to its work. The gift would be helpful, but the organization had taken a position against gambling. Now it had to decide whether accepting money from a racing club that derived its revenue from gambling would compromise its commitment to Christ.

Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the heads of the families of Israel faced a similar dilemma. They were being offered help to rebuild the temple by Assyrian settlers in the land who had intermarried with remnants of the tribes of Israel. Later known as Samaritans, these people were adversaries of Israel (Ezra 4. 1). Zerubbabel's response was decisive: "We alone will build to the LORD God." Why such exclusivity? In 2 Kings 17. 33, we learn that those who offered help "feared the LORD, yet served

their own gods.”

We need to be reminded often of the first commandment: “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” (Exodus 20. 3). Although the Lord can use even unbelievers to accomplish His purposes, we are never to compromise our loyalty to Him. By our words and our actions we must show that we worship Him and Him only.

Albert Lee

“The dearest idol I have known,
Whate’er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from Thy throne
And worship only Thee.”

Cowper

Slightly adapted from “Our Daily Bread” 2005

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE EPISTLES

The Epistle to the Romans (II)

My dear young friends: I would lovingly warn you of the spirit of the world that is creeping into the churches, and has been gradually doing so for some years. You imbibe some of this spirit during your school years. Sadly, the education establishment in our country is very strongly against the teachings of the Word of God. It aggressively promotes feminist libertarian principles. These principles are against the doctrine of marriage as taught in the Word of God. They promote, as they call it, free love and co-habitation: living together unmarried. They promote the feministic idea of the wife not taking her husband’s surname, nor being subject to him. Women with a family are encouraged to continue working. Anything that puts a clear distinction between a man and a woman is rejected. Then the ultimate of their philosophy is same-sex unions because they say there is no difference between men and women and we are free to do as we like. This anti-Christian philosophy is leading to the breakdown of our society. Western Christian tradition has always taught that men wear trousers and a woman wears a

skirt or a dress. May we be given grace to take heed to the exhortation: "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). We are exhorted not to love the world nor the things of the world but to separate from it. The more distinct the church stands out from the world and the spirit of it, the brighter its light shines in this dark world.

The Apostle speaks in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, that he is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: not ashamed to preach it, to practise it, to defend it. May we be given the same zeal, the same single eye of faith. The Lord Jesus said: "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). Sometimes our light shines clearer and brighter in what we do not do, as well as in what we do. We are often told today that we need to get up-to-date, especially when it comes to same-sex relationships. The Bible is always up-to-date. This particular sin is dealt with in the Book of Genesis. These things were practised in the imperial city of Rome. It is part of man's depraved and corrupt nature. Here in the first chapter of this epistle, the Apostle tackles it head on. He is speaking of man's fallen condition. Read for yourselves Romans 1. 22-28.

The great central teaching of this letter is summed up in the first two verses of chapter 5: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God," and subsequently in this chapter: the spiritual death and alienation of man from God, through the fall of Adam, and that lost life recovered in the second Adam, Christ, who was born of the promised seed of the woman: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; It

shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel” (Genesis 3. 15). As Adam was the federal head of the human race, so we all died in him. So Christ is the great King and Head of the church and believers all live in Him. In this sense Adam was a figure of Christ, or as in the Corinthians: “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is the Lord from heaven” (1 Corinthians 15: 45-47).

(To be continued)

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD, which you can read about in Genesis 1-11. 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 write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Out of the thirty-one verses of Genesis chapter 1, which two words do twenty-one of the verses begin with?
2. When Adam and Eve sinned, what did they do when they realised they were naked? (Genesis 3. 7)
3. What clothes did God provide for them afterwards? (Genesis 3. 21)
4. When God cursed the ground, what did He say it would bring forth? (Genesis 3. 18)
5. Why did Cain kill his brother Abel? (1 John 3. 12)
6. Why did God bring a flood upon the earth? (Genesis 6)
7. Of which two of the patriarchs in Genesis 5 and 6 is it recorded that they “walked with God”?
8. Which two places did the water come from which drowned the earth with the flood? (Genesis 7)
9. Which of the patriarchs mentioned in Genesis 5 died in the year the flood came?
10. What solemn warning did the Lord Jesus speak in referring to the days of Noah?

ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS

1. Nephew. "His brother's son."
2. Their substance was so great they could not dwell together and their herdmen were fighting.
3. Lot went towards the plain of Jordan because it was well watered (and would therefore provide good pasture for his flocks).
4. Because "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly."
5. Lot was living in Sodom and Abram and his servants saved him.
6. Lot was "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked." (2 Peter 2. 7)
7. "Wilt Thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? ... That be far from Thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from Thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? (Gen 18. 23, 25)
8. His wife and two unmarried daughters. (Genesis 19. 16)
9. She looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt. (Genesis 19. 26)
10. Lot chose the best for himself and dallied with sin without thought of the consequences and eventually lost everything. Abraham put God first and God honoured him, giving him the promise of the whole land as the possession of his children.

Contributed

"GOD IS EVERYWHERE"

There's not a tint that paints the rose,
 Nor decks the lily fair,
 Nor streaks the humblest flower that blows,
 But God has placed it there.

There's not of grass a single blade,
 Nor leaf of loveliest green,
 Where heavenly skill is not displayed
 And heavenly wisdom seen.

There's not a star whose twinkling light
Shines on the distant earth,
And cheers the silent gloom of night,
But heaven gave it birth.

There's not a place on earth's vast round,
In ocean's deep or air,
Where skill and wisdom are not found;
For God is everywhere.

Since God surrounds me everywhere,
And I'm defiled with sin,
What need to fly to Christ by prayer,
Whose blood can wash from sin.

J. C. Wallace

“PERCEPTION”

(A New Magazine)

For some years a desire has been expressed that a magazine should be produced for those who have left school and are either at college or university, or entering a career.

The Magazine Committee have agreed that such magazine should be produced quarterly, and that Mr John Broome of Trowbridge should be its first Editor. This magazine will seek to address, in depth, issues that concern our young people.

If the Lord will, the first issue will be published in March 2009. Any interested friends who would like to subscribe to this new venture are asked to complete the order form which will be found in the February *Gospel Standard*. The cost of the magazine will be £8.00 for an annual subscription.

We wish the Lord's richest blessing upon the reading of the new magazine and upon our dear friend, the Editor, and hope there may be a warm response from our readers and others.

Editor

The Friendly Companion



“... a little child shall lead them.”
(Isaiah 11. 6)

March 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

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

Volume 135

March 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	51
Our Front Cover Picture	52
Cardinal Fish	53
For The Very Little Ones: The Lamb Of God	54
Colouring Text: Genesis 22. 8	55
Bible Lessons: A Lunatic Son And His Father Helped	56
A Boy From Stavenisse	58
Editor's Postbag	60
Israel (III)	61
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XV)	63
Being Carried	65
Warnings	65
Bible Study For The Older Ones: The Epistles:	
The Epistle To The Romans (III)	67
Bible Questions: The Holy Spirit	69
Poetry: "He Shall ... Gather The Lambs In His Arms"	70
List Of Names	71

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

It is very interesting (for those of us who like figures!), to notice some of the statistics (facts) about the Bible. For example, somebody has counted the number of letters, words, verses and chapters in the Bible, and come up with the following results:

In the Bible (Authorised King James version of course!) there are said to be 3,587,473 letters, 775,603 words, 81,373 verses, 1,189 chapters in its 66 books.

The longest book is, of course, the Psalms which also contains the longest and the shortest chapters: Psalms 119 and 117 respectively.

Esther 8 verse 9 is the longest verse in the Bible, whereas the shortest verse is John 11. 35, where the beautiful words: "Jesus wept," are recorded.

The middle verse is Psalm 118. 8 which reads: "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."

Isaiah 37 is the same as 2 Kings 19. Esther is the only book in the Bible where the name of God is not mentioned, but His hand is seen on every page!

Ezra 7 verse 21 contains all the letters of the alphabet but one. I wonder if you could tell me which one?

Of course, whilst all these things are interesting, especially to those of us who like mathematics, we might know all these things and yet be sadly without that knowledge which saves the soul. The scribes, whose job it was to write out the Holy Scriptures, were sadly ignorant of the Person of the Lord Jesus, although they had spent their working-life writing about Him! They could very quickly tell Herod where Christ was to be born but they did not stir one step to Bethlehem to find Him. But we do read of one scribe at least who was different. His name is given to one of the books of the Old Testament, and is mentioned above. His name is Ezra. We read in his book that he "had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." He was a

man whom James commended as we read in his epistle: "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1. 25).

Some of us can remember when, by God's grace, we trust that the Bible was no longer just a Book of natural interest to us, but it became 'a lamp to our feet and a light to our path' and food to our souls.

May each of our readers know this vital difference.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture of a lion and a lamb together has several lessons for us this month. In Britain, March, weather-wise, can be a very unpredictable month. An old saying goes like this: "If March comes in like a lion it will go out like a lamb, but if it comes in like a lamb it will go out like a lion." Whilst this is not always true, it is so often enough for us to expect a changeable and unpredictable month. Of course, our readers in the Southern Hemisphere will be expecting autumn when we in England are hoping for spring!

But the sight of the lion and the lamb, apparently quite happy to be with each other, is another lesson for us this month.

Firstly, it tells us of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and also the Lamb of God. The Lion tells us of His strength, might and power: whereas the Lamb tells us of His meekness and love, especially in laying down His life for sinners. In the Book of the Revelation, John heard an angel telling him that the Lion of the Tribe of Judah had prevailed, and when he turned, he saw a Lamb as it had been slain. As one of our hymn-writers puts it:

"Power and love in Christ combine,
An able, willing Saviour too."

But then the picture also tells us the great difference that

grace makes in a sinner's heart and life. Isaiah 11. 6 and 65. 25 tells us of a spiritual day when wild animals, such as wolves, leopards and lions, will dwell peaceably with lambs and calves, and a little child shall lead them. This tells us of a day in the life of God's children, when the curse which came upon them at the Fall is reversed. So a man like Saul of Tarsus, who was as cruel as any lion of the jungle, became a meek believer in Christ when he was called by grace. He came into the world as a wild lion, but when he left it, he was a lamb in Christ's fold. He now had the Spirit of Christ.

Has grace made this difference in you I wonder?

Editor

CARDINAL FISH

Cardinal fish are small reef-dwelling fish that are found in tropical and temperate seas. They mainly feed on other small fishes and crustaceans, and are primarily nocturnal, spending most of their time during the day hiding under ledges and in darker areas of the reef.

Many people refer to some species of these fish as "Gobblers," as they have very large mouths. However, this large mouth is not just used for eating! The male fish uses his mouth to protect and incubate a fertilized egg mass. He holds the eggs in his mouth for ten days or more until they hatch. Every minute or so he will open his mouth to allow fresh water to oxygenate the eggs. When the babies hatch, he will allow the tiny new generation to swim in and out of his mouth until they are ready to face the ocean on their own. So long as he holds the eggs, and later the fry in his mouth, the male does not eat.

In a speculative evolutionary model of "red in tooth and claw" it stretches the imagination beyond belief as to how this behaviour would develop slowly, i.e. protecting the eggs and the fry and not eating them.

It seems just another amazing example of the creativity of an infinite God.

Creation Vol. 31. No. 1.

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***THE LAMB OF GOD**

One terrible night, the Lord passed over the land of Egypt to kill every firstborn son. But He had told the people of Israel how to escape from death. Each family must take a lamb without any spot or blemish and kill it. Then they must put the blood upon the two sides and top of the door frame of their house. They would be safe inside the home where the blood was applied. The Lord said: "... *when I see the blood, I will pass over you*" That night was called "*the LORD's passover.*"

When the Lord Jesus went forth to preach, John the Baptist said of Him: "***Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.***" The Lord Jesus is the Passover Lamb who died so His people might live. When His blood is applied to the heart, the wrath of God passes over a sinner.

QUESTIONS:

1. What must each family in Israel take and kill?
2. What must they put upon the door frame?
3. What did John the Baptist say of the Lord Jesus? (5 words)

Please 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. John the Baptist.
2. Repent.
3. Prepare the way for the Saviour.

Contributed

*“God will
provide
Himself
a Lamb.”*

*Genesis
22. 8.*

BIBLE LESSONS**A LUNATIC SON AND HIS FATHER HELPED**

As Jesus and the three disciples came down from the mountain, He told them not to talk about what they had seen until He was risen from the dead. While Peter, James and John obeyed this commandment, they could not help questioning among themselves *“what the rising from the dead should mean.”*

They found a great multitude of people around the remaining disciples. What could be happening? As they drew closer, they saw the scribes reasoning with the disciples, while others were just curious to see if the disciples could perform some miracle.

Suddenly, all eyes were turned in one direction. There stood Jesus with Peter, James, and John. The people ran to Him, and Jesus asked the scribes what they were questioning with the disciples. Before the scribes could answer, one of the multitude cried out: *“Master, I have brought unto Thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away.”* What a sad affliction! How the devil tormented him!

The poor father came and knelt before Jesus, saying that this was his only child: *“And I besought Thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.”* Perhaps that is what the scribes were reasoning with the disciples about. Maybe they were even mocking them because they could do nothing to help the poor father.

Jesus answered the father: *“O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to Me.”* This was a rebuke to the unbelieving disciples, as well as to the scribes.

When they brought the boy to Jesus: *“the spirit tare him”* and he fell to the ground, rolling and thrashing about. He was foaming at the mouth like a mad dog. You can imagine how the poor father felt.

Jesus asked the father how long he had suffered with it. He answered: *“Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him.”* But surely the Lord

knew how long the child had suffered. Why then ask such a question? It was to impress upon the father and the multitude how hard, how impossible, his case was.

The father cried out: "...*if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.*" The father feared that this affliction might even be beyond the power of the Lord Jesus to cure; but to whom else could he go? Jesus said unto him: "*If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*" What a question: "*IF THOU CANST BELIEVE ...*"! How often those that seek the Lord struggle with such a question!

Tears began to roll down the poor father's face. How could he answer this question of the Lord Jesus? Now he felt the strife in his own heart. Straightway he cried out: "*Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.*" What little faith he possessed was looking unto Jesus: but oh, the power of unbelief. His poor heart, like his son's body, was being torn apart by the devil.

Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of the boy and enter no more into him. The evil spirit: "*Cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him.*" The poor boy lay on the ground as one dead, so that many said he was dead. However, Jesus took him by the hand, raised him up, and gave him to his father. How the Lord answered his prayer for help, by healing both the father's weak faith and the son's affliction!

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 17 verses 14 to 18, Mark chapter 9 verses 9 to 27, and Luke chapter 9 verses 37 to 42.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who were reasoning with the disciples?
2. Who tormented the son?
3. What did the father cry out? (13 words)
4. What did Jesus answer the father? (12 words)
5. What did the father straightway cry out? (7 words)

Please 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. G.L. TenBroeke

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. Peter, James, and John.
2. Moses and Elijah.
3. The decease of the Lord Jesus at Jerusalem.
4. "This is my beloved Son: hear Him."
5. Jesus only.

A BOY FROM STAVENISSE**Chapter 15. To The Captain**

A certain day, the corporal threateningly stands in front of a group of soldiers. They did not polish their rifles properly and the corporal looks angry. "You are a bunch of lazy rascals," he scolds and follows this with a few very coarse curses. Leen stands between the young soldiers. He cringes when he hears these curses. This man always curses and this always troubles Leen. They are definitely forbidden to criticise a superior. Leen knows this; yet he cannot restrain himself any longer. His King is being offended and he cannot tolerate this. He powerfully feels that the Lord is now demanding him to speak. He straightens up and looks at the corporal kindly, but seriously: "Corporal, it is a very great sin to curse. My most-high King in heaven forbids it. With all love, I urge you not to curse any more."

It becomes deathly silent on the square in front of the barracks. The soldiers stiffly and rigidly stand to attention, Leen, too. But he does not look down. He openly and honestly looks at the corporal. That man has never experienced that a soldier reprimands him. His mouth falls open in amazement and he momentarily does not know what to say or do.

At an angle behind him stands a non-commissioned officer. He heard what Potappel dared to say to the corporal. He furiously takes a step forward and snarls at Leen: "You shut your mouth immediately. I command you to keep quiet."

Leen cannot keep quiet. His King commanded him to speak. It concerns His honour.

"We will make up a report about this," decides the corporal. "Private Potappel will hear more about it."

"How did you dare?" a soldier asked Leen later. "Now you are going to be in for it. Did you not know that you might not reprimand a corporal just like that?"

Leen nods. "Certainly, Jan: I know that, but he also did something he is not allowed to do. I had to say something about that."

Jan inspects Leen from head to foot. "Never yet did I see a strange fellow like you. You are not a bad guy, but I do not understand you either."

Leen tries to explain why cursing is so terrible. But Jan just laughs about it and lets him talk. Leen does not have to be in suspense for long. Leen is summoned to come to the captain.

"Lord, be with me," pleads Leen while he follows the soldier who has to bring him to the captain. He is actually somewhat afraid of the stern captain. When the soldiers are on the square in front of the barracks for roll call, the captain often roars like a lion. Most of the soldiers do not care for him. Still, Leen feels wonderfully peaceful. When he is standing in front of the captain, he does not even feel his heart pounding.

The captain is sitting behind a large desk. At first he acts as if he does not notice Leen standing in the room. He calmly continues writing with scratching swirls of his pen. Suddenly he looks up. He briefly lets his stern glance glide over the soldier from Stavenisse. Did that man dare reprimand his superior? How did he dare? "So you are the person who is refusing to do his duty?" he begins. Leen shakes his head. "I did not refuse to do my duty, Captain."

"So you did not refuse to do you duty. What did you do then?" He folds his large hands under his chin and looks at the impudent soldier. He has a frown line above his eyebrows.

"I told the corporal that he should not curse so terribly." Leen calmly looks at the stern man behind the desk.

The captain lowers his hands. The veins on his forehead swell and his face turns red with anger. "Who do you actually think you are? How do you dare to speak to a corporal about his behaviour? A common soldier is strictly forbidden to open his mouth to his superior."

He grows with anger when he sees the boy standing in front of him so calmly. "Just wait, man, we will get you to pipe down. I have very good methods for that." He arose during his fit of anger. His eyes take on a venomous expression. "In your piousness, you will probably say that I cannot do this. Just like Jesus told Pilate: 'Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above.' But I will punish you, whether your God wants it or not." He laughs mockingly. Then he follows his words with a coarse curse and points to the door: "You can leave."

Leen stands deathly still for a few moments. A stab of pain flashes through his body upon hearing the curse. Oh, the name of the Lord is so dear to him. Tears spring into his eyes. He leaves.

At the door he turns to the captain. "At some time the captain will discover that he has misused the name of God. His name is holy," he says with calm courage. He softly closes the door.

Outside he leans against a wall and closes his eyes. The sunlight warms his face and dries his tears. "Oh, Lord," he prays, "care for Thy honour: Thou who canst incline people's hearts like water brooks."

He does not feel like going back to the other soldiers who are sitting together on the grass. They are polishing their gear in the sunshine. In the distance, he hears them laughing about their coarse jokes. Without being seen, he slips into his room and falls on his knees.

There the love of the Lord pours into his heart and sets it aflame. With his God he can move mountains. Great is the faith that the Holy Ghost gives in Leen's heart. The Lord comforts His child.

(To be continued) *Slightly adapted*

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from KEZIA BURGESS, REBECCA and THOMAS CROWTER and ABIGAIL TEUNISSEN.

ISRAEL (III)

After dinner Wednesday evening, several of us set off for a walk down the road to the Garden of Gethsemane, and encountered quite a few centipedes also out walking across the path. I understand that these creatures have thirty-five sections in their body, each with a pair of legs. What a reminder of the wonderful works of God in creation!

Thursday morning our coach took us to Bethany to follow the traditional Palm Sunday walk past the Church of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. I myself thought this was a very moving experience to follow this route. The morning was very warm, the road was very dry and dusty, as well as uneven. The Lord Jesus must have walked very many miles on such roads and became weary as He did on His way through Samaria (John 4. 6). So we continued on over the Mount of Olives, visiting the Church of the Paternoster, where the Lord's Prayer is displayed in sixty-eight different languages. Then we continued on to the Garden of Gethsemane and looked at the church which has three names: The Church of Gethsemane, The Church of Agony, and the Church of All Nations. It was rather noisy outside in the road which spoilt our visit to the Garden and also in listening to the reading by our leader.

In the hotel lounge that evening, it was suggested that some friends might like to rise early (very early) and go to the sheep market the next morning. So a taxi was arranged, and soon after 7.00 a.m. the next morning we were on our way. 'Now there is at Jerusalem a sheep market.' (It actually reads: "Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool.") We remembered that this market had been held for at least 2,000 years, and we did try and talk to the farmers, as far as we could understand each other. I thought that the atmosphere was very similar to an English cattle market with the farmers and their sticks. There was a water seller, but he did not seem to be doing much business so early in the morning.

Having given the rest of the party time to rise and have their breakfast, we walked along by one of the old walls to the Lion

Gate where we all met up once more. Then we all set off to walk along the Via Dolorosa, passing the parts which are known as the Stations of the Cross. This walk was through many narrow streets, of which some were very busy. This, of course, detracted from the things that we were thinking about, but I myself feel that it is good to look back and remember this time. This is traditionally the way that Jesus went, bearing His cross. With these thoughts, we moved on to the Garden Tomb. This was a very telling experience for all of us, and I really felt that up to that time it was the most moving place that we had visited. There was a general quietness about the garden which contains many beautiful flowers. The guide took us around and explained various points, after which he said something which to me was very significant. This was that although there are many places in the Holy Land where it is said that this or that took place, there is one thing which is certain, and that is as it is written over the tomb: "He is not here – He is risen."

"Yet we believe that mortal eyes
Beheld that journey to the skies."

After lunch at the hotel, and after a short rest, we hired taxis and returned to the Garden Tomb. This was a 'free' afternoon, and so we had more time to wander around the garden. After a while we gathered in a group for a short service where we sang "When I survey the wondrous cross," and a brother spoke in prayer. There were many groups of various nationalities and it was good to hear them singing their hymns and listening to their leaders speaking. The memory of this time in the garden will remain with me.

After this, some friends returned by taxi, whilst the remainder of us walked back through the modern Jewish quarter (very clean and tidy) and down along the Kedron Valley back to the hotel. I did omit previously to write that on Thursday afternoon we visited Mount Zion, also the Dormition Abbey and the supposed site of the upper room. This is also near the High Priest's palace where Jesus was kept. The stone

steps are very old and could well have been the very steps which Jesus used.

So we came to the end of our stay in Jerusalem. The Panorama Hotel was very comfortable with the dining room on the fifth floor, so affording a good view. We missed our smiling waiter when we left.

(To be continued)

R.H.H.

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XV)

Sanctify

This is one of a number of words of Scripture which come from the same origin. To sanctify really means to set apart, and especially to be separated for holy purposes. The first time it is used in the Word of God is for the seventh day. After the six days in which God created the world and all upon it: "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." So in the creation, God set apart the seventh day. The children of Israel were reminded of this in the fourth commandment given on Mount Sinai: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." The seventh day was therefore set apart and it was to be kept for holy use, primarily for worship. Notice that it was God that sanctified the seventh day, not man. God, having set it apart, commanded that the seventh day should be kept holy.

Sometimes God commanded His people to sanctify or separate themselves. For example, when the children of Israel were called to Mount Sinai, God commanded that the people should be sanctified. They were to wash their clothes and be ready for the third day when God would speak to them. This showed that they were to be set apart as they heard God's holy Word. They were to separate themselves as an outward sign.

In the days of the prophet Joel, the Israelites were called to sanctify a fast. They had largely forsaken the ways of God, and they were being overrun by the enemy. The prophet was sent to instruct them and to call them to turn again to the ways of

God. They were not to fight the enemy, but were to fall under the mighty hand of God. They were to set apart a time (it may have been one day) when they were in humility to seek the forgiveness of God.

We find that Aaron and His sons were to be consecrated and sanctified to minister unto the Lord in the priest's office. They were separated from other Levites and the children of Israel generally for a particular responsibility as priests. To show they were set apart, they were anointed with oil, and were given distinct and special clothing.

When God called Jeremiah to be His prophet, God told Jeremiah that He had purposed this before he was born. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." He was set apart to be God's prophet. It was the case too with the Apostle Paul, who writes to the Galatians of his call by grace "when it pleased God ... to reveal His Son in me." He says that God "separated me from my mother's womb" to preach Christ. This speaks of more than mere natural birth and means that Paul had been set apart by God's sovereign will for the work of the ministry before he was born. When God's time came, the Holy Spirit commanded the church at Antioch to "separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

The people of God are called to be separate from the world and from false religion. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord," is the command. The Pharisees separated themselves outwardly. They thought they kept the law and were therefore holier than others. This is not true sanctification. There is only one way in which sinners can be sanctified, and that is through the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only as we are in Christ that we are sanctified, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." If the Lord will, we hope to look at this sanctification when we consider the word "saint."

Contributed

BEING CARRIED

Henry Moorhouse, when engaged in a work that seemed to call upon him for a more than usual exercise of faith, received what seems like a most tender answer from God. His little daughter, who was a paralytic, was sitting in her chair as he entered the house with a package in his hand for her. He asked: "Where is mother?"

"Mother is upstairs."

"Well, I have a package for her."

"Let me carry the package to mother."

"Why, Minnie, dear, how can you carry the package? You cannot carry yourself."

With a smile on her face, Minnie said: "Oh, no, Dad; but you give me the package, and I will carry the package, and you will carry me."

Taking her in his arms, he carried her upstairs – and the package too.

And then it came to him that this was just his position in the work in which he was engaged. He was carrying his burden, but was not God carrying him? (Read Psalm 55. 22, Isaiah 46. 4.)

The Banner of Truth

WARNINGS

I expect you may have noticed in the October 2008 *Friendly Companion* that three men were specifically mentioned who were given warnings of impending disasters, and who were each delivered. The first, of course, was Noah who, as you all know, was warned of God that the world that then was, would be destroyed, and he was commanded to build the Ark. Then there was a man named Lot, who was taken out of a city called Sodom by the angels who warned him that this city and another called Gomorrah, would be destroyed.

You may remember that there was also an interesting account of a man who saw the earth tremble and, with his family and his belongings, fled from the village in which he lived. He knew that an earthquake would soon come. Each of

these men was saved from the disasters which did indeed come, while those around them, who laughed and scoffed at them, perished.

These things are not myths: they were, in their day, dreadful realities. God's Word tells us clearly that we should take great heed to these things, because they tell us that, although God is very merciful and long-suffering, He will not let sin go unpunished and His judgments will eventually fall on those, whether individuals or nations, who do not repent of their sinful ways.

As you will know, those men who speak of things which have not yet come to pass, but which are to happen at some time in the future, are known as prophets. Noah was a prophet, as were Daniel, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Perhaps you could try to make a list of many others who are mentioned in the Bible. The greatest of all Prophets, of course, is the Lord Jesus, who spoke about many things while He was here below, which would come to pass after He ascended into heaven. Many of those things have already happened: the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans as a direct result of the treatment of the Lord Himself by the Jews and the subsequent dispersion of the Jews throughout the world, is just one example.

But the accounts of the three men mentioned above, remind us more particularly of the words Jesus spoke concerning what you may well hear ministers refer to as the last times. You can read what Jesus said about these, towards the end of the gospels. Jesus said that there would be wars and rumours of wars and great earthquakes and pestilences in different parts of the world – and we know that these things have already happened and are still happening. But He then spoke of a most solemn time when there will be great tribulation and distress of nations: “such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”

We would not wish to alarm our dear young readers, but no doubt they hear of some of the things which are happening in

the economy, both in our own land and throughout many nations of the world at the present time. Many people are calling these things “unprecedented,” that is, they have never seen anything quite like them before, and there has never been a time when so many things upon which, naturally speaking, modern society depends, that are being, quite quickly, brought into serious decline. To those who desire to fear God, there can be no doubt that this is all being brought upon us as a direct result of our awful departure from Almighty God and His commandments which, as a nation we have cast aside. As in the days of Noah and Lot, and, no doubt, the man who was spared from the earthquake, men and women generally have become proud and arrogant; Sabbath-breaking; practising sins which are abhorrent to God, and God is very displeased. In the light of all that is taking place, we cannot help wondering if we are entering that time spoken of by the Lord Jesus, and what we may be called upon to pass through. Jesus Himself gave the warning of such times, and His Word must be fulfilled. But He also said: “When ye see these things begin to come to pass, look up.”

The man who saw the earth tremble had looked down. Lot was commanded not to look back when he escaped from the city. The Ark had its only window in the roof, so that Noah *had* to look up! May the Lord help us each to do the same – in all our needs, and as we see things around us which may fill us with dismay, may we prove that our “help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.”

Contributed

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE EPISTLES

The Epistle to the Romans (III)

The letter deals with the total depravity of fallen man (chapter 3), and then the recovery of fallen man through faith alone (chapter 4): not just the Jews but also the Gentiles. Indeed the Word clearly states that the true Christian believer is the spiritual seed of Abraham: “Therefore it is of faith, that it

might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were” (Romans 4. 16-17). The gospel of the New Testament does not just deal with a nation but all nations.

The Christian believer is delivered from the law: from its condemning sentence. Please note that this deliverance does not lead to sin, which is a transgression of the law, but to true separation from the world and its practices. The faith of a believer purifies the heart, a faith that works by love to God: “Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid” (Romans 6. 13-15).

The Christian believers know much conflict within themselves: between their old sinful nature and the new principles of grace and godliness through the new birth. This is expounded with great clarity in chapter 7. The essential nature of the work of the Holy Spirit in and throughout the life of the Christian believer is clearly opened in chapter 8. The weakness of the law, because of our fallen nature and yet the mighty power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to deliver, is set forth in the first verses of this chapter: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the

righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8. 1-4).

In this chapter the vital need of the Holy Spirit in real religion is emphasised. My dear young friends, have you been born again by the Spirit of God? Have you been brought as a poor trembling sinner before a holy God? Has the Lord Jesus been made precious to you? If the Holy Ghost has quickened your soul you will know something of this: however young you may be, you must have a new heart given. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. *Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His*" (Romans 8. 8-9).
J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about THE HOLY SPIRIT. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 7 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 50 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. What is the first recorded reference to the Spirit of God in the Bible? (Genesis 1. 2)
2. What other name did Jesus give to the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost)? (John 14. 26)
3. We need the Holy Spirit to lead us and teach us. Write out the words in Luke 11. 13 in which Jesus encourages us to ask for Him.
4. "He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb." Who was this referring to? (Luke 1. 13-15)
5. One work of the Holy Spirit is the inspiration of the Scripture. Write out the words in 2 Peter 1. 21 which state this clearly.
6. Where do we read the Holy Spirit led the Lord Jesus and why was He led there? (Matthew 4. 1, Hebrews 2. 17, 18)
7. Another work of the Holy Spirit is mentioned in John 16. 13: "He will show you things to come." Who was shown "things to come" in Luke 2 and what was he shown?

8. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities." Why do we need His help and how does He give it? (Romans 8)
9. The Holy Spirit anoints men to preach the Gospel. Who is thus referred to in Luke 4 and Acts 13 as being sent to preach?
10. Of whom was it written, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?"

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. "And God..."
2. They sewed fig leaves together to make themselves aprons.
3. Coats of skins.
4. Thorns and thistles.
5. "Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."
6. God sent the flood because "GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Genesis 6. 5)
7. Enoch and Noah. (Genesis 5.22 and 6. 9)
8. "The fountains of the great deep." "The windows of heaven." (Genesis 7. 11)
9. Methuselah. (Genesis 5. 25-32 and 7. 6)
10. "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." (Luke 17:26-27 or Matthew 24. 37-38)

Contributed

"HE SHALL ... GATHER THE LAMBS IN HIS ARMS"

See the kind Shepherd, Jesus, stands
With all-engaging charms;
Hark! how He calls the tender lambs,
And folds them in His arms!

"Permit them to approach," He cries,
"Nor scorn their humble name;
It was to bless such souls as these
The Lord of angels came."

He leads them to the heavenly stream
Where living waters flow;
And guides them to the fruitful fields
Where trees of knowledge grow.

The feeblest lamb amidst the flock
Shall be its Shepherd's care:
While folded in the Saviour's arms,
It's safe from every snare.

Oh, am I then a bleating lamb?
In secret do I cry
For pardon to the Lamb of God,
Who did on Calvary die?

P. Doddridge

LIST OF NAMES

The following young people have answered questions during the months July to December 2008. The total number is 281, for which we would thank God. May the Lord bless you each with the saving knowledge of the truths you have searched.

Maia and Harry Aldridge; Tom Aldridge; Anthony Ashby; Naomi Aston.

Alasdair Bailey; Sarah Ball; Joseph, Mary and Samuel Banfield; Josiah and Noah Barker; Benjamin and William Bos; Abigail, Daniel, Joanna and Nathan Broome; Phebe Burden; Jonathan and Nicolas Burton; Sophie Buss.

Bethany, Elizabeth and Victoria Chapman; Mark Chapman; Christopher Christie; Matthew Cooper; Lucy, Ruth and Samuel Cooper; Alice, Charlotte and William Cottingham; Annie, Lucy and Miriam Cottingham; Michael Cottingham; Emma and Jessica Cottington; Jacob and Zach Cottington; Abigail, Hannah, James and Sarah Crowter; Annabel, Elsie and Kate Crowter.

Esther and Louise Dadswell; Henry, Joanna, Jonathan, Marlene, Nicholas and Peter De Vogel.

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

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

Jacqueline and James Hallier; James Hanks; Eleanor, George and Jonathan Hare; Emily and Thomas Hart; Benjamin and Suzanna Hayden; Cornelia, Joseph, Joshua, Luke and Nathanael Hayden; Andrew, Marcus and Susanna Hickman; Benjamin, Heidi and Thomas Hickman; George Hickman; Henry and Sophie Hook; Eleanor Hope; Joseph Hydon.

Abigail and Joshua Izzard.

Emily Janes; Henry Johnson.

Helen, Joshua and Marianne Kerley; James, Rebecca, and William Kerley; John and Thomas Kerley; Edward, Matthew, Naomi and Samuel Kingham; Jennifer and Stephen Kingham.

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

Hannah McNaghten; Claudia and Florence Mercer; James and Julia Mercer.
Amy Northern.

Anna, Jonathan, Rebekah and Simeon Pack; Rachel and Susanna Pack; Joseph, Matthew, Priscilla, Rebecca, Robert, and Sarah Parish; Ruth Payne; Elisabeth and John Pickles; Heidi, James, Joseph and Katie Playfoot; Naomi and Robert Pocock; Esther, Lukas and Martine Pont; Nathan Pont.

Emily Ramsbottom; Jessica and Oliver Raymond; Alexander and Oliver Rayner; Matthew and Nathan Rayner; James Rice; Susanna Risbridger; Freddie and Harry Rokison.

Chloe and John Sadler; Jessica, Rosanna and Timothy Salkeld; Charles and Emily Saunders; Ethan and Samuel Saunders; Jasmine Saunders; Joseph and Stephanie Saunders; Clementine and Maria Sayers; Philippa Sayers; Jessica Seymour; Emma, Kate and Matthew Stearn; Alexander, Emma and Jessica Stevens; Ellen and Rebekah Suckling.

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

Joanna, Natalie and Thomas Warboys; Beth Wigley; Emma and Joshua Wigley; Abigail, Bethany and Charlotte Wilderspin; Bethany, Cordelia, Francesca, Gad, Jemima, Kitty and Nathanael Wiltshire; Joanna, Matthew, Susie and Thomas Wiltshire; Jeremy Winkley; Benjamin, Jessica, Louise, Timothy and Thomas Woodhams; Edwin, Hannah, Joseph, Kate, Lucy and Matthias Woodhams; Chloe and Lucy Woods.

Overseas Names:

Evan and Karina Baum; Calvin, Dennis and Kira Glass; Katelyn Kamp; Caleb, Elisabeth and Isaac Knol; Jeff Legemaat; Hannah Linna; Kelly, Matthew and Thomas Mills; Paul Nowlan; Caleb, Danielle, Kelsey and Megan Oudshoorn; Emily and Jonathan Quist; John. Luke and Sandra Seymour; Nathaniel TenBroeke; Abigail, Bethany, Kaitlyn and Michaela Teunissen; Jessica Toogood; Arlicia and Marilene Van de Munt; Amanda, Dena, Jacob, Julie and Steven Van Gemert; Savannah Van Oort; Benjamin and John Van Vugt; Cody and Dylan White; Aaron, Andrew, Carolyn, Jonathan, Kristina, Lydia, Natalie and Nathan Ymker.

The Friendly Companion



“They ... led Him out to crucify Him.”
(Mark 15. 20)

April 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

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

Volume 135

April 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	75
Our Front Cover Picture	76
Marine Cuisine	77
For The Very Little Ones: Jesus Came For Sinners	78
Colouring Text: Luke 15. 2.	79
Bible Lessons: The Money In The Fish's Mouth	80
A Boy From Stavenisse	82
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XVI)	84
Editor's Postbag	85
God Uses Little Things	86
"Father, Forgive Them."	87
Commanding Rhyme	87
"The Heart Is Deceitful Above All Things"	88
Israel (IV)	88
Conquering Grace	91
Lying Slander	91
Bible Study For The Older Ones: The Epistles	
The Epistle To The Romans (IV)	92
Bible Questions: Soldiers And Warfare	94
Poetry: "O, Think Of The Lamb, Who On Calvary Died"	96

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

One of the lessons which you are, no doubt, taught by your parents and your teachers, is that we ought to give attention to detail. Often in what might seem to be an unimportant detail, a very important lesson is contained. We have a very wonderful example of this in the accounts given in the gospels of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead.

In John 20. 6, 7 we read these words: *"Then cometh Simon Peter following ..., and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself."*

Why does the Scripture mention the napkin so specifically?

Firstly, it is to tell us that the resurrection of Christ was completely orderly as is every work of God.

But, young people, the customs of Eastern lands perhaps teach us another lesson which in our countries we would miss. If a master was having dinner and got up to leave the table for some reason, his servant would watch to see what he did with his napkin (or serviette). If he neatly folded it up and left it by his plate then the servant would know that he would return. If, however, he left it carelessly by his plate, the servant would know that he was not coming back and had finished his meal.

So it is suggested by those who understand Eastern customs that the Lord Jesus Christ, in folding His napkin so carefully, was leaving a message that He would one day return to this earth, which we know He will do at the end of time when heaven and earth shall pass away, but not His words!

When He does return it will be in the same body in which He lay in the tomb, and the same Jesus who hung upon the cross bleeding and dying for sinners.

*"There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin.
He only could unlock the door
Of heaven and let His people in."*

May we be found among them.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture of the gate on our front cover this month, is to be found in Jerusalem. In ancient cities, gates were an important part of city life as they were the only points of access. They were manned by watchmen who guarded the entrance from unwelcome intruders and who kept them closed at night. Probably one of the reasons why Paul was let down the wall by a basket one night, was because the gates would have been shut and watched by his enemies at that time. The gates of the cities of refuge, by contrast, were to be kept open night and day so that a fugitive would never be denied the safety within the city.

Also gates were often a meeting place where important transactions took place. Boaz concluded the marriage arrangements for Ruth at a gate of Bethlehem. It can rightly be said that the greatest of all transactions which have ever taken place in the history of this world, took place outside a gate of Jerusalem. It was outside the gate that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered for the sins of many, and paid the ransom price of His own blood to set them free from the curse of the broken Law of God. Hebrews 13 tells us: *"Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without (outside) the gate."*

Those who are blessed with faith in this greatest of all transactions are commanded to go outside of the camp: meaning that they are to leave behind the false pleasures of this world, and not trust in any other hope but in the Lord Jesus Christ who *"endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

Editor

MARINE CUISINE

Dolphins display chef skills to prepare food

Dolphins are the chefs of the seas, removing the bone and ink from cuttlefish so that they are soft enough to eat, scientists claimed.

Researchers repeatedly observed a wild female Indo-Pacific bottle-nosed dolphin herding cuttlefish out of algal weed and on to a sandy patch of sea floor in the Spencer Gulf, in South Australia.

She then pinned the fish with her snout while standing on her head, before killing it with a downward thrust and “loud click,” which divers heard as the bone broke.

The dolphin then beat the dead fish with her nose to drain its toxic black ink. Finally, she scraped it on the sand to remove the cuttlebone, making the fish soft for eating.

Tom Tregenza, from the University of Exeter and the study's co-author, said the behaviour seen between 2003 and 2007 was likely to be common.

“It is a clever way to get pure calamari without the horrible bits,” said Mark Norman, the curator of molluscs at Melbourne’s Museum Victoria.

Daily Telegraph 07.02.09

Here is another wonderful example of God's goodness in giving these intelligent creatures the wisdom to survive in this way.

Editor

QUESTION: How does Christ execute the office of a priest?

ANSWER: Christ executes the office of a priest in His once offering up of Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and to reconcile the elect unto God, and in making continual intercession for them.

Isaiah 53. 6-11; Romans 8. 34; 2 Corinthians 5. 19-21;

Hebrews 2. 17 and 7. 25 and 9. 28

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**JESUS CAME FOR SINNERS**

The men who collected taxes were called publicans. They often made people pay too much and kept the extra money for themselves. The Jews hated publicans and called them sinners.

One day Jesus saw a publican, named Matthew, sitting at a table to receive taxes. Jesus said to him: *"Follow Me."* At once he left all, rose up, and followed Jesus. Then Matthew made a great feast for Jesus in his home. Many other publicans and sinners came and sat down with them. How eager they were to hear the words of Jesus!

The Jews were amazed to see Jesus eating with publicans and sinners; but He was not ashamed to sit down with them. He came to seek and to save sinners. Jesus said: *"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."*

Matthew (also called Levi) was chosen by Jesus as one of His twelve disciples. He wrote the gospel of Matthew.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the Jews call publicans?
2. What did Jesus say to Matthew?
3. Whom did Jesus say He came to call? (3 words)

Please 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 lamb.
2. The blood.
3. "Behold the Lamb of God".

Contributed

*“This Man
receiveth
sinners,
and
eateth
with them.”
Luke 15. 2.*

BIBLE LESSONS

THE MONEY IN THE FISH'S MOUTH

Leaving Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus and His disciples returned to the region of Galilee. There were no multitudes following this time, as He did not want anyone to know He was there. Jesus wished to be alone with His disciples, so they would not be distracted from what He was telling them. Once again He told them about His death.

How gently He spoke, telling them: *"The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise the third day."* They could not understand what their Master was saying, but they were afraid to ask Him to explain it further. They were still hoping that one day He would receive an earthly crown and reign over their nation like David and Solomon did.

When they arrived in the city of Capernaum, an officer of the temple came to Peter and asked him: *"Doth not your Master pay tribute?"* The tribute was like a tax and was used for the upkeep of the temple. Every man who was twenty years of age and older was expected to pay a small tribute every year. Peter answered: "Yes," but he had not given much thought to the question.

When he entered the house where Jesus was, the Lord asked him: *"Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?"* This was an easy question to answer. Peter quickly said: *"Of strangers."* Jesus answered: *"Then are the children free."* What did Jesus mean? He was teaching His disciples that the temple was His Father's house. Thus, He was not required to pay the tribute money. Yet, lest it would cause offence, Jesus said that He would pay the tribute money. But where would He get the money to pay the tribute? He sent Peter to the sea, to cast a hook. He was told to look in the mouth of the first fish he caught. You will remember that Peter was a fisherman; so to go fishing was a common thing to him. Quickly, he caught a fish. When Peter opened its mouth, he found a piece of money. It was enough to pay the tribute for Jesus and himself.

After the tax money had been paid, the disciples gathered with Jesus in the house where He was staying. Jesus asked them what they had discussed among themselves on the journey to Capernaum. The disciples became very silent. Perhaps they could hardly lift up their eyes; just like you and me, when we have done something wrong and are found out. The disciples had been quick to speak while walking along the way. Now they were too ashamed to answer the Lord. What had they talked about? Sadly, they were debating which of them would be the greatest. They had been talking about their positions in the kingdom, while Jesus had been talking about His death. Jesus told them: *"If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all."*

But Jesus had further teaching for them. He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. What a wonderful thing that the Lord does not despise little ones! He said to the disciples: *"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."*

What an effect His lesson had on the disciples! In later years, when the disciple John wrote his epistles, he called the believers *"LITTLE CHILDREN."*

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 17 verses 22 to 27 and chapter 18 verses 1 to 6, Mark chapter 9 verses 30 to 43, and Luke chapter 9 verses 43 to 50.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jesus say would happen on the third day after His death?
2. Why did Jesus not have to pay tribute?
3. What did Peter find in the fish's mouth?
4. What were the disciples talking about along the way?
5. Whom did Jesus set in the midst of them?

Please 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. The Scribes.
2. The devil.
3. "If Thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us."
4. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."
5. "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

G. L. TenBroeke

A BOY FROM STAVENISSE**Chapter 16: To The Captain Again**

"Private Potappel!"

The shouts come from outside. He is startled. They are looking for him and he is not busy polishing! He quickly grabs his polishing box and runs outside. The same soldier who brought him to the captain this morning, is waiting for him. He points to him.

"You there, Private Potappel, the captain wants you to come to him immediately."

The other soldiers look on curiously. They lower their guns and polishing rags and stare at Leen. "Well now, what are you getting into?" Jan asks mockingly.

"Now you will be hung on the gallows, my boy. That is the best punishment for you," another says laughingly.

The entire group laughs about the lame joke.

Leen follows the soldier silently, full of the love of Christ. Who can separate him from that? No soldier, no captains, even if there were a hundred. He quietly enters the room again. The captain is sitting behind his desk. Leen almost cannot believe his eyes. What has happened to the man? His stern face is now friendly. He invites Leen to take a chair.

"Sit down, Private, I want to talk with you."

This is not the same roaring lion of a half-an-hour ago. The lion has become a lamb.

"Potappel, I want you to fully and thoroughly explain why

you get so upset when people curse. I want to hear this from you. There must be a reason for this." He nods at Leen.

Leen first has to get over his amazement. Then joy vibrates through him. God has cared for His own honour. What happiness! "Lord, give me words to speak," he begs silently.

"Does the Captain have a father?" he asks carefully.

"No," replies the captain. "He died years ago."

"If you loved your father very much, what would you think when they mocked or reviled his good name?"

The captain did not have to think long about that. "I would get very angry; I would not be able to stand that."

Leen nods. "That is how it also is with cursing. Through Christ, God in heaven has become my heavenly Father. It hurts me very deeply and sorely when I hear His name reviled. Then I must say something about it."

The captain silently looks at him a long time. The simple boy with his honest words impresses him deeply. "Private Potappel, I have understood you. You may go."

Leen returns to the soldiers with a light heart. They have put away the polishing stuff and have begun cleaning the horse stables. Leen patiently lets their teasing flow over him. He actually does not even properly realise what they are saying. His heart is filled with thankfulness.

A little later he starts when he sees the captain approaching. He diligently loads the manure from the stall on to his wheelbarrow. The captain has to see that he is a hard worker. He must not find a reason to criticise his behaviour.

The captain marches inside and has all the non-commissioned officers called in. He commands that they may no longer tease Potappel by cursing. "I have questioned him. The cursing has to do with his religion. That is an honourable cause. No more cursing from now on." He sternly looks around the circle. He will not tolerate being contradicted.

(To be continued)

(Slightly adapted)

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XVI)**Sanctuary**

We previously looked at the word “sanctify.” In Old Testament times, when He commanded the worship of the tabernacle, God promised that the tabernacle shall “be sanctified by My glory.” That is, God promised His presence, and it was His presence alone that sanctified it. The Lord went on to say: “I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to Me in the priest’s office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.”

The tabernacle is often called the sanctuary, particularly in the Psalms and in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It was a place sanctified, that is, set apart for holy use. Our chapels are set apart for worship and should not be used for other things. Of themselves they are just a building of bricks, stone, etc, but it is only the presence of the Lord that can sanctify them and make them a sanctuary.

We have sanctuaries, or places set apart: for example, for the welfare of animals or birds. The sanctuary is a place of safety for them, and a place suitable to their needs, where they receive shelter and food. Perhaps the animals live there permanently or it is a place where they can rest while they migrate. In a similar, but more glorious way, the sanctuary is a place of spiritual provision for the Lord’s people. The Old Testament sanctuary represented the provision that the Lord Jesus is for His people.

The Lord provided a temple for His ancient people, and they were to worship Him in it according to God’s Holy Word. There were sacrifices and offerings to be attended to. It was right for those things to be attended to, being the Lord’s provision for Old Testament times. However, it was the outward form only and the mere keeping of those ordinances did not save. Paul says they could “never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.” Faith was required to look to God’s

provision of His dear Son whom He would send. It is the same today: it is good and right to gather together for worship: we should not forsake “the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is,” but without faith in Christ, the worship is vain.

When the children of Israel were brought into captivity because of their sins, they were deprived of the provision of the temple. Yet even in captivity, the Lord made the provision of a sanctuary – none other than Himself. Hear His faithful word to His sinful people: “Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.”

The Lord’s people did not need to be found in the temple at Jerusalem to prove the benefit and provision of the sanctuary, for God Himself was their provision. He was their refuge, and He sustained them spiritually. Today, the Lord’s people are sometimes unable to meet together, perhaps because of affliction, but they prove from time to time the sanctuary of the Lord’s presence where they are.

We sometimes refer to our chapels as sanctuaries. We should be thankful for them, as many of the Lord’s people do not have a place for worship in which to meet. We have a great privilege which we should prize. But we need more than the building and outward worship if we are to know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Sanctuary. We need the Lord’s gracious presence. We need Him to be revealed to us as our place of safety and we need to be given faith to feed upon Him spiritually.

May we each prove the Lord’s presence as we are enabled to meet around His Word.

Contributed

EDITOR’S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from KATY COTTINGHAM, ROSALIE HICKMAN and ABIGAIL WOODHAMS.

GOD USES LITTLE THINGS

As all creation belongs to God, it does not matter to Him whether He uses great or small things to fulfil His purposes. Elijah was fed by ravens, and only five loaves and two fishes were used by the Lord Jesus to feed five thousand people. Lest we should think that God has ceased to work miracles in these ways when it is needed, the following account in the life of David Brainerd, the missionary to the American Indians, will prove that the day of miracles is not passed.

David Brainerd was sent by God during the eighteenth century on this dangerous mission field. On one occasion, whilst he was travelling to visit a nearby tribe, a severe storm blew up, making it impossible for him to continue on his journey. Realising that he needed a place of shelter, he found a large tree which was hollow at the base and into which there was just enough room for him to crawl and escape the full force of the tempest.

As this storm continued many hours, he became very hungry, but what was he to do? To move on was impossible. The only remedy, which was indeed the best one in these circumstances, was to pray that in some way God would provide him a meal.

After some while of waiting and praying, a little squirrel came into the hollow and left a pile of nuts, which, when the squirrel had gone, he gratefully took into his hand, and after giving thanks to God for this unexpected meal, he filled his hungry stomach. This was repeated for three days in succession, until eventually the rain stopped and he was able to go on.

David Brainerd wrote in the diary which he kept, that it was an encouragement to him to carry on visiting these Indian tribes, when like Elijah he proved: "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

Never limit the power and ability of God to provide for those who seek His face.

“He lions and ravens came tame.
 All creatures obey His command.
 Then let us rejoice in His name,
 And leave all our cares in His hand.” *J. Newton*

Editor

“FATHER, FORGIVE THEM”

A young man, feeling very sore and angry, once visited Robert Moxon of Bury. Mr. Moxon remained silent for a while. Then rising and walking to the window as though casually observing something outside, he said: “I was once treated very badly by a man in Lancashire. I became very angry and was determined to have my revenge. While I was meditating upon some plan of vengeance, these words dropped into my heart and stopped me: ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.’” And then he repeated, very gently and lovingly, *“Forgive them; forgive them.”*

The young man was at that moment far removed from a spirit of forgiveness, but the memory of Mr Moxon’s words and tender demeanour abode with him for a long time, and he blessed God that he was at last given the spirit of forgiveness.

Fred Windridge in ‘His Great Goodness’

COMMANDING RHYME

This anonymously written verse dates back to around 1731:

Have no other god but Me,
 Unto no image bow thy knee,
 Take not the name of God in vain,
 Do not the Sabbath day profane,
 Honour thy father, and mother too,
 And see that thou no murder do.
 From vile adultery keep thou clean.
 And steal not, though thy state be mean.
 Bear not false witness – shun that blot!
 What is thy neighbour’s, covet not.

**“THE HEART IS DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND
DESPERATELY WICKED.” (Jeremiah 17. 9)**

God's Word says nothing good about the unregenerate heart. It is more deceitful and untrustworthy than anything else in creation. It is also known to be proud and fearful. In prosperity, our heart is proud and does not concern itself with God's Word, but speaks: "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice?"

Also in spiritual matters, it glories in its own strength and imagines itself to be so strong that it says with Peter: "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended." But it loses courage in times of cross (*trouble*) and affliction. When the Lord hides His face and withholds His grace, one might curse his day, as did Job.

The wicked heart has already deceived millions eternally and causes God's people much grief. He that trusts in his own heart is a fool! Reader, have you also come to know your heart as such and do you fear for what you carry about in your bosom?

Dominé Gvan Reenen
Daily Manna 1. January 13th

ISRAEL (IV)

Saturday morning at 8.00 a.m. was our time for removal to Tiberias and we set off promptly in a comfortable coach.

On looking back on this day, although we travelled many miles, to me it was a time much to be remembered. Our route took us near Lydda and the outskirts of Tel-Aviv as we made our way up the coast towards Cæsarea. It was rather misty at first, but as the sun broke and it became very warm we were glad for a stop and refreshment. During this journey we saw many large flowering trees and some fields with oranges growing. Also there were some bananas, but these had been blighted earlier on by frosts, which do occur now and again. The region of Cæsarea is very beautiful, and we drove down to

the sea adjacent to the ruins of the aqueduct. This is some eight miles long, and used to bring water to Cæsarea from springs near the Carmel range. How lovely and refreshing it was to feel the Mediterranean breezes after the hot air inland of the past few days.

Moving on a short distance, we walked into a large area quite near to the harbour. This is where the amphitheatre is, and so we all sat down whilst one of our party walked down to the front and read Psalm 23. We could hear quite clearly. Cæsar's palace was our next stop where we had a very nice lunch including St. Peter's fish. This restaurant overlooks the sea, and as it was such a warm temperature, we sat outside which made it all the more enjoyable. The harbour area has been made quite attractive with interesting shops and art galleries. Of course, Cæsarea is where Paul was taken and kept. How could he have escaped if he had wanted to? Taken by two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen (Acts 23. 23). But his Lord was greater than all that company.

We then moved on to Megiddo, passing very many fields of sunflowers. The view from the top must be very wonderful on a clear day, but as it was hazy we could not see very far. From the summit you can see the valley of Jezreel, and whilst standing on the top, we enjoyed the blow of a warm breeze. Of course, we did not know then, but it may have been a notice of what was to come when we got to Galilee. Also at Megiddo there is a very impressive water supply system which indicates that King Ahab must have had a very clever Clerk of Works.

We then went on our way passing quite near Nain and thinking of the wonderful miracle Jesus performed in raising the widow's son. Now our thoughts turned to Galilee. What great need we had to give thanks to the Lord for bringing us safely through.

Around the Sea of Galilee

As we came over the brow of the hill near Kinneret, we had our first view of the Sea of Galilee. Our driver pulled off the road, and as we got down from the coach we were instantly aware of the great heat. We could hardly believe it, but our leader explained that the hot wind was known as the mistral and only occurs a few times every year. Of course, when we speak of Galilee, this covers the area around as well as the sea.

As I looked over the sea, I tried to think of all the wonderful things and events connected with it: how when Jesus was walking one day He called Simon, Andrew, James and John; how great multitudes followed Him; how He walked on the sea to go to His disciples; how He calmed the waves with the words: "Peace, be still"; how He told Peter to take up the first fish and he would find a piece of money in its mouth; how He performed many miracles around its shore. So we could go on.

Moving off, we went down a very steep and twisting road to Deganya which is a traditional baptismal site on the river Jordan. How wonderful this was as we all sat in a group at the waters' edge. The River Jordan flows approximately sixty miles from the foot of Mount Hermon to the Dead Sea, and it falls some 3,000 ft (915 m) in that distance.

Leaving Deganya, we proceeded the few miles to Tiberias. This is quite a large city, and in parts looked very interesting. Many of the suburban streets looked attractive, being set out as boulevards, and you could sense the Middle-East atmosphere. We soon arrived at the Golan Hotel which had a very modern and stark appearance, but was very comfortable inside, and was air-conditioned. As before, when we were in Jerusalem, we had the use of a room for a meeting every evening for reading and prayer.

(To be continued)

R.H.H.

CONQUERING GRACE

Some while ago, a gamekeeper was walking through part of the estate for which he was responsible, when he heard the moaning of a dog. He turned aside and found a dog with its leg trapped in a snare. When he first tried to approach the dog to free it, he was met with snarls and vicious growls. But notwithstanding the hostile dog, he managed at length to release its leg, whereupon the dog turned and licked his face appreciatively and followed him as if it was his own dog.

What a picture is this of the effects of grace! When the Lord begins to call a sinner by His grace, the natural heart of that sinner is totally opposed to God and godliness. This is seen when the sinner says: "We will not have this Man to reign over us." But grace conquers this in the end, and by love changes 'the heart, renews the will, and turns the feet to Zion's hill.'

Editor

LYING SLANDER

Lying slander is one of the foulest sins on earth, seeking as it does to destroy man's character, injure his usefulness to others, separate him from his friends and crush him beneath an unjust burden.

Selected

"One Thing I know"

"Though words can never tell my case
Nor all my sorrows paint;
This I can say before Thy face
That Christ is all I want.

If you your lips would keep from slips,
Five things observe with care:
Of whom you speak, to whom you speak
And how, and when, and where."

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE EPISTLES****The Epistle to the Romans (IV)**

This letter in chapter 11 deals with the deep mystery of the Israelites rejecting Christ the true Messiah, and the doctrine of divine election. Through the Jews rejecting Christ, the Gentiles believed and found mercy; but the expectation is that the Jews will turn in these latter days to Christ. But all unbelievers are also rejectors before God, which things are very deep and unfathomable to our poor fallen minds and God's ways are past finding out, so it is expressed: "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Romans 11. 32-36).

From chapter 12 we have insisted that the fruits of the Spirit will be seen in the life of every true believer, as the Lord Jesus teaches us in John 15. If those fruits are not there, then God's Spirit is not there. Christian believers are in the world, but not of the world: they have a different spirit: a spirit of love and kindness to all men; a spirit of holiness which separates them from the world, not as the proud self-righteous Pharisee who despises others, but as a lover of Jesus Christ, of His Word and His commandments; a spirit of truth which makes them honest: "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4. 12-13).

The Christian believers are exhorted in chapter 13 to be subject to higher powers: that is the rulers of this world. Remember, they were heathen powers but ordained of God.

He warns against a judgmental spirit, but also not to cause a weaker brother to stumble in what we do, in chapter 14.

What a good example of Christian love and charity, when in the last chapter he names the brethren and sisters in the church. Christian love is not just a general love but very personal. The godly and learned John Calvin said of the Epistle to the Romans: "When any one gains a knowledge of this Epistle, he has an entrance opened unto him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture."

Paul spent the last two years of his life in the city of Rome preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ right at the very heart of the heathen Roman Empire. No doubt, the Christian church in Rome was edified and built up by his ministry at this time. The perversely wicked emperor, Nero Domitius AD 64, ruled at this time. If you read the Acts of the Apostles chapter 28 from verse 16, we are given a brief account of Paul's stay in Rome. When Paul writes to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy, he gives us the following account of his appearances before the Roman Emperor, Nero Domitius, whom he calls, "the lion." He speaks of his readiness for martyrdom: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Timothy 4. 6-8). Then before Nero: "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (2 Timothy 4. 16-18).

Then we are informed: "The Second Epistle unto

Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time." In Foxes Book of Martyrs we read that it is believed that the Apostle Paul was beheaded by Nero.

The Romans built an infrastructure of cities with paved roads and bridges connecting city to city throughout this vast empire. This enabled them to move men and equipment efficiently from place to place, from region to region. The Roman legionnaires were garrisoned in all the regions of the empire enabling it to be controlled from the centre. Some of these ancient Roman roads and city walls are still with us today. In the wonderful overruling providence of God, this empire with its infrastructure was being put in place when the Lord Jesus Christ was here on earth. God put this there for the swift spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the earth. The truth was no longer to be the preserve of one nation, the Jews, but the gospel was to be preached unto all nations tribes and peoples. "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16. 15). "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen" (Mark 16. 20). When sore persecution came on the church they were scattered further and further abroad and with them the sacred truths of the gospel. So once more, as he always will be, the devil was outflanked by the eternal God of grace.

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about SOLDIERS AND WARFARE. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 5 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see page 74 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Who said: "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield:" to whom was he speaking and what weapons did he use? (1 Samuel 17. 40-45)
2. Which godly king appointed singers to go in front of his army, praising the LORD? (2 Chronicles 20. 20, 21)
3. What did Aaron and Hur do when the children of Israel, under Joshua, fought Amalek in Rephidim? Why? (Exodus 17. 8-13)
4. What weapons did Gideon use in fighting against the Midianites. (Judges 7. 20)
5. Write out the verses from Psalm 118 illustrated by the events in the previous questions. They begin "It is better to..."
6. Which king of Israel prevailed against a huge army because he trusted in the LORD; then later foolishly looked to the Syrians? (2 Chronicles 16)
7. Who was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen, and why? (Ezra 8)
8. What did the Apostle Paul say that a soldier doesn't do? (2 Timothy 2)
9. Which soldiers "became as dead men" and were later given "large money" to tell a lie? (Matthew 27 & 28)
10. Several centurions are referred to in the Bible? Of only two do we know their names; what were they?

ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS

1. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."
2. The Comforter.
3. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"
4. John the Baptist.
5. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
6. Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, that knowing what temptation is He might be able to help those of His people who are tempted.

7. Simeon was told that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. (Luke 2. 25-26)
8. Because we do not know what to pray for. The Holy Spirit "maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Romans 8. 26)
9. The Lord Jesus. Paul and Barnabas. (Luke 4. 18, Acts 13. 2-4)
10. Joseph. (Gen 41. 38)

Contributed

"O, THINK OF THE LAMB, WHO ON CALVARY DIED"

Come, children, and learn of the infinite grace
Of Jesus, in coming to die;
He left His bright throne, that all-glorious place.
His beautiful home in the sky.
O think of the Lamb, who on Calvary died,
And died for such sinners as we:
The thorns on His brow, and the spear in His side,
When He suffered and bled on the tree.

Ah! Never was sorrow so bitter as this,
The anguish He suffered below:
The dear Son of God had done nothing amiss:
For others He tasted such woe.
O, think of His love, when He gave up His life,
For sinners so guilty as we;
For them 'twas He finished the conflict and strife:
'Twas for them He bled on the tree.

Dear little ones, think, is it nothing to you
The tale of His wonderful grace?
He'll come in the clouds: will you joyfully view,
Or tremble to look on His face?
O, may you be led to the Saviour who died,
And died for such sinners as we;
Find shelter from wrath in His once-riven side,
Find health in His wounds on the tree.

Unknown

The Friendly Companion



“... Let God be true, but every man a liar.”
Romans 3. 4.

May 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

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

Volume 135

May 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	99
Our Front Cover Picture	100
For The Very Little Ones: Two Men Who Prayed	102
Colouring Text: Luke 18. 13	103
Bible Lessons: Jesus Teaches A Lesson Of Forgiveness	104
A Boy From Stavenisse	106
Editor's Postbag	107
Israel (V)	108
God Is In Control	109
A Pearl Of Great Price	111
Navigation	112
What Is God?	113
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XVII)	114
Bible Study For The Older Ones: The Epistles	116
The Epistle To The Corinthians 1 & 2	
Bible Questions: Forgetting And Remembering	118
Poetry: There Are No Clocks In Hell	120

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

You will often hear the word *sacrifice* used by preachers and perhaps may wonder what its real meaning is. The following true story is a powerful illustration of *sacrifice*.

In the 15th Century (the 1400's) there was in a small hamlet near to the German city of Nuremberg, a family in which there were no less than eighteen children! The father had to work very hard at his profession as a goldsmith, and usually worked eighteen hours a day. This left him only six hours for sleep and seeing his family. As the children grew up, they realised that if they were to make their own way in the world they would need to use their own initiative, because it was certain that their father, with all his responsibilities, would not be able to set them up in life.

Two of the family, brothers Albert and Albrecht, were particularly good at art, and wanted to attend the local Art Academy in Nuremberg. How could this be done, as they had no money to pay for the course?

After much discussion, it was decided that one of them would go first to the academy, whilst the other would work down the local mine and so pay for his brother until his course was finished. Then they would reverse their roles and the first brother would go down the mine to support the other.

After some discussion it was decided that Albrecht would go first to the academy, which he did, whilst for four years Albert toiled down the mine. Albrecht was particularly gifted, especially in etching and carving of wood.

At the end of his course, which he completed with flying colours, Albrecht returned home, and was received with a warm welcome from his family and friends.

"Now," Albrecht said to Albert, "it is your turn to go and succeed at the academy, and I will go down the mine, as you have done so faithfully for all this time."

All attention was now on Albert, who slowly stood up, tears streaming down his face. "No, no, no, I cannot go to

Nuremberg. See what four years of mining have done to my hands." He held up his hands for all to see. They were sadly disfigured with arthritis and deformed through numerous rocks falling on them.

"I cannot even hold a glass, let alone a pen, or a brush to paint. No, for me it is too late!"

It is now more than 450 years ago since this moving incident took place. Albrecht Durer's artwork is still renowned. However of all his works of art, none are so well-known as "The Praying Hands," which was probably originally a sculpture, but better known as a painting copied thousands of times over.

To commemorate the sacrifice of his brother Albert, Albrecht drew the deformed and mangled hands of his brother stretching upwards, palms together. He called it: "Hands," but it very soon became known as "The Praying Hands."

This deeply moving story tells us that sacrifice is a costly matter, and yet, as in this case, the one who benefited from this act of love, never forgot his debt of love.

Of course, our minds go to the hands of the Lord Jesus, whose dear hands still bear the marks of a much greater sacrifice in heaven above. Those who are blessed with living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, will be glad to be reminded of His dying love and their debt to so great a Saviour as they read of Him in the Bible, and hear of Him in the Gospels. He said: "I lay down My life for the sheep."

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

I expect many of you will have heard of the atheist's advertisement on the London buses, which says: "*There probably is no God, so get on with your life and enjoy yourselves.*" The Trinitarian Bible Society has also now put a counter-advertisement on the buses which quotes Psalm 14. 1: "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.*" We hope this may have God's rich blessing in counteracting the folly of wicked men.

Some years ago, a minister entered a large hall where he had

been invited to speak on the subject of "God." As he was about to begin, a man rushed through the crowd and handed him a note which he supposed was an announcement to be read out.

When he opened up the piece of paper, what should he read on it, but one word: "Fool!" Despite being somewhat taken aback by this announcement, he started his address as follows: "Something has just happened which is very unusual. Someone has handed me a message which consists of one word: 'Fool!' I have often heard of those who have written letters and have forgotten to sign their names – but this is the first time I have ever heard of anyone who signed his name and forgot to write the letter! I shall therefore base my remarks this evening on the words from Psalm 14. 1: *'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.'*"

On another occasion, a famous atheist was addressing a crowd using very sophisticated arguments. He spoke for about an hour trying to convince his hearers that God does not exist. As soon as he had finished, an elderly person stood up and asked the lecturer if he could answer two questions. He readily agreed to do so. Her questions were as follows:

"Sir, I have known, loved and served God for many years. I have received great joy from His Word. He has graciously kept me from sinning on many occasions and enabled me to lead a calm and contented life. If, when I die, I after all come to learn that there is no God, can you please tell me what I have lost by believing in God?"

The large crowd fell completely silent, waiting for the answer which never came from the stunned lecturer.

After a prolonged pause, the lady asked her second question as follows: "Sir, if when you come to die, you discover that there is a God and that the Bible is true after all; can you please tell me what you will lose?"

To this there was no answer either. *"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?" Mark 8. 36, 37. (See poetry on page 120.)*

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**TWO MEN WHO PRAYED**

The Lord Jesus told a parable about two men who went to pray at the temple. One was a Pharisee and the other was a publican: despised by others.

The Pharisee gave thanks that he was not like other sinful men. He told of all the good things he had done. He did not ask God for anything. Pharisees often felt their strict life and good deeds made them better than others.

The publican stood far off and was afraid to look up. He felt his heart to be so sinful, that he hit himself upon the chest. Out of his sorrow and need, he cried: "*God be merciful to me a sinner.*"

Jesus said that the prayer of this poor publican was heard, rather than that of the Pharisee. The publican went back home with his sins forgiven. How happy he must have been!

QUESTIONS:

1. Where did the publican stand?
2. What did he feel his heart to be?
3. Was the prayer of the publican heard?

Please 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. Sinners.
2. Follow me.
3. Sinners to repentance.

Contributed

*“God be
merciful
to me a
sinner.”*

*Luke
18. 13.*

BIBLE LESSONS**JESUS TEACHES A LESSON ON FORGIVENESS**

One day, Peter came to Jesus with a very different sort of question. He asked Jesus how many times he should forgive his brother who had done him wrong. Peter wondered if it should be as many as seven times. On one occasion, Jesus had told the disciples that if a brother wronged them seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turned and repented, they were to forgive him. Perhaps he also remembered the prayer that Jesus had taught them, which had the petition: “...*and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*”

Peter could hardly believe what the Lord said in answer to his question: “*Not ... until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven*”. What Jesus was really saying, was that you must not begin to count how often or how many times. You must always forgive.

Then Jesus told His disciples a parable to show the nature of the kingdom of heaven. He told of a certain king who called his servants to give an account of their actions.

One servant was found who owed the king ten thousand talents, which was a great sum of money. When he was brought before the king, he was commanded to pay all that he owed. The servant became afraid, for he had nothing to pay with. What could he do? The king commanded that he should be sold as a slave, along with his wife and his children, and all his possessions sold to pay the debt.

The servant fell down before the king with trembling. He pleaded with the king to have patience and give him time to repay the debt. The king knew that the servant would never be able to pay the debt, for it was too great. Yet he had compassion on the poor servant. He forgave him all the debt! He did not need to pay anything! He could go out free! How happy and thankful the servant must have been.

When that servant went out from the king, he found a fellow-servant who owed him an hundred pence. That was a very small sum of money compared to ten thousand talents.

Angrily, he took him by the throat and demanded that he pay all the debt. His fellow-servant asked him to have patience with him, and he would pay his bill. Surely he would have compassion on his fellow-servant, as the king had pity on him. But no, instead, he cast his fellow servant into prison until the bill should be paid. How wicked and cruel! What an unthankful action, after all that the king had done for him!

When the king heard what the servant had done, he called for him and said: "*O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?*" The king commanded that he should be delivered to his tormentors, until he had paid all that was due.

Then Jesus said unto them: "*So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*" These words of Jesus should have sounded in their ears for the rest of their days. It should also sound in the ears of all that fear God; for the great debt of sin that God forgives them requires that they should forgive all others.

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 18 verses 21 to 35.

QUESTIONS:

1. How many times did Peter think he should forgive?
2. How many times did Jesus tell him to forgive?
3. What did the servant owe the king?
4. What did the fellow-servant owe him?
5. Did he follow the example of the king?

Please 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. He would rise.
2. Because the temple was His Father's house.
3. A piece of money.
4. Which of them would be the greatest.
5. A little child.

G.L. TenBroeke

A BOY FROM STAVENISSE**Chapter 17. The Wild Horse**

The corporal, whom Leen had warned, is angry! He walks back and forth with long strides. Oh, he is very angry. He had hoped that the captain would give the impudent soldier a heavy punishment. It turned out very differently. The captain comes to the stables himself to tell them they may no longer curse in the presence of Private Potappel because he is sincere about his religion. The corporal laughs hard and derisively. Just wait, he will get that soldier in another way. He will think up something to take revenge.

When he walks through the stable a few moments later, his eye falls upon Fleur. Fleur is the most difficult horse. Whoever takes her by the tail, is sure to receive a couple of hard kicks from the vicious horse. It is logical that the soldiers are not very fond of Fleur.

The wicked plan is soon made by the corporal. That afternoon he is standing in front of the row of soldiers. He calls out their names and the name of the horse they are to care for and ride. Leen Potappel is assigned to Fleur.

When the soldiers go to work, the corporal walks along with Leen. "This horse is not as bad as they think. You have to learn to handle her. Whenever you enter Fleur's stall, you immediately have to take hold of her tail. That puts her at ease." He immediately turns around and goes to the next soldier.

Leen opens the door of the box stall. He had been afraid of horses as a child. He did field work at Stavenisse and had never learned to handle horses. He let his glance glide over the brown horse's large hoofs. It was not a nice thought to be kicked by them. Leen carefully takes the black tail and gently pulls the animal to the side. Fleur snorts and curiously turns her head towards the soldier. The animal remains standing peacefully and allows herself to be groomed. Leen is protected by the Lord. Every day he enters Fleur's box stall, takes hold of her tail, and brushes and combs the animal.

One day a major just happened to be walking by, when Leen takes hold of Fleur's tail. The major knows about the horse's tricks and becomes very frightened. "Potappel, what are you doing now?" he asks worriedly.

Taken aback, Leen looks over his shoulder. Is he doing something wrong?

"Do you enter the stall just like that?"

Leen does not understand the question. "I'm going to groom the horse, Major."

"Groom the horse? Does she allow you to do that?"

"The corporal explained to me that Fleur will not do anything nasty if I first take hold of her tail. That is what I always do."

Speechlessly, the major looks from the horse to the soldier. A light goes on in his brain. Something is wrong here. Everyone, and certainly the corporal, knows that Fleur cannot be trusted. He is aware that Fleur will kick as soon as you take hold of her tail. New soldiers do not know this and must be warned about this horse's tricks.

Without a word, the major turns around and leaves the stables, looking for the corporal. He will question and punish him. That punishment will be severe. He asks himself how it is possible that soldier Potappel was not yet lying, kicked to death in a corner of the stall. There must be something special about the soldier!

(To be continued)

Slightly adapted

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **BENJAMIN MAIN**; **OWEN RAYNER** and **CHLOE SEYMOUR**.

Well done! to all those who sent an answer to the extra questions asked in the March *Friendly Companion*: "Who slew a lion on a snowy day?" (The answer is Benaiah in 2 Samuel 23. 20); and which letter is missing from the text Ezra 7. 21? (The answer is J).

ISRAEL (V)

On the Lord's Day we were able to have a service in the YMCA chapel by the lakeside. It was very hot, and when the service was over, we walked a short way down to the edge of the sea. We also saw the supposed site where Jesus sat in the boat and taught all the people who were sitting on the land.

As we did not wish to go "sightseeing," as it were, on a Lord's Day afternoon, we arranged a meeting in one of our rooms. Furniture was re-arranged so that the seating was not too cramped. Two of our brethren each spoke for a few minutes. After dinner, we all went to the end of the hotel garden and sang some hymns until the batteries had expired in the torches.

As you look at Tiberias there are many buildings which reflect many different religions, just the same as in Jerusalem.

Starting off on Monday morning, our leader reminded us that the whole area of Galilee was rich with connections of the Lord Jesus, and how we did prove this in the places that we visited. The Sea of Galilee (or Sea of Chinnereth or Sea of Tiberias or Lake Gennesaret) is fed by many springs and, of course, the River Jordan whose main source is at Cæsarea Philippi. The lake is about twelve miles long by eight miles wide, and abounds with fish. It is about 689ft below sea level and the climate is very warm generally. So we proceeded along the lakeside road towards the Mount of Beatitudes and I thought: 'What a nice way to spend a Monday morning.' The scenery was very beautiful and interesting. Soon we turned off the road to approach the church which is of octagonal design. What a wonderful experience it was to be there, as we read part of Matthew chapter 5. We read that great multitudes had followed Jesus, but now He had His own disciples with Him, and when He was ready, He spake to them and taught them. We spent a little time here and enjoyed the wonderful view over the Sea of Galilee. Moving on, we went to Tabgha, supposed site of the feeding of the five thousand. This is another very lovely place with magnificent flowering trees. Of

course, with both these places, as with many others, the significance is of far greater importance than the location. We must remember that those that ate were five thousand besides women and children.

Quite near to this is the Chapel of the Primacy which stands to commemorate the appearance of Jesus to His disciples after the resurrection, and where He said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?"

After this we moved on to Nazareth, which to me appeared very busy and not very attractive. From here we went to Mount Tabor where the coach stopped part of the way up, and the summit was then reached by a hair-raising ride in a taxi. However, we all were safely brought down again, for which we were thankful.

(To be concluded)

R.H.H.

GOD IS IN CONTROL!

One of the most cruel people to have ever reigned in England, was Mary 1st. She was so determined to stamp out Protestantism, that she sent many of her subjects to the stake where young and old alike were burnt to death. Not content with cruelly persecuting believers in England, she determined that Ireland, which also was ruled by her at that time, should be subject to the same inhumanity. She authorised a man named Dr. Cole to personally carry her written orders to the governors of Ireland, whom she fully expected to fulfil her wishes.

His way to the ferry for Ireland, lay through the ancient city of Chester, where Dr. Cole stopped and paid a visit to the mayor of Chester. Very foolishly for him, he boasted to the mayor that he carried in his luggage the Queen's commission to persecute the Irish Protestants. Waving a leather box which he had taken from his suitcase, he said: "Here is a commission from the Queen which will lash all the heretics in Ireland!" (Of

course, to him Protestants were heretics.)

In the wonderful providence of God, he was overheard by the wife of the mayor, who had a secret sympathy for the much-maligned Protestants. In fact, her own brother was one of their leaders in Dublin.

Waiting her opportunity, whilst her husband was showing the important visitor around his gardens, his wife quickly searched the suitcase for the leather box, opened it, removed the fateful commission, and replaced it with a pack of cards which had been hastily wrapped in paper. (We cannot excuse her for keeping a pack of playing cards in her house, but sometimes God uses strange means to accomplish His purposes.) The unsuspecting visitor was soon on his way again, and having crossed the Irish Sea by boat, he made his way to the Lord Deputy in his castle at Dublin. After introducing himself to the Deputy, he proceeded to explain the purpose of his visit. Taking the leather box out of his case, he opened it, and asked his secretary to read the contents! Imagine his confusion and shock, and of all those who looked on, when instead of a Royal Commission, they saw a pack of playing cards!

When the initial shock had subsided, it was decided that another commission must be obtained. So Dr. Cole set out to return to England and the Queen. Whatever would she say?

Not for the first time in the history of His people, God used the weather in His cause. Storms blew up in the Irish Sea which prevented Dr. Cole from returning. Whilst he waited for better weather, tidings reached him that Mary had died.

So the hand of persecution was stayed for the present, as Queen Elizabeth 1st took the throne.

It is said that she got to hear of what the mayor's wife had done, and was so impressed that she had the story published. The mayor's wife received a royal pension for the rest of her life.

Editor

A PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

A dealer in diamonds was sending a valuable consignment of jewels to an Indian customer. He carefully wrapped each diamond separately, but ran out of wrapping material for the last one. So he dipped into his waste paper basket and wrapped the remaining diamond with the first piece of paper he laid hold on. Sadly, this was a torn page of a Bible which had been deliberately thrown away.

Some time later, the consignment reached the Indian customer. With great care and increasing delight, he unwrapped each diamond, until he came to the one which had been wrapped differently. Carefully unwrapping this last one, his attention caught the words on the wrapping paper. They were these well-known words: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

These words were to prove far more precious to him than the total value of all the diamonds in his possession. God, the Holy Spirit, used them to open his eyes to the need of a Saviour, and directed him to the Lord Jesus Christ, where he found salvation. The great change which this wrought in his life was soon apparent so that others began to enquire and in the great mercy of God, a church of believers was established.

When some years later a missionary arrived in that part of India, expecting to find blind heathendom among the people, to his amazement he found that God had indeed gone before him, and without human agency, wrought a mighty work of salvation in many Indian hearts and lives.

The man who first received the gospel in this way, would have understood the man who the Lord Jesus speaks of, who found a pearl of great price.

I wonder how many of our readers have found it, too?

Editor

God may be reconciled to the sinner, but not to the sin.

Charnock

NAVIGATION

One of the advances of science which we see today, is in the field of navigation. For many people who are going on a car journey, instead of studying a map, they switch on their Satellite Navigation System. I expect you know that a small map appears on a screen, and a voice tells the driver what to do and what turnings to make. But all this takes away the excitement of getting out the road atlas and planning our journey to, perhaps, our holiday destination. On ships at sea, instead of studying charts and the stars, the sailors can use what is known as the Global Positioning System (GPS), so that even in the middle of one of the great oceans of the world, a ship can know its exact position down to a remarkably small area.

Maybe at school you are being taught to read an Ordnance Survey Map. What interesting maps these are, with all their accurate detail! But supposing these were not accurate? If we were going on a long walk in the countryside and across the fields using public footpaths in an area we did not know, and took a turn in the wrong direction because the map was faulty, we could become hopelessly lost.

Do not these thoughts take our minds to the journey of life? Everybody on the face of the earth is on a journey; some by God's grace and mercy, to the Celestial City, which we call heaven; but for those who are left to despise God and His ways, they travel to a lost eternity, to a place the Bible calls the pit.

How then is the wanderer in this world to know his way? For each one of us, the first thing is to know ourselves as lost and wandering. There are many people who we meet in the world, who would say just the opposite. Many people have had their ideas and plans, but the Bible says: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." So, the end for those who follow that way is very sad indeed.

In Luke 11. 31, we are told of the queen of the south, who was, of course, the Queen of Sheba. She came many hundreds

of miles to hear King Solomon's wisdom. I wonder if those accompanying her had a map, or whether like the sailors, they used the stars to guide them? But it is the final part of verse 31 I would ask you to consider: "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

The people in Israel at the time the Lord Jesus was here upon earth, had the Son of God with them, preaching and doing all those wonderful works we read about, and at the end of His earthly life going to Calvary and shedding His precious blood for sinners. Yet the Scriptures record that most of the people either just wondered, or mocked or ignored Him. But there were those who looked for the coming Messiah, and there were those who the Bible calls His sheep. We think of Martha, who received Jesus into her house (Luke 10. 38); the lepers and blind and sick folk – often they cried out: "Thou art the Son of God."

My dear readers, it is the prayer, I am sure of those of the Lord's people who know you, that the Lord would guide you in His ways; that you will know for yourselves the One who is "greater than Solomon." "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Thy servant; for I do not forget Thy commandments" (Psalm 119. 176).

Contributed

WHAT IS GOD?

A king of the ancient kingdom of Syracuse once asked one of his wisest men, Simondes, the question: "What is God?" He asked for a day to think over his answer. But the next day he returned and asked for an extension of two more days, and then four more days and eventually eight more days!

The king was getting rather exasperated and impatiently asked why he needed so much time: to which the wise man replied: "The more I think of God, the more I realise how little I know of Him!"

Perhaps this man knew what Job said: "*Lo these are parts of His ways: but how little a portion is heard of Him?*" Job 26. 14.

Editor

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XVII)**Saint**

We have previously considered the word “sanctify.” The word “saint” comes from the same origin. Sadly it is a word that is often used wrongly. Your dictionary may describe saints as those who have died and have won a high place in heaven. It may say that this is because they lived an exceptionally holy life: perhaps they did something miraculous. It may go on to say that because of the special things that they have done, they have been chosen as saints. There is no basis for such a meaning in Scripture. It is one of many errors put forward by the Roman Catholic system, and increasingly adopted by others.

As always, the best definitions are found within the Word of God itself. In the first place, it is clear from the Bible that the word “saint” does not only refer to God’s people in heaven. In the sixteenth Psalm, David refers to the saints that are in the earth. We read in the Acts of the Apostles of Peter going “down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda.” In Romans 15 we find that “them of Macedonia and Achaia” made “a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.”

When Paul writes to the churches, he refers to them as saints. To take the first two examples: Paul refers to the Romans as “beloved of God, called to be saints” (Romans 1. 7) and in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul describes them as “sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints” (1 Corinthians 1. 2). Notice in both cases that something comes before being called to be saints.

These saints are beloved of God. That means: they belong to God, they are His. The saints are those upon whom God has set His love. God set His love upon them before time began, and chose them before they had done either good or evil. So it was not their doings that caused them to be saints. Neither has it anything to do with the choice of man, since the saints were chosen before man was upon the earth. It is because of the eternal love of God, that they are called.

The saints are sanctified in Christ Jesus, meaning they are set apart in Him. The Lord's people are set apart, by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Firstly, as we have referred to, they were set apart from the rest of mankind as they were loved of God the Father and chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Secondly, they were also sanctified when the Lord Jesus died for them, to save them from their sin. In God's sight, they were set apart from their sin and brought unto God; Paul says that: "He sanctified them with His own blood" (Hebrews 13. 12).

These two works: the eternal choice of God and the death of Christ have already taken place. By contrast, the sanctification of the Spirit is a present work. The saints are called by God the Holy Spirit, who sets them apart by quickening them and calling them out of darkness into light. It is God's calling and not man's. Paul says they are "partakers of the heavenly calling." The Holy Spirit's work is a continual work to teach His people of their sin: that they cannot keep the holy law of God, and of their need to be sanctified. They are brought to hate their sins and are made willing to be set apart from them, but increasingly find that sin is a plague to them, and they cannot improve themselves. The Holy Spirit teaches them that it is God's work to sanctify them. He shows them the one place of sanctifying, is the perfect sacrifice of Christ, and confirms that Christ died for them. Peter describes this experience as "sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." This is to be one of the "saints in Christ Jesus" and to be taught to "cease from your own works bad or good and wash your garments in His blood."

Although in God's sight the saints have been separated from their sin, a day will come when the saints of God will in experience be separated from their sin. That is the day of their death, when they shall enter into the inheritance of the saints in light.

Contributed

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE EPISTLES****The Epistles to the Corinthians 1 & 2**

Corinth was one of the principal cities of Greece in the region known as Achaia, a busy thriving seaport and a very wealthy trading city. There were two sea ports, one on the west side called Lechaeum, the other on the south east side called Cenchrea. The ships from Lechaeum served the west and those from Cenchrea served Asia to the east. As is usual with wealthy, thriving places we see the corruptions of human nature made manifest. To be called a "Corinthian woman" was a byword for an immoral woman. It was to this wicked, wealthy, heathen city that the Apostle Paul was sent. Here he worked as a tentmaker with Aquila and Priscilla. As was his usual practice, he began teaching and preaching Christ in the synagogues. In Acts 18 we are informed: "And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them" (Acts 18. 6-11). No city, no town, no village is too wicked for the gospel of God's grace. The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.

The Second Epistle was written about a year after the first. In these letters, Paul seeks to correct some of the errors and deal with some of the problems among the brethren at Corinth. The majority of believers at Corinth appear to have been Gentiles. He instructs them to withdraw the privilege of

church membership from a member who had a relationship with a woman exceptionally wicked, saying that this sort of behaviour was not even tolerated among the heathen. In the Second Epistle he instructs them to take this man back into membership as he had truly repented of his sin and was very sorry for his indiscretion. He also corrected them on the improper way they kept the Lord's supper, turning it into a drunken feast. One of the serious problems causing dissension in this church was the following of certain ministers. This has always tended to be a problem in the churches: "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Corinthians 1. 12-13). To rectify this problem, he directs them to Christ in the following well-known Scriptures: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1. 23-24). "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2. 2). "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3. 11).

Paul also deals with the doctrine of marriage in chapter 7 of the First Epistle. He instructs them to continue to live with an unbelieving husband or wife as by their consistent Christian living they may save their partner. He also stands firm on the sanctity of the married state: they were not permitted to separate and marry another. "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).

In chapter 11. Paul deals with dress and hair. He states very clearly that a Christian woman should have long hair and a

Christian man should have short hair. In the house of God men should not wear a head covering, but a woman should. In western tradition, women wear skirts or dresses; men wear trousers. We are instructed to continue with the distinct separation of dress between men and women. In Deuteronomy, we are instructed from a moral and not a ceremonial point of view, that this distinction is to be maintained. We do not follow the ceremonial law but we do follow the moral distinctions in the law. "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). We live again in a day when we are told there is nothing wrong with cross-dressing, such as men wearing skirts, women wearing trousers. Let us as Bible-believing Christians maintain these Scriptural standards.

(To be continued)

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

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

1. Who did not "remember Joseph, but forgat him"? (Genesis 40. 23)
2. Which of the Ten Commandments begins with "Remember..."? (Exodus 20. 8)
3. Who prayed, "Lord, remember me..." when he was dying? (Luke 23. 42)
4. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" What was God's answer to this question? (Isaiah 49. 15)
5. What does Solomon say children and young people should

- remember? (Ecclesiastes 12. 1)
6. What had the disciples forgotten to take with them, which caused them to misunderstand Jesus' words, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees..." (Mark 8)
 7. Paul says, "Be not forgetful to..." What and why? (Hebrews 13)
 8. A man looks at himself in a mirror, then goes away and forgets all about what he is like. What is such a man likened to? (James 1)
 9. Which name, given to one of the twelve tribes of Israel, means "forgetting"? (Genesis 41)
 10. Four times in the Book of Deuteronomy, God said to the children of Israel, "Thou shalt remember that..." What was it they were to remember?

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS

1. David was speaking to Goliath; he used a sling and pebbles.
2. Jehoshaphat.
3. Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands, because when his hands were held up Israel prevailed against its enemies.
4. A pitcher, a lamp and a trumpet.
5. "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man." (Psalm 118 .8)
6. Asa. (2 Chronicles 16. 7-8)
7. Ezra (Ezra 8. 22) because he had told the king that his trust was in God.
8. "Entangle himself with the affairs of this life." (2 Timothy 2. 4)
9. The keepers who were entrusted to watch over the grave of the Lord Jesus to prevent it being opened. (Matthew 28. 4 & 11-14)
10. Cornelius and Julius. (Acts 10. 1 & Acts 27. 1)

ONE THING I KNOW

John Newton used to say: "I am not what I should be, I am not what I long to be. I am not what one day I hope to be. But, blessed be God, *I am not what I once was!*"

THERE ARE NO CLOCKS IN HELL

"No clocks in hell," dear Tiptaft said,
Who, truth to tell, was not afraid;
He knew that time would ended be,
And then would come "Eternity."

But now the truth most men deny,
And heaven and hell they count a lie:
Still, God is true, and all shall see
The end of time – "Eternity."

The fool hath said: "There is no God," –
This way of old, the wicked trod:
They were cut down from time we see,
And went into "Eternity."

Whatever men may say or think,
We all are living on death's brink,
And, in a moment's time may be
Launched into long "Eternity."

Then come what will, this truth is plain,
"Except a man be born again,"
God's kingdom he will never see –
No, not to all "Eternity."

But all who here partake of grace
And truly seek the Saviour's face,
With joy of heart His face shall see,
And that to all "Eternity."

G.H.

(The above lines, it is said, arose from a solemn remark made by the late Mr. Tiptaft, when in the late Mr. Tanner's clock making shop at Cirencester. The remark was: "Friend Tanner! There are no clocks in hell!")

(The Gospel Standard – 1899)

The Friendly Companion

The Red Sea.

Exodus.

39 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lift up their cry, and hearken unto the Egyptians: and they cried unto the Lord.

and they were sore afraid: whosoever saw the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.



In this figure, the children of Israel are seen in the wilderness, looking across the Red Sea towards the land of Canaan. The sea is calm, and the land is visible in the distance. The children of Israel are gathered on the shore, some on foot and some on camels, looking across the water. The land of Canaan is visible in the distance, with a city and a tower. The sea is calm, and the land is visible in the distance.

40 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lift up their cry, and hearken unto the Egyptians: and they cried unto the Lord.

41 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lift up their cry, and hearken unto the Egyptians: and they cried unto the Lord.

42 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lift up their cry, and hearken unto the Egyptians: and they cried unto the Lord.

43 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lift up their cry, and hearken unto the Egyptians: and they cried unto the Lord.

44 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lift up their cry, and hearken unto the Egyptians: and they cried unto the Lord.

45 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lift up their cry, and hearken unto the Egyptians: and they cried unto the Lord.

46 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lift up their cry, and hearken unto the Egyptians: and they cried unto the Lord.

47 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lift up their cry, and hearken unto the Egyptians: and they cried unto the Lord.

Part of a Page from the Geneva Bible

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” Romans 15. 4.

June 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

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

Volume 135

June 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	123
Our Front Cover Picture	124
"But Mary Kept All These Things, And Pondered Them In Her Heart"	126
Emptying The River	127
The Fear Of The Lord	127
For The Very Little Ones: "Come And See"	128
Colouring Text: John 1. 39	129
Bible Lessons: The Unfriendly Brethren And Samaritans	130
A Boy From Stavenisse	132
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XVIII)	134
Editor's Postbag	135
Early Days	136
Israel (VI)	137
God Is	140
Bible Study For The Older Ones: The Epistles The Epistle To The Corinthians 1 & 2 (II)	140
Bible Questions: Ships	142
Poetry: "The Eye Of Faith"	144

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

If you know your Bible well (and I hope you do!) you will remember that when David pursued and rescued his own family and that of his friends, some of the men had to stay behind because of weariness. When David returned victorious, some of the men who had not stayed behind did not want to share the spoil with the others. But David made it a rule that those who stayed and looked after their belongings were to be treated as fairly as those who went to battle.

I wonder if Winston Churchill, the wartime prime minister, remembered this when he was approached by a group of Welsh miners who wanted to join the army with their fellow comrades who were not miners. Churchill said: "Some must stay in the pits, and others must stay in the army. Both are equally needed and are equally worthy. When the war is over," he said, "one will say to their sons: 'I was a fighter pilot,' and another will say: 'I was in the submarine service,' and you will say with equal pride: 'and I cut the coal.'"

The Word of God says that He is no respecter of persons. To the Lord, Ruth as a gleaner was just as precious as Boaz the owner of the fields and the corn she was gleaning.

May God teach us to be content with our calling, and to seek His grace to do it for His name's sake. Paul, though an apostle, was content also to be a tent-maker. Of course, the Lord Jesus Christ, no doubt, worked in the workshop of Joseph, even though He is Lord of all. In fact for thirty years of His holy life, He lived largely un-noticed by others, fulfilling His Father's will nonetheless.

May God give us such grace to be content with being remembered by God, even though others may pass us by and not notice us.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Geneva Bible

The **Geneva Bible** is one of the most historically significant translations of the Bible in the English language, preceding the King James translation by fifty-one years. It was the primary Bible of the 16th Century Protestant movement and was the Bible used by John Knox and John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*. It was one of the Bibles taken to America on the *Mayflower*, it was used by many English Dissenters, and it was still respected by Oliver Cromwell's soldiers at the time of the English Civil War.

What makes this version of the Holy Bible unique in world history is that, for the very first time, a mechanically-printed, mass-produced Bible was made available directly to the general public, which came with a variety of scriptural study guides and aids (collectively called an apparatus), which included verse citations which allow the reader to cross-reference one verse with numerous relevant verses in the rest of the Bible; introductions to each book of the Bible which acted to summarize all of the material that each book would cover; maps; tables; woodcut illustrations; indexes; as well as other included features – all of which would eventually lead to the reputation of the Geneva Bible as history's very first study Bible.

"For God so loved the world, that he hath given his only be gotten Son, that whosoever beleeveth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3. 16 – Geneva Bible)

Because the language of the Geneva Bible was more forceful and vigorous, most readers preferred this version strongly over the Bishops' Bible: the translation authorised by the Church of England under Elizabeth I. In the words of Cleland Boyd McAfee: "It drove the Great Bible off the field by sheer power of excellence."

History

During the reign of Queen Mary I of England (1553 – 1558), a number of Protestant scholars fled from England to Geneva

in Switzerland, which was then ruled as a republic in which John Calvin and Theodore Beza provided the primary spiritual and theological leadership. Among these scholars was William Whittingham, who would come to supervise what would become of the effort to create the translation now known as the Geneva Bible, in collaboration with Myles Coverdale, Christopher Goodman, Anthony Gilby, Thomas Sampson and Willian Cole – several of whom became prominent figures in the proto-Puritan Nonconformist faction of the Vestments controversy. Whittingham was directly responsible for the New Testament, which was complete and published in 1557, while Gilby oversaw the Old Testament.

The very first Bible printed in Scotland was a Geneva Bible, which was first issued in 1579. In fact, the involvement of Knox and Calvin in the creation of the Geneva Bible made it especially appealing in Scotland, where a law was passed in 1579 requiring every household of sufficient means to buy a copy.

The annotations which are an important part of the Geneva Bible, were Calvinist and Puritan in character, and as such they were disliked by the ruling pro-government Protestants of the Church of England, as well as King James I, who commissioned the “Authorised Version,” or “King James Bible,” in order to replace it. The Geneva Bible had also motivated the earlier production of the Bishops’ Bible under Elizabeth I, for the same reason, and the later Rheims-Douai edition by the Catholic community. The Geneva Bible remained popular among Puritans and remained in widespread use until after the English Civil War. The Geneva notes were surprisingly included in a few editions of the King James version, even as late as 1715.

It has been stated by some that the Geneva Bible was the Bible present at the signing of the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, because it was the Bible that the Puritans brought with them to America.

However, the U.S. Library of Congress and the Independence National Historical Park both state that they do not know what version/translation of the Bible was present at these signings (Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania being the location of both of the signings).

Wikipedia

“BUT MARY KEPT ALL THESE THINGS, AND PONDERED THEM IN HER HEART.”

Twice it is said of Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ, that she “kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart”; these things being the sayings of those who spoke of the Lord Jesus at His birth.

It is a great blessing to have such a memory set apart by God for Himself. In the history of the people of God down the ages, God has greatly favoured those whose heart, like Lydia's, has been opened to retain the truth.

It was said of Lady Jane Grey, who was Queen of England for only nine days before she was arrested and later beheaded, that she had by much reading of the Scriptures made her bosom Christ's library. It seems that from her infancy, Jane had an appetite for the Word of God.

Of another less well-known girl who died when nearly ten years old, it was confidently stated by her minister, that she had read the Bible so many times that at nine years old she could say all of the New Testament by heart, and being asked by him where any words were, could immediately give chapter and verse.

Satan fills empty minds, even as he finds work for idle hands. So may our minds be filled with God's Word so that when Satan comes, he may not find an empty mind to fill with his errors and deceit.

Editor

EMPTYING THE RIVER!

A young minister ended his sermon on Lord's Day morning by saying that next Lord's Day he would explain the Trinity to his congregation.

One day during the week he was out taking a stroll when he saw one of his elders stooping by the river. To his surprise, this man had a spoon in his hand and was scooping water out of the river into a hole nearby.

"Whatever are you doing?" asked the minister.

"I am emptying the river with a spoon," replied the elder.

The minister, who thought his elder was acting very strangely, said: "You could never do that, however long you tried!"

The reply from the elder was: "I can as soon empty this river as you can do what you have promised to do next Lord's Day – explain the Trinity!"

We do not know whether the conversation went any further, but it must have given the minister much food for thought as he meditated for next Lord's Day morning's sermon.

The Bible says: "Canst thou by searching find out God?" The truths of God are to be received by faith which is God's gift. Even the most well-taught believer has to say with Job: "How little a portion is heard of Him?"

Editor

THE FEAR OF THE LORD

Before Eli Page, minister at Mayfield, Sussex, began to preach, he used to sell corn. One day a man came and wanted a bushel of oats. As Mr. Page went to weigh it out, Satan whispered in his heart: "He trusts you. He will never check whether you have given him the full amount. You need not give him full measure."

Immediately Eli Page's heart responded (in a loving, tender way), "The eye of God is upon me."

The man received rather *more* than a bushel of oats!

Friendly Companion 1985

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**“COME AND SEE”**

Philip had been called to follow Jesus. He believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Saviour, spoken of by Moses and the prophets. Philip found his friend, Nathanael, and told him all about Jesus. Nathanael asked if any good thing could come from Nazareth; it was such a poor, despised place. Philip said: *“Come and see.”* He was sure that if Nathanael saw Jesus and heard Him speak, he would also believe.

Jesus saw Nathanael coming and spoke as if He already knew him well. How surprised Nathanael was! Jesus said that even before Philip called him: *“I saw thee under the fig tree.”* Nathanael knew that no one could have seen him there, except God. Perhaps he was praying to God in secret. Immediately Nathanael said: *“...Thou art the Son of God.”*

Both Philip and Nathanael became disciples of Jesus. They followed Him and saw the great works that He did.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Philip say to Nathanael? (3 words)
2. Where did Jesus see Nathanael before Philip called him?
3. Who did Nathanael say Jesus was? (4 words)

Please 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. Far off. | 2. Sinful. | 3. Yes. |
| <i>Contributed</i> | | |

*“He saith
unto
them,
Come
and see.”*
*John
1. 39.*

BIBLE LESSONS**THE UNFRIENDLY BRETHREN AND SAMARITANS**

Once a year the Jews would go up to Jerusalem to keep the Day of Atonement. It was a memorable time, when so many people came together from all parts of their country. The men of Galilee, along with some of Jesus' brethren, began to reason with Him about going up to Jerusalem. In a mocking way, they suggested to Him that it would be a good opportunity to show His great works to all Israel. The Bible tells us that they did not believe in Him. Perhaps they thought His works had been done by deceit or trickery. They thought that when He stood before all the men of Israel, and especially before the nobles and high priests, He would be found to be a deceiver; at least they hoped it would be so. Like many of their leaders, they were filled with hatred toward Him.

Jesus answered them: *"My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."* Then He told them to go up to the feast without Him. He would go at a later time.

When Jesus did go to the feast, He went secretly, so that no man would know it. How could He go secretly? By this time, the news of His healing powers had gone through the whole country. Mark tells us in his gospel that Jesus *"could not be hid."* (Mark 7:24)

Jesus knew well that His brethren and the men of Galilee would take the long route, so they would not have to go through Samaria. Do you remember that the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans? They despised them. They believed that they were much better than the Samaritans. However, Jesus took His journey right through the country of Samaria. As He and His disciples approached a village, evening was fast approaching. He sent some messengers before Him to find a place to stay and make ready a meal.

Soon the messengers returned, telling Jesus that they were not welcome in that village. The Samaritans knew that Jesus

and His disciples were Jews going up to Jerusalem to worship; but the Samaritans believed that the true temple was in Samaria. For this reason they would not receive Jesus and His disciples.

When James and John heard this, they were filled with rage against the Samaritans for rejecting their Master. They remembered how Elijah called fire down from heaven to consume his enemies. They said unto Jesus: *“Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?”*

What a rebuke the Lord gave them! He said: *“Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.”* He reminded them that He had not come to destroy men, but rather to save them. The Bible tells us: *“... avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”* (Romans 12.19) What an example for you and me to follow! Meekly and humbly, Jesus journeyed on to the next village.

As they went, a certain man came to Jesus, saying: *“Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest.”* Jesus answered him: *“Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.”* How striking these words are, in light of the Samaritans denying Him a place to stay.

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 8 verses 19 and 20, Luke chapter 9 verses 51 to 58, and John chapter 7 verses 1 to 10.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Jesus say the world hated Him? (11 words)
2. How did Jesus go up to the feast?
3. Through which country did Jesus go up to Jerusalem?
4. Name the two disciples who wanted to destroy the Samaritans?
5. What did they want to call down from heaven?

Please 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. Seven times.
2. Seventy times seven.
3. Ten thousand talents.
4. An hundred pence.
5. No.

G. L. TenBroeke

A BOY FROM STAVENISSE**Chapter 18: Letters**

When Leen has some time to rest in the evenings, he writes letters to send home. He writes very little about his experiences and much about his association with the Lord.

His grandmother dies while he is in the military service. Now Sien does the housekeeping. Sien is only eighteen years old, but she does the best she can to care for her father, Johanna and Cornelis. Now she also has a boyfriend whom she hopes to marry.

Leen thinks it is terrible that they do not attend the little church and that they are still unconverted. He feels so sorry for them. He does not send one letter to Stavenisse without warning them about death.

He tries to make them jealous of the blessed, loving service of the Lord. When his little brother has a birthday in December, he writes him a separate letter:

Breda, December 1904

Dear Brother,

I want to congratulate you sincerely on your birthday. I hope that God, who has spared you until now, will still give you a long life; but especially, that you may learn to seek your Creator early, while you are still young, and that you do not allow yourself to go along with sin.

Oh, Brother, you will have to die one day. One day, a last year will arrive for us, or perhaps it has arrived already. We are still spared but we do not know what is coming. But remember, that you cannot die as you were born.

One day, God will punish sin, for He hears and sees everything. Thus, Brother, be sure not to curse! Do not be rough in your life. Think about death and eternity often. When someone dies, consider that you will have to die, too. If you are not converted then, you will have to go to hell forever.

Brother, faithfully attend church on Sunday. Do not stroll along the streets and roads on God's day. You are still young; do not destroy yourself as most boys do today. Do not join in with them.

One day, God will cast away into eternal pain all that seek sin. There the rich man found himself in the flames of hell-fire. He could not get one drop of water to cool his tongue. There he suffers eternal pain in the fire that cannot be quenched.

Now then, Brother, I will close with this and it is my hope and wish that you will remember this well. Write back sometime.

Your Brother, L. Potappel.

Leen makes friends in the city. The captain always gives him leave of absence when he asks for it. Then he visits the people of God. On prayer and thanksgiving days, he goes to hear Rev. Pieneman preach in Rotterdam. He can talk freely with the minister. The captain permits him to stay away overnight.

Leen has to go along for an exercise in Oldenbroek. He does not look forward to it. This is especially because he is there on a Sunday and cannot go to church.

On Saturday night, one of the soldiers passes him a package: "An old man told me to give this to you. I do not know what is in there, but you probably know."

Leen sits down in his tent and opens it. Out rolls a book of sermons. Leen glows with pleasure. Does not the Lord take good care of him? Now he can still read a sermon tomorrow.

(To be continued)

Slightly adapted

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XVIII)**Election**

This is a very important word, and describes a fundamental truth which is clear throughout the Word of God. But although the truth is so clear, it is hated by many. You will hear the minister use the word “election” or “elect” to describe the people of God. But what does the word “election” mean? It simply means a choice. So the “elect” are those whom God has chosen.

We have elections, for example when candidates are chosen for Parliament, the local council or some other body. However, other than there is a choice, there is very little similarity between God’s election and the elections of man. We hope that by comparing them, we shall see something of the beauty in God’s election.

First of all, the election, or choice of a people, was made by God and by God alone. It is not man’s choosing. God’s choice of a people was made before time began, and before man was created. Therefore election cannot be anything to do with man’s choice.

Secondly, because God is an eternal, unchanging God, His choice of a people is unchanged and unchangeable. He loves them with an everlasting love. By contrast, man often holds elections. For example Members of Parliament are elected for a period of no more than five years. Man’s opinion changes and so people, political parties and policies are sometimes in favour and sometimes out of favour.

In man’s elections, candidates are selected for particular reasons. Generally those who are better known are more likely to be elected. Others are elected because they have done something of note, or because they hold particular views or belong to a particular organisation. But God did not choose His people because they would be well known or popular; indeed they are strangers and pilgrims in the earth. In God’s sight there was nothing commendable in them. He did not even choose them because they would believe in Him or because of any good works they would do, but He chose them

simply because He loved them. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." This goes against man's wisdom, but "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise...that no flesh should glory in His presence." It is true that all whom God has chosen will be possessors of the faith of God's elect, and that without faith it is impossible to please Him. Yet the elect only obtain that "like precious faith" because of God's eternal choice and love.

"No goodness God foresaw in His,
But what His grace designed to give;
No comeliness in them there is
Which they did not from Him receive." *Tucker*

God's election is a fundamental truth, and a precious one at that. Had not God made His choice, not one of mankind would have been saved; they would all have perished eternally. But God's people rest on His eternal love and choice; it is that which has saved them and will keep them.

The important, vital thing is whether you and I are among that favoured number. It is to be sought for. The promise is to those who truly feel their need, as taught by the Holy Spirit and come unto Him. Jesus said "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." You will see that this precious promise is based on the truth of God's election. None that came to the Lord Jesus when He was here on earth, in complete dependence upon Him, were ever turned away. May the Lord give us grace to give diligence to make our calling and our election sure.

Contributed

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **ELLA GREEN; KATHARINE HILLS; ANNA LOCKEY; ALEXA McIVERVEY; ESTELLA PALMER; RACHEL SCOTT and MELISSA VANGEMERT.***

EARLY DAYS

In my early days there were incidents which somehow left a deep impression on the mind. These, like framed pictures on the wall of memory, remain with me while many other things are forgotten.

I recall, for example, how one evening, with a number of other boys, we were entertaining ourselves by throwing small stones on to the corrugated iron roof of a newly erected shed belonging to a somewhat wrathful man in the district. The tiny stones did no damage, but the noise, which was to us a great novelty, annoyed the owner who chased us over the sodden ground. Since I was younger than the others, my pace was slower. Once he recognised me, he altered his steps and walked towards our home.

When he entered the door I also, in a great state of fear, ran towards the house, at the back of which I listened to his loud, angry voice as he told my shocked mother of her wayward boy. As I stood there, I trembled at the picture of myself which this man, unwittingly, placed before my eyes. Was this really me? Overwhelmed with shame I would have given a thousand worlds if only I could have vanished out of existence and been no more.

But it was a pleasant picture which our neighbour gave me of myself that evening, compared with that awful discovery which God made of my heart in the day He brought me to His mirror, and where, in seeing one whom I could not but recognise as myself, He said: "Thou art the man." Ever since that hour, I have been asking God to look at me, and to let me look on myself, only in His dear Son and in His perfect righteousness.

There was another memorable evening when I was present at a Communion service in Harris, where my father was resident as a lay preacher. It was summer, and the service was in the open air. The day was warm and calm, so that the powerful voice of the preacher – the Rev. R. Macleod, Garrabost – could be heard a long distance away. As the

preacher, like Paul of old, “reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,” a solemn hush rested on the large congregation present.

During the sermon, the preacher told a story. It was that of a man who sometimes engaged in the dangerous practice of scaling the face of a high precipitous cliff at the base of which snarled the deep and restless sea. This man had a little son who would sometimes steal away to watch his father negotiating the rock. One day, as the father was halfway down, he heard a voice. “Father, I am coming after you.” It was the voice of his own son. By his careless example he had led his own child to destruction.

The story, of course, was meant as a warning to parents whose example might lead their children astray. From where I sat, I could see my father, and I knew that if I lost my soul, it was not because he had not, by precept and example, set before me the way of life and safety.

Murdoch Campbell (Memories of a Wayfaring Man)

ISRAEL (VI)

So to our last full day: Tuesday. Our first call was Capernaum, which was the home of Jesus for much of the time that He was in Galilee. This was very nice as it is not built up in any way and so there are just the ruins to look at. We had a short reading in the old synagogue whose three porches face towards Jerusalem.

We then drove to Cæsarea Philippi at the foot of Mount Hermon. Here is the main spring which supplies the River Jordan and which we saw issuing out from under the rocks. Also here are the conies – when you can find them. Our leader was very disappointed (and so were we) that none could be seen on the day that we were there.

We then had quite a long ride near the Golan Heights back to Ein Gev for lunch. Like many other places where we stopped for lunch, this was very nice. From here we went across the sea to Tiberias and we proved how Galilee can go

from very calm to much more movement in the water. Although not rough when we crossed, we did see it very smooth previously.

This brought us to our last evening together, and after dinner we met in our usual way and concluded with a hymn which was very fitting at the conclusion of our journeys. (*See Poetry on Page 144.*)

It was just beginning to get light when we left the hotel on Wednesday morning. As we boarded the coach, we were rather quiet, no doubt all thinking that our pilgrimage had nearly come to an end. As we climbed up the hill away from Tiberias, we all looked back to get our last glance of Galilee. I thought: "Shall I ever see that again?" But then I thought how thankful I must be for this opportunity of coming once, and for the time spent with so many friends, old and new.

The journey to Tel-Aviv was over two hours and we were able to see a lovely sunrise. We were all well examined at customs, after which we had time for a look around the airport shops.

A coach then took us out to the aircraft which this time was a Boeing 767, rather bigger than the 757 in which we flew out. A very nice breakfast was served and the flight was absolutely smooth. We arrived at Heathrow in a thunderstorm and pouring rain, which was a complete contrast to the weather we had in Israel.

There was only one thing which we could say as regards the Lord's care over us:

"For mercies countless as the sands
Which daily we have received." *J. Newton*

These notes are a very poor attempt to put down reflections of the wonderful time I experienced during my visit to the Holy Land.

It would be quite true to say that for many years I have had a desire to go to Israel, but I suppose I never really thought that I would have the opportunity. How many times have I read of

all those wonderful places: Jerusalem, Jericho, Bethany, Bethlehem, Cana, Capernaum, Cæsarea, Galilee, etc. How many times, even from Sunday school, have I sung: "There is a green hill far away." I remember, as a boy, thinking how right that was – "far away" – and yet I have now been to the place, or at least very close. But, of course, it is not enough to go to the place – how we do need to go in spirit. I do want God to give me faith to pray in the words of one of those verses:

"We may not know, we cannot tell
What pains He had to bear
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there."

And Jericho. I have for a long time thought much of this place – the oldest town in the world – and of the time that Jesus passed through, and called Zacchæus.

Another thing which gave me much thought was the distances that Jesus must have walked. No doubt, He did ride on a donkey or perhaps a camel many times, but I am inclined to think that He did much walking on what were very often dusty and stony roads. How the words in that lovely hymn sum this up:

"He went about, He was so kind,
To cure poor people who were blind:
And many who were sick and lame,
He pitied them, and did the same."

So Jesus walked about among the people. Then in Matthew 27. 27-31 we read of the terrible things that the soldiers did before they led Jesus away. So although Simon carried His cross, Jesus walked to Golgotha.

But He rose again – Mark 16 verse 6: "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: He is risen; He is not here."

So I just conclude with a truly thankful heart to the Lord for all His watchfulness over us.

R.H.H.

GOD IS

Martin Luther was once in a period of great depression. Everything seemed to be going wrong and he thought that everyone was against him. For some weeks he went about with a sad face and would hardly speak to his family. One day, he came downstairs to find his wife in deep mourning. She was wearing deep black clothes. Martin said: "Who ever has died that you should be in such deep mourning?"

His wife replied: "I think that God must have died."

Martin very crossly told her she should not speak so about the Almighty, especially as God cannot die.

His wife calmly turned to him and said: "Why then are you living as if He is dead?"

The point went home and he found relief to his mind that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46. 1).

Editor

"If you were to ask several people to draw a crooked line, no two lines would be identical. There is a lesson in this: there are many ways to be crooked, but only one way to be straight."

Albert Lee

*"Lord, grant me grace throughout this day
To walk the straight and narrow way,
To do whatever in Thy sight,
Is good and perfect, just, and right."*

Huisman

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**THE EPISTLES****The Epistles to the Corinthians 1 & 2 (II)**

One thing that stands out with the church at Corinth is the abundance of spiritual gifts. We are instructed that unless we have charity (love in action), we cannot use these gifts graciously to the profit of others, unless we are motivated by the love of Christ. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,

and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing" (1 Corinthians 13. 1-2).

In chapter 15 of the First Epistle, the sacred and fundamental doctrine of the resurrection of Christ and subsequently of believers is opened. Death has been swallowed up in victory, the believer is to enter eternal glory. As in the Epistle to the Romans, we died in the first Adam but we live forever in the second Adam, Christ Jesus, the Lord from heaven. There was error in this church concerning these doctrines. How we need to be careful not to imbibe or teach error in the church of God. Our doctrine, our practice must be consistent with the Word of God.

As in his other letters to churches, he lays a clear line between law and gospel. The law he calls the ministration of death and of condemnation. The gospel he calls the ministration of life and a glory that excelleth the law as light excels darkness. "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious" (2 Corinthians 3. 7-11). There is no mixing up of law and gospel as many try to do.

The apostle writes to them of his divinely-given authority: not that he desired to lord himself over them. He informs them of his afflictions, for Christ's sake; his tribulations in the gospel; how he had been imprisoned and whipped. He also

reiterates the doctrine of the resurrection, in the Second Epistle: the glorious hope of a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens and that longing desire to be there.

In the Second Epistle he exhorts, as in all his epistles, to good works, instructing them to have collections on the first day of the week for the relief of those in need. This instruction, with others, reveals to us that the practice of the apostolic church was to meet for divine worship, not on the Old Testament Sabbath, the seventh day, but the first day: firstly because Christ rose from the dead on the first day; secondly, Christian believers are no longer under the law but under grace. We do not work on the Lord's Day because it is a holy day kept as unto the Lord; in love to our blessed Redeemer; in recognition that He has fulfilled the law for and by His sufferings, death and resurrection; has satisfied divine justice for us; has put away sin by the offering of Himself on the cross of Calvary. May we keep this holy day in love to our blessed Redeemer. As the apostle says in this epistle: "The love of Christ constraineth us."

These epistles end with the well-known doxology revealing to us the sacred doctrine of the Trinity. The three-in-One and One-in-three. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13. 14). *The second epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, a city of Macedonia, by Titus and Lucas.*"

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions have to do with SHIPS. 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. Jonah was fast asleep in a ship in the midst of a storm. Why was he in the ship? (Jonah 1. 3-5)

2. The Lord Jesus was also asleep in a ship in a terrible storm. What did Jesus do when His disciples awoke him? (Mark 4. 39)
3. Who, despite being in danger in a storm at sea, said: "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." What had the angel of God told him? (Acts 27. 24)
4. What kind of cargo did Solomon's ships bring back to Israel? (2 Chronicles 9. 21)
5. The disciples once went fishing all night and caught nothing. What did Jesus tell them to do? (John 21. 3-6)
6. Once, after Peter had fished all night and caught nothing, Jesus preached from the boat. What did he tell Peter to do afterwards? (Luke 5)
7. Of which tribe of Israel was it said: "He shall be for an haven of ships"? (Genesis 49)
8. Which two brothers were in a fishing boat, mending their nets, when Jesus called them? (Matthew 4)
9. Of whom did David say: "These see the works of the LORD, and His wonders in the deep"? (Psalm 107)
10. In one place in the Bible we read of a ferry boat. Who was travelling in it and which river did it cross?

ANSWERS TO MAY QUESTIONS

1. The chief butler.
2. "Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy."
3. The dying thief.
4. "Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."
5. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."
6. Bread. (Mark 8. 14-16)
7. "Entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Hebrews 13. 2)
8. "A hearer of the Word, and not a doer." (James 1. 23-25)
9. Manasseh. (Genesis 41. 51 – see margin)
10. That they were bondmen in the land of Egypt. (Deuteronomy 15. 15, 16. 12, 24. 18, 24. 22)

Contributed

"THE EYE OF FAITH" (John 20. 29)

We saw Thee not when Thou didst come
To this poor world of sin and death,
Nor e'er beheld Thy cottage home
In that despised Nazareth;
But we believe Thy footsteps trod
Its streets and plains, Thou Son of God.

We did not see Thee lifted high
Amid that wild and savage crew,
Nor heard Thy meek, imploring cry,
"Forgive, they know not what they do";
Yet we believe the deed was done
Which shook the earth and veiled the sun.

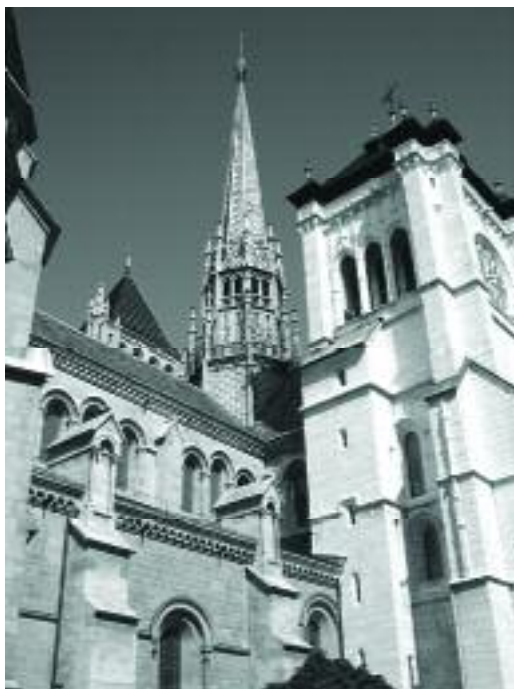
We stood not by the empty tomb
Where late Thy sacred body lay,
Nor sat within that upper room,
Nor met Thee in the open way;
But we believe that angels said:
"Why seek the living with the dead?"

We did not mark the chosen few,
When Thou didst through the clouds ascend,
First lift to heaven their wondering view,
Then to the earth all prostrate bend:
Yet we believe that mortal eyes
Beheld that journey to the skies.

And now that Thou dost reign on high,
And thence Thy waiting people bless,
No ray of glory from the sky
Doth shine upon our wilderness:
May we believe Thy faithful Word,
And trust in our redeeming Lord."

Anne Richter – I. H. Gurney (Slightly adapted)

The Friendly Companion



St. Pierre's Cathedral, Geneva

"Tell it to the generation following."
Psalm 48. 13.

July 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

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

Volume 135

July 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	147
Our Front Cover Picture	148
God's Hand	150
Editor's Postbag	151
For The Very Little Ones: "Do It"	152
Colouring Text: John 2. 5.	153
Bible Lessons: The Ten Lepers	154
A Boy From Stavenisse	156
The Great Teacher	159
Gold	160
"To Whom Else Can We Go?"	161
Bible Words/Words of Scripture (XIX)	162
Bearing The Reproach	163
Bible Study For The Older Ones: The Epistles:	
The Epistle To The Galatians (I)	164
Bible Questions: Deception	166
The Heavenly Weaver	167
Poetry: The Plan Of The Master Weaver	168

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

This month marks the birthday of a man whose name should be well known to Protestants! Five hundred years ago this month, on July 10th 1509, John Calvin was born. He was born into a Roman Catholic family, but as he grew up he read the Bible for himself and found that many things which he had been brought up to believe were not as Scripture teaches. As he searched more and more, the Holy Spirit opened his eyes to God's way of salvation, so that he became a Protestant, which was the name given to those who protested against the errors of the Roman Church.

He was helped by the Spirit's teaching to show the people of his day, God's way of salvation. This he set down in what are called *THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM*. We must not think that Calvin invented Calvinism! All he did, with God's help, was to bring to light what the Word of God has always taught, namely that God saves sinners by grace.

The five points he set down are:

Firstly, that since the fall of Adam, man is born completely sinful and without spiritual good. This he called *total depravity*.

Secondly, that God has made a choice of sinners to be saved, entirely of His own purpose and not for any good in them. This is called *unconditional election*.

Thirdly, that the Lord Jesus Christ lived and died to pay the price of God's justice, demanded for the sins of these sinners chosen by God. This Calvin called *limited atonement*.

Fourthly, that the Holy Spirit will most certainly work in the hearts of these sinners whilst they are alive on earth despite whatever may oppose His work. This is called *irresistible grace*.

Fifthly, that all of these sinners will reach heaven at last, as God keeps them by His grace. This is called *the perseverance of the saints*.

Although Calvin was a great leader of the Reformation, yet like us all, he had his faults. For example, he was exceedingly

cruel to those who believe as we do, that baptism is for believers and by total immersion. He even approved that some be drowned on account of following what they believed that Scripture teaches on this matter.

This reminds us that even great men are not always wise, as God's Word tells us, and that we are only to follow a man as long as he follows God's Word, whoever he be. Notwithstanding that, it is right that we remember God's goodness to the church of God in raising up such a man who had such a clear grasp of the gospel and who was enabled to preach it with such power, both in his sermons and commentaries.

The city of Geneva is where Calvin worked for the greater part of his life. It is a city well worth visiting, not only for its history but for the beauty of the countryside around.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture of St. Pierre's Cathedral Geneva, on our cover this month, reminds us of John Calvin, who was born on Tuesday July 10th 1509 in Noyon. It was in Geneva that Calvin led the way in furthering the Reformation. What was he like as a boy and young man though?

His father Gerard was a lawyer as well as a counsellor for churchmen and others. His mother Jeanne was exceptionally beautiful. In all she had seven children: two girls and five boys. John was the second of the three brothers who survived. Two died when they were but babies.

John's mother was a devout Roman Catholic and meant to bring her children up, John included, as good Catholics. So the large cathedral church of Noyon and its worship was indelibly fixed in young John's mind as he grew up. However, God had another future ordained for him, than that which his mother intended. When John was only six years old his mother died and his father's influence became the dominant force in his life.

John's father, Gerard, thought the world of his children, and

was determined that they should all do well. This dictated his bringing up of his family. He especially saw that John was a very clever boy and so he found the best education he could for him by placing him in the family of the brother of the Bishop of Noyon: a man called Adrien. Although young John must have missed his mother terribly, yet he was shown great kindness by Adrien and his family. Gerard paid well for John's education. Later John was to dedicate his first book to Claude, one of Adrien's boys with whom he was taught. It is wonderful how the Lord overruled John's humble beginnings so that although he was what some would have called a "commoner," yet rather like Moses in Pharaoh's court, he learned manners and confidence which would stand him in good stead when he became a leader of the Reformation and also a political master, too. He could mingle on equal terms with rich and poor.

When John was only twelve, his father managed to get him an appointment in the church! This was a very common way of earning money. The salary went to John to help him pay for his studies whilst he paid someone else to do the work! It is said that even one of the popes became a pope at twelve and other boys even younger could become cardinals! These were some of the abuses which Calvin would rail against later in his life.

John's disposition was quiet and rather timid when he was young, although hints of a deeper, passionate character occasionally shone through.

Just about the time he was given a position in the church, he went with his friends to Paris to further his education. One of his teachers was a man called Mathurin Cordier. John was so devoted to him that later on, when he ruled Geneva, he brought him to be the headmaster of the Grammar School there. In Paris he learned Latin, and arithmetic as well as writing skills.

From here, at only fourteen, he entered university proper. Here he found student life very harsh. Each day began at 4.00 a.m. and went right through until 8.00 p.m. Calvin proved to

be an excellent debater and was very popular as a student.

In 1526 John became an MA and seemed destined for a career in the church, but his father, who had been keeping a close watch on his growing lad, changed course and decided that law was a better option for John. In various universities the young John now set his mind to law as diligently as he had theology. It is thought that the long hours of studying and overwork at his studies, weakened his constitution and eventually led to his early death.

It was while he passed through these various parts of his education, that he came into contact with godly men who were beginning to see the errors of the false religion of Rome and were learning by grace the true way of salvation. When John came into deep conviction of sin in 1529, although at first he turned to his mother church for help, finding them to be but blind leaders as Martin Luther had done in his day, it was to these godly teachers he turned, who pointed him to the cross of Christ as the only answer to his sins. It was however a close university friend called Pierre Robert who, according to Beza, was first used of God to awaken him to a felt need of the Saviour.

*Adapted from an article by W. J. Grier
in Banner of Truth February 2009*

GOD'S HAND

My father used to tell of another incident which happened shortly after his conversion. There was in his native village an old and enfeebled Christian woman who accompanied another young man and himself to attend a Communion in the vicinity of Stornoway. After walking over fourteen miles, this aged woman lost all power to go on. On the lonely moorland road they sat down and prayed for help.

Soon a cart appeared on the scene, but although it was quite empty, the gruff man who owned it, refused to help. He had not gone forward many yards, however, before the animal shied violently, till both horse and cart were quite bogged in the soft moorland. Every effort to coax it forward, failed.

The young men, who meantime watched the man's struggle with the animal, rebuked him for his refusal to help one of God's fainting children. They reminded him of how a dumb ass once rebuked the madness of a prophet.

At this stage the exasperated man was willing to try any experiment to get out of his predicament. "We shall let this woman sit in the cart," counselled my father's friend, "and if the horse still refuses to move forward, God's hand is not in the matter, but if it does you are meant to take her." No sooner was she seated in the cart, than the horse heaved itself out of the bog and walked away in perfect docility.

Murdoch Campbell

Robert Dabney, in his *Systematic Theology*, wrote: "Prayer is not intended to produce a change in God, but in us," and then went on to quote Rowland Hill who explained to sailors: "The man in the skiff at the stern of a man-of-war, does not pull the ship to himself in hauling at the line, but pulls the skiff to the ship. This line is prayer. Prayer does not draw God down to us, but draws us up to God, and thus establishes the connection."

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from *ISAAC and JOSIE PARISH; ETHAN STARKEY and HUGH WINKLEY.*

Would the person who kindly sent two copies of *Leen Potappel* to the Editor in May, please contact him.

Preliminary Announcement

On September 30th, Mr. Henry Mercer is laying down the office of Secretary to the Gospel Standard Societies. We deeply appreciate all the work he has done on the behalf of the *Friendly Companion* in dealing with the subscriptions for more than twenty years. If the Lord will, from October 1st, Mr. David Christian will take up this position and from that date all correspondence regarding the magazines should be sent to him. His details will appear in the September *Friendly Companion*.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**“DO IT”**

There was a wedding in Cana, near to where Jesus had grown up. Jesus and His disciples had been asked to come. The mother of Jesus was also there.

While the feast was still going on, they ran out of wine for the guests to drink. The mother of Jesus came to tell Him. She knew that He was able to help. She said to the servants: *“Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.”*

In the room were six big stone pots used for washing. Jesus told them to fill these pots with water. Quickly the servants obeyed. Then they were told to take some out for the ruler of the feast to taste. The water had been turned into very good wine. What a great miracle it was! This was the first miracle that Jesus did after He went forth to teach and to preach. It showed His power and glory. *“And His disciples believed on Him.”*

QUESTIONS:

1. The mother of Jesus knew He was able to __? (1 word)
2. What did the servants quickly do? (1 word)
3. After this first miracle, what did His disciples do? (3 words)

Please 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. Come and see.
2. Under the fig tree.
3. The Son of God.

Contributed

*“Whatsoever
He saith
unto
you,
do it.”
John 2. 5.*

BIBLE LESSONS

THE TEN LEPERS

When the Samaritans refused to let Jesus stay in their village, He quietly journeyed on to the next village. As He entered the village, there was a great commotion. Ten men who were lepers stood at a distance, calling out to Him.

These men had to live apart from their families because their disease was so contagious. They must warn any person who came near them by crying out: "UNCLEAN, UNCLEAN." But, at least, they had each other for help and companionship.

Leprosy was a dreadful disease. The hair of the head became short and stiff. The eyes were red and inflamed. The tongue was very dry and sometimes turned black. The fingers often rotted and fell off. The skin became very rough. You can imagine how painful the disease must have been. Doctors could not cure those who had leprosy, and medicine could not give them relief. What a miserable life they had!

Perhaps these lepers heard that Jesus had already cured a man with leprosy. Could He cure them too? They must at least ask Him. Thus, they all cried together: "*Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.*" Many had prayed these same words before and were helped. But to the lepers, their case seemed so much worse and harder, too. Such is the feeling of all who seek after Jesus.

Although at such a distance, their cries reached the ear of Jesus. What a wonderful thought! Even though Jesus now dwells in heaven, He still hears the cry of those who feel the leprosy of sin. Jesus said: "*Go show yourselves unto the priests.*" On another occasion, He had touched a leper to heal him. You may also remember that Naaman was told to wash in Jordan seven times. But now, Jesus said they must simply go to the priests. Carnal, unbelieving hearts would say it was no use to do that; they must first see that they were healed.

The Bible tells us that as they went, they were cleansed. Oh how happy they must have been! Now they could return to their homes and families. Suddenly one of the ten stopped.

As he looked at his body that was completely cured, his heart was filled with love and praise to God. While the others hurried on to the priests, he turned back to Jesus. Did he think it was not necessary to go to the priests? O no, he would do that later. But first he must go back to Jesus.

He no longer had to keep at a distance, for he was no longer unclean. He came near and fell at Jesus' feet and gave Him thanks. The Bible tells us that he was a Samaritan. He felt so unworthy of the favour and kindness shown to him! With a loud voice, he began to glorify and praise God. We wonder if the other nine were Jews.

Perhaps some of the multitude wondered if only this one was truly healed. Jesus answered: "*Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.*"

Sadly, it is just the same today. There are few who give thanks to God for all His mercies, His kindness, and His help.

Jesus said to the leper: "*Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.*" He had received a double portion. His body had been healed from the dreadful disease of leprosy, and his soul had been healed from the disease of SIN.

You can read about this in Luke chapter 17 verses 11 to 19.

QUESTIONS:

1. How many lepers were there?
2. What did they cry unto Jesus? (6 words)
3. What did Jesus tell them to do? (6 words)
4. What did one return back for? (5 words)
5. What was his soul healed from?

Please 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. "Because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."
2. Secretly.
3. Samaria.
4. James and John.
5. Fire.

G. L. TenBroeke

A BOY FROM STAVENISSE**Chapter 19: A Warning Sermon**

After two years, Leen is permitted to go home. He will not miss the life as a soldier. He really longs for Stavenisse. God's people are there: there he may again attend the little church every Lord's Day. He had a difficult time in the military service among the rough soldiers. Yet, it was also a good time. The Lord helped him through all the difficulties and Leen lived close to the Lord.

Leen becomes older. His sisters and brother, marry. He continues living alone with his father in the little house along the Molendijk. One day, he asks the Lord for his own place, where he can pray and read undisturbed. The Lord Himself points out a place for him. He builds a house on the Molenpad which is large enough for his sister Sien, her husband, their two daughters and himself. Leen lives in a separate part of the house. A new church is also built in the village. Leen is elder and takes turns with the second elder to read a sermon on Lord's Days.

Two world wars pass by. During the last war, all the villagers in Zeeland have to leave their villages. The Germans inundate their islands. This war also passes by.

Leen lives close to the Lord. He cannot and dare not start the day without prayer. He needs the Lord's blessing and support in all things. This is how he lives as an example to the village. Everyone knows him and respects him. One can feel that Leen really fears the Lord and does not just pretend. He warns the children that they must be converted. He points out the dangers of sin to young and old. He has the courage to take the Lord's part when the Lord's Day is misused. He always says something about it when he hears cursing.

He loves walking by himself on the long sea dyke from Stavenisse to friends in Saint Maartensdijk. Then he reads in a little book that he always has in his pocket: *"Pearls of Luther."* Now Leen has become old. He is now seventy-one years of

age. During that year something terrible happens in Zeeland. Leen always felt that the Lord's judgments would come upon the sinful country. He could never understand precisely how the Lord would let His voice be heard. He did know that the Lord would take him Home after many tribulations.

It is Saturday, January 31, 1953. That afternoon there is a fierce storm. Stavenisse is located on the island, Tholen. The water from the North Sea roars towards the island along the Eastern Schelde River. The water climbs higher and higher. High tide and low tide always alternate, but today there is no low tide. The ships in the harbour protrude high above the dyke.

Leen is drinking coffee at the home of the other elder, Johannes Slager, who later becomes minister. "I still do not know which sermon I have to read tomorrow," says Leen.

"Oh," says Slager, "it is not the Lord's Day yet. You will surely find one."

"Last week was so extraordinary," says Leen. "You read the sermon on Psalm 119. 120, by Reverend Smijtegelt."

"Yes, yes, Potappel, it was strange. I still do not know why I had to read about judgment. The text was: 'My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee; and I am afraid of Thy judgments.' It was a Prayer Day sermon by Smijtegelt which does not fit at this time of the year. We are so close to Christmas, and then to have a Prayer Day sermon. The congregation had expected something about Anna or Simeon in the temple, did they not? But I had to read this one, I could not do otherwise."

Leen looks at the elder, pensively. "Later on we might understand why the Lord wanted that warning sermon read; and also why you had to address the congregation so earnestly. I do not know; I do not know anything. Everything is shut up. We yield the matter to the Lord."

"But something is threatening. We all felt that in church."

"Yes, I have heard many talking about it this week, yet. The sermon made the people uneasy. Would the Lord come with His judgments on the sins? How? When?"

Both men quietly sit together for a while. Then Leen gets up. Deep in thought, Leen walks to his house. It is next to that of Elder Slager. Something is very strange about that sermon. It seems as if something is closed in his head and in his heart. No matter how much he seeks for a sermon in his books, he cannot find a single one suitable to read in church tomorrow morning. How is it going to go?

Outside the wind is increasing in strength. It becomes a hurricane. The water had never risen that high. It becomes a high tide again, while there was no low tide that Saturday afternoon. High tide brings even more water. It runs in all directions. The storm batters the coasts.

In the middle of the night, the siren wails. Leen and Slager and many others hurry to the dyke to see how high the water has come. Everyone is shocked by the sea. Enormous waves, metres high, come rolling in, threateningly topped by angry white caps. They break up on the dyke in the harbour. Men are lugging sand bags and struggle with the storm. How long will the dykes hold against this hurricane?

Leen and Slager look at each other. What should they do in this great distress?

"I am going to my wife!" shouts Slager.

Leen barely hears him because of the howling of the wind. But he understands. "Yes, I am going to Sien."

Slager comes home and there finds his worried wife. Together they bow their knees.

"I do not know, but something is going to happen this night," says Slager.

"Yes," nods his wife, "we have to get some stuff together and go upstairs."

The dyke at the harbour did not hold. The waters flowed into the polders where the people lived. They are caught by surprise while they sleep.

(to be concluded)

Slightly adapted

THE GREAT TEACHER

Many years ago, a young boy was reading a book in his native language in a land (a part of India) where the Bible was hardly known at all. The book said that there is a Great Teacher who knows and can teach men all things. The imagination of this young boy was fired. He was going to find and meet this Great Teacher! But where was He to be found? As the boy grew up he went throughout his native land in search of this Great Teacher, but although he met many wise people who knew some things, he found no one who could tell him everything!

Eventually he returned to his home village, disappointed, and ready to give up his search. However on his return he found an English officer, who had been assigned to an engineering project in his area. Being a man of God, this man, whose name was Captain Haig, kept the Lord's Day for worship, and not hiding his light under a bushel, he gathered as many of his workers as would come to hear him read the Scriptures. Only one of the books of the Bible had at that time been translated into Telegu, the native language, so he had only the Gospel as recorded by Matthew to read to his congregation.

One Lord's Day, Captain Haig was reading the words of the Lord Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, which you find in Matthew 5, 6 and 7. When he reached the part where Jesus speaks of praying to the Father in secret, and that He will reward such openly, this young man eagerly jumped to his feet and said: "Sahib, let me see that Book, for there is the Great Teacher who will teach me all things." The Holy Spirit had opened this young man's eyes to see that the God who knows what things are done and said in secret and makes them known, must know all things!

Soon after this, Captain Haig had to return to England, but he left a copy of the Gospel of Matthew in the hands of this young seeker. It was said that this young man studied the Bible as few do. He studied it on his knees, asking the Lord to open his eyes to see the truth. (How many of our young readers, having the whole Bible, do that, we wonder?)

Some time later, the Captain returned to the village and he

found that with no human teacher, and only one book of the Holy Bible, the Gospel of Matthew, this young man had been truly converted and deeply taught the way of salvation. Not only that, so great was his love for the truth, he could not hold it back but had to tell his fellow villagers, too. He eventually became a minister of the gospel to the Telegu people and over the years of his ministry hundreds of his fellow countrymen were also wrought upon by the same Holy Spirit who had so wonderfully taught him.

Our minds go to the woman of Samaria who in John 4 confessed that He “told me all things that ever I did.” Her testimony was wonderfully used so that many others said: “We have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.” “What hath God wrought!”

Editor

GOLD

Do you like English lessons at school, or even spelling tests? Yes, words can be very interesting things. Some people even like looking through dictionaries to search different words and find their meanings and history, too.

Have you ever thought of the word *perish*? The dictionary defines it as *to rot and decay*. Perhaps in the winter when it is very cold, Mother has put a hot water bottle into your bed, and unbeknown to Mother it has perished, so when you climb into bed, instead of being warm and cosy, the bed is damp and cold. Yes, the bottle has leaked water, because the rubber casing has broken up because it has *perished*.

Many times we read in the Bible of things which perish. The Apostle Peter speaks of this in his First Epistle, chapter 1 verse 7. Simply, what Peter is saying is that when our trust in the Lord Jesus is tested in the many things that we meet with in life, and God helps us through this trial, then this experience is more valuable to us than gold! Now, we know that gold is much valued in the world in which we live. When the so-called money markets of the world become very worried, as we have

seen recently, then men buy real bars of gold because it is considered the safest thing to invest in.

If people have to have their teeth repaired by the dentist, the dentist will sometimes use gold to make a new part of the damaged tooth, because it will not corrode and is not liable to wear easily away. Gold is used in our electrical equipment, such as the connection in the ink cartridges for our computer printers: because gold is a good conductor of electricity.

So we have three attributes of gold, which is a faint picture of the written Word of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Word of God is of extreme value; is of an everlasting quality and is good for our never-dying souls, for by God's help as we read the Scriptures we are led (conducted) by the power of the Holy Spirit into the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

What a most wonderful thing it would be if everyone who reads this magazine was brought to see God's Word, the Bible, as precious as gold.

Contributed

"TO WHOM ELSE CAN WE GO?"

Some years ago, a little boy of about four years of age, wanted to help his mummy clear the table after tea. He gathered all the plates together in quite a pile. His mummy told him not to carry so many at once, but he said: "I'll be alright!" All went well for a few steps and then it happened! One of the plates slipped, and before anything could be done, the whole lot clattered to the floor and lay in broken pieces.

What the little boy did next should be a lesson to us all. Instead of making excuses, or running away, he ran straight to his mother's arms, asking for forgiveness.

How often do sinners make excuses or run away from the God whose law has been broken, instead of fleeing to Him, the only One who can forgive sins, for mercy? As Peter said: "Lord, to whom else can we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life (forgiveness)."

(The above was told by his mother many years later. The little boy is now, we believe, in heaven.)

Editor

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XIX)**Prevent**

Today the word “prevent” is used in the sense of stopping something from happening. So for example we might prevent a tender plant from being damaged by frost by covering it or placing it in shelter.

“Prevent” did not always mean this. The first three letters “pre-” means before, and “-vent” is derived from a Latin word meaning to come, so together the meaning of prevent is to come before. This is the sense in which it is used in the Bible.

When the Psalmist says: “I prevented the dawning of the morning,” he did not mean that he stopped the morning from appearing. He meant he was awake before the morning: his trouble was so great that he must seek the Lord both night and day.

The Psalmist, in distress over his sin, says: “The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.” This is similar to his cry: “My sin is ever before me.” At another time, he says, speaking of God’s mercy having gone before him: “Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness.”

The Lord’s “going before” is a gracious principle of the Scriptures. The Lord God goes before His people in all things. The Lord Jesus, describing Himself as the Good Shepherd, says that “when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them.”

He went before His people in eternity past when He chose a people for His own. In eternity, God ordained their salvation, and in covenant love the Son of God agreed to redeem them from their sin. This was before the world was created, before man sinned, and His mercy is unchangeable. All illness is a result of sin, yet before man sinned, God went before and made a kind provision when He created the herbs from which we derive medicines to relieve our illnesses.

The Lord goes before His people when the Holy Spirit quickens them into life when dead in trespasses and sins. The Lord Jesus has gone before them, suffering at Calvary for their sin.

Such is God's love to His people that He goes before them even when they rebel. We see God's preventing mercy in the case of Jonah. Jonah was disobedient to God's command, but God would have him go to Nineveh and would not let him perish. God prepared the storm to hinder his progress. When Jonah was thrown overboard, he was saved by being swallowed by a great fish that God had already prepared.

There is no temptation that His people suffer that He has not endured. He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He has gone before them in affliction too: "In all their affliction He was afflicted." He says: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" – it is already accomplished.

Yes, the Lord has gone before His people in all things. He has decreed all things for them, and there is nothing that they need but He will supply. He will lead them all their journey here below. Just as the Ark of the Covenant went before the children of Israel into Jordan, so the Lord has gone before His people in death. He has taken away the curse so that death has no more sting for them. He went before His people to prepare a place for them in heaven, and He is there now interceding for them, and they must be brought safely there at last.

Contributed

BEARING THE REPROACH

I remember when I was quite young spiritually, and I had to take a stand, and it was very hard. I felt the reproach, and I felt it keenly, and the bitterness of it. All my companions were going out, and I had to refuse to go with them. I was in Rochdale that day, and I was going quite close to John Kershaw's chapel, when this word came: "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." You children, you young people, there will be that reproach that you will have to bear.

B.A. Ramsbottom

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE EPISTLES****The Epistle to the Galatians (I)**

This letter was written to a province in which there was more than one Christian church. Galatia was a province in what is modern-day Turkey and is named by the Apostle Peter in the introduction of his first epistle: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1 Peter 1. 1). The seven churches in Asia in the second and third chapters of the Revelation, were also all in what is now known as Turkey. We can safely say that this area is really the cradle of Christianity.

To understand the Apostle Paul in this epistle, we must realise that he was, before his conversion to Christ, a strict Pharisaical Jew. He tells us in his Epistle to the Philippians that he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews and concerning the law a Pharisee. The Lord often works in this way. He took this man, Saul of Tarsus, stopped him in his mad career and made him a monument of His grace. We have this beautiful expression in the first chapter of this epistle: "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Galatians 1. 13-16). The particular expression I refer to is, "called me by His grace." May it be our chief concern to be called by grace.

There were certain Jews in the churches in Galatia that were teaching that the Christian believers were still subject to the Old Testament laws. Paul recognized the gross error that the Galatian churches (this was written to a group of churches) were falling into because it was the very thing that he had been

delivered from. It appears from the Acts of the Apostles and in this epistle, that he had to openly oppose the Apostle Peter and others on the distinction between law and gospel. Christian believers who were not Jews did not have to be circumcised. He does not only refer to the ceremonial law but also the moral law. We wish to be very clear on this point, as the Apostle is in all his epistles. The holy moral law of God contained in the Ten Commandments is as eternal and inviolable now as it was when first given on Mount Sinai. The Lord Jesus Christ said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5. 17-19).

In other words, the holy law of God has not and never will be abrogated (set aside). The Lord Jesus Christ goes on with this statement: "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5. 20). What does He mean? The Pharisees believed that they could live a holy, perfect life consistent with the law of God: in other words, they were self-righteous.

This was the very error being introduced into the Galatian churches and the dear apostle would have none of it. They were being falsely taught that although they were righteous in Christ, yet as Christian believers they could now produce a righteousness of their own to add to the righteousness of Christ. See how in chapter 3 he shows them the fallacy of this teaching: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only

would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3. 1-3). We are justified by faith in Jesus Christ not by the works of the law.

(To be continued)

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about DECEPTION. 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. Which one of the Ten Commandments shows how wrong it is to deceive someone else? (Exodus 20. 16)
2. "Ye shall not surely die." Who deceived whom by these lying words? (Genesis 3. 4)
3. Complete the solemn warning given in Galatians 6. 7. "Be not deceived; ..."
4. Jacob deceived his own father Isaac. Who did he pretend to be? (Genesis 27. 22-24)
5. Later Jacob himself was deceived. Who was he referring to when he said: "Your father hath deceived me"? (Genesis 31. 7)
6. In what way did Jacob's own sons deceive him after they had sold Joseph to the Midianites? (Genesis 37)
7. Which two people tried to deceive the Apostle Peter about the price of some land and were struck dead? (Acts 5)
8. "And David's place was empty." (1 Samuel 20. 25) Where was David and where did Jonathan say he was?
9. David afterwards fled from Saul and went to see Ahimelech, who asked why he was alone. What lying excuse did David give? (1 Samuel 21)
10. "Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee." To which godly king were these mocking words addressed and why do you think he was *not* deceived?

ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS

1. Jonah was fleeing to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.
2. He arose, rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea: "Peace, be still."
3. Paul. "Fear not, Paul: thou must be brought before Cæsar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."
4. Gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks.
5. "Cast the net on the right side of the ship."
6. "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." (Luke 5. 3-5)
7. Zebulun. (Genesis 49. 13)
8. James and John. (Matthew 4. 21)
9. "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters." (Psalm 107. 23-24)
10. King David's household. The River Jordan. (2 Sam 19. 18)

Contributed

THE HEAVENLY WEAVER

One of God's children was passing through a very difficult time in his life. Nothing seemed to be going as he would have wished it, and he even began to doubt whether there was a God, or if there is one, that He cared for him at all.

One day he had to visit a close friend of his who worked in a carpet factory where oriental carpets were being woven. As he entered the weaving room, he became interested to see how the rugs and carpets were produced.

One such rug was suspended above the workers. To his inexperienced eye it seemed nothing but confusion! Lots of coloured wool hung down in a disorderly fashion. The workers were rushing to and fro, as directed by their boss, who was directing the weaving from above at a different level. As he asked them, so they handed without question the various colours he needed.

As the visitor needed to see his friend who was on a higher floor, he climbed the stairs, and now he looked down on the carpet. What a transformation! Now he could see a most

beautiful picture woven on to the canvas. As he gazed at it, he learned an important lesson about God's dealings with His children.

We can only look at the underside of God's dealings with us. Often these seem as confusing as the underside of the carpet seemed to be. God always looks at it from above, and He knows what He is about. When the weaving of the life of a child of God is finished, then he will be shown by God how wonderfully everything has worked together for good in a perfect way.

Adapted

THE PLAN OF THE MASTER WEAVER

My life is but a weaving between the Lord and me,
I may not choose the colours, He knows what they should be:
For He can view the pattern upon the upper side,
While I can see it only on this, the underside ...

Sometimes He weaveth sorrow, which seemeth strange to me,
But I will trust His judgment, and work on faithfully.
'Tis He who fills the shuttle, and He knows what is best.
So I shall weave in earnest, leaving to Him the rest ...

Not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly
Shall God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why –
The dark threads are as needed in the Weaver's skilful hand
As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has planned.

Anonymous

QUESTION: How does Christ execute the office of a king?

ANSWER: Christ executes the office of a king by subduing the elect to Himself, ruling and defending them, and conquering all His and their enemies.

Psalm 110. 1-3; 1 Corinthians 15. 25; Philippians 2. 9-11;
Hebrews 1. 8.

The Friendly Companion



“Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.”
Mark 13. 33.

August 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

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

Volume 135

August 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	171
Our Front Cover Picture	172
"Whatsoever A Man Soweth That Shall He Also Reap"	173
Editor's Postbag	173
For The Very Little Ones: "At Thy Word"	174
Colouring Text: Luke 5. 5.	175
Bible Lessons: The Feast Of Tabernacles	176
A Boy From Stavenisse	178
The Deadly Hook	181
The Unwelcome (?) Stranger – A Warning!	183
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XX)	185
Supercomputer To Brainstorm The Human Brain	187
Bible Study For The Older Ones: The Epistles	
The Epistle To The Galatians (II)	188
Bible Questions: Foolish Things	190
Poetry: The Cry Of The Poor	192

The Editor recently received two copies of 'Leen Potappel' with an invoice but no name or address. He wishes speedily to pay his debt; would the person who kindly sent them please contact him.

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

You will, no doubt, have heard of the Second World War, from grandparents and others who lived through that terrible time for Europe. What is often forgotten is that although between nations there was animosity and bloodshed, yet between some individual soldiers on either side there were unwritten rules of kindness which were followed, even though they were fighting on different sides of the conflict.

When the Allies (the countries that were fighting Germany) at last invaded France to recapture land lost, an assault had to be made on Dieppe. Here the coastline is very rocky and one platoon was ordered to scale the cliffs to gain a bridgehead against the Germans.

The captain, a man named Walker, was leading the way up the cliff with his men following, when about one third of the way up he heard a cry of "vasser." This is the German word for "water." Looking to one side he saw a German soldier lying wounded. What should he do? He had no water left in his own flask, and anyway this man was an enemy!

He did not take long to make up his mind. The barriers that lay between them as soldiers must be laid aside. Seeing a stream nearby, which the wounded man pointed out to him, he cautiously put his own life at greater risk than he otherwise would have needed to, and he filled both the flask of the German and his own, and returned safely.

This man's action was very much like that of the Good Samaritan who overcame all natural prejudice and attended so carefully to the needs of the man who had fallen among thieves.

The Word of God tells us to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Especially it is important that those who call themselves Christians should remember this rule. We may have every reason to disagree with others who do not believe as we do,

yet they will be much more ready to respect what we hold dear, if we can show kindness without compromising truth.

But it is especially pleasing to God, when He sees one 'giving a cup of water in His name' to one of His people because they are His. The Lord Jesus said, that such would not lose their reward.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The photo of the beautiful sundial on our cover this month was taken by Alison Tugwell of Chippenham. The sundial is to be found at West Overton Church, near Marlborough in Wiltshire. Before clocks and watches became common, the church clock or sundials such as this were the main means of telling the time. The real reason why churches have a tower, is that at the time of their construction, the common people could not read, and were dependant on the bells to tell them when to come to worship.

It is good, however, to see a Scripture text as well over this sundial sending a message not just for the time of day, but a warning to be on the alert for dangers, many of which are at first unseen.

This text comes from Mark 13. 33, which reads: "*Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.*"

The Lord Jesus had been warning His disciples of the troubles that will precede His Second Coming. In particular, He told them that no one, except His Father, knows the day or the hour of His return. So we are exhorted to be ready. How can we be ready? By being taught to watch for signs of His Coming and to be much in prayer as Paul was, when he could say: "*I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.*"

How alert we need to be! Our lives may come to an end with no warning. The two hundred and twenty passengers on

the Air France flight from Rio-de-Janeiro on May 31st little thought that they would not reach Paris. But suddenly tragedy overtakes the plane and all those souls are launched into eternity. We wonder how many, if any, were watching and praying?

May God teach us and help us to take heed to the message on the sundial and then we may be able to say with one of the hymns we sometimes sing:

“If my hope on Christ is stayed,
Let Him come when He thinks best.”

Editor

**“WHATSOEVER A MAN SOWETH,
THAT SHALL HE ALSO REAP”**

Some years ago there was a godly man who worked on the farm of an ungodly farmer. Many were the conversations they had, but the master could not see the necessity of being a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

One day the farmer told this man to plant a field of barley, instead of which he went out and sowed the field with oats! Perhaps we should not condone this disobedience, but the godly man wanted to teach his master a lesson.

When the master realised that the field was sown with oats and not barley, he was very cross, and asked the godly man to explain his actions.

“I hoped that I would reap barley,” said the godly man.

“How silly,” said the master, “how can you expect to reap barley when you have sown oats?”

“Well,” said the godly man, “you are sowing a life of sin by neglecting the Bible and God, and yet you expect to reap heaven at the end!”

Adapted

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from JENNIFER BUSS; FREDDIE COTTINGTON; HARRIET MACPHERSON and TYLER WHITE.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**“AT THY WORD”**

One morning, people crowded about Jesus by the Sea of Galilee. He sat down in a ship that was Simon Peter's. After it was moved out a little from the shore, Jesus taught them.

When He had finished preaching, Jesus said to Peter: *“Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets”* Peter told Jesus that he had been fishing all night and caught nothing. Yet, he said: *“... at Thy word I will let down the net.”* As soon as Peter obeyed, the net was so full of fishes that it began to break. James and John came with their ship to help, and both ships were filled with fishes. They knew this wonderful catch of fishes was by the power of God.

Simon Peter fell down at Jesus' knees in awe. How sinful he felt before Him! Jesus said to him: *“Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.”* When they had brought the ships to land, Peter, James, and John: *“forsook all, and followed Him.”* They gave up their nets and fishing to follow Jesus and preach His word to others.

QUESTIONS:

1. What had Peter caught after fishing all night?
2. As soon as he obeyed Jesus, what was the net full of?
3. From that time on what would he catch?

Please 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. Help.
2. Obeyed.
3. Believed on Him.

Contributed

66

o o o

nevertheless
at Thy
Word I will
let down
the net.”
Luke 5. 5.

BIBLE LESSONS**THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES**

After being shunned by a village of Samaritans and healing ten lepers, Jesus finally approached the city of Jerusalem. Great crowds were already gathered for the yearly feast called the Feast of Tabernacles. Everywhere you looked there were booths or huts made from branches of trees. The people slept in them at night. It was to remind them of their forefathers, who lived in tents during the forty years journey through the wilderness to the land of Canaan.

You can imagine how the children must have looked forward to this feast with great excitement. Not only did they sleep in their huts, but they were going to the famous city of Jerusalem, where they might even catch a glimpse of their High Priest.

However, at this time something else added to the excitement. Everywhere people were huddled in groups, talking about the great Teacher from Galilee. They asked one another if anyone had seen Him yet. Many hoped He would come so they could hear Him preach and perhaps see some miracle performed. Others, who hated Him, hoped He would come so they could find some occasion to put Him to death.

To a young boy or girl, it must have seemed like everyone was talking about the Prophet. What division it caused! Some were asking: *"Where is He?"* Others were saying: *"He is a good Man."* Still others answered: *"Nay; but He deceiveth the people."*

Halfway through the feast (about the fourth day) Jesus went up to the temple and began to teach. Perhaps this was on the Sabbath Day, as it usually fell during the feast. As the people listened to His words, they were astounded at His wisdom. They asked: *"How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"* It was the Scribes who were taught the knowledge of Scriptures, but He was not one of them. Jesus answered: *"My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me."* By this, He declared that He had come from God. After saying many

things unto them, suddenly Jesus asked the people: *“Why go ye about to kill Me?”* The people looked at one another in disbelief. Who was trying to kill Him? They answered Him: *“Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill Thee?”* They did not know that their leaders and the Pharisees were plotting to kill Jesus.

Many of the people believed on Him and said one to another: *“When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this Man hath done?”* This must be that long promised Messiah.

When the Pharisees heard that the people spoke such things, they and the chief priests sent officers to arrest Him. When the officers came to Jesus, they first listened to His words. Every word that Jesus spoke was wonderful and powerful; especially on the last day of the feast, when He cried out: *“If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”*

Many of the people said that He was the Prophet Moses spoke of. Others said that He must surely be the Christ. Others questioned whether Christ would really come out of Galilee, for the Scriptures said that He would come from the town of Bethlehem.

The officers sent by the chief priests and Pharisees returned without Him. When they were asked why they had not brought Him, they answered: *“NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN.”*

You can read about this in John chapter 7 verses 10 to 53.

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the name of the great feast?
2. What did the people sleep in at night?
3. As Jesus taught the people, what were they astounded at?
4. What did Jesus say to any man who thirsts? (7 words)
5. What did the officers say about Jesus to the chief priests? (6 words)

Please 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. Ten.
2. "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."
3. "Go show yourselves unto the priests."
4. To give Glory to God or (To glorify and praise God.)
5. Sin.

G. L. TenBroeke

A BOY FROM STAVENISSE

Chapter 20. Waves Over Stavenisse

Only an hour after the siren sounded its warning, danger comes from a totally different side. The people always feared for the dykes at the harbour. Now the tidal wave comes rolling in to the sea dyke. Like a treacherous beast of prey, it pounces on the 1,800 metre-long sea dyke of the island Tholen. A towering wall of water breaks through the dyke and sweeps into the polders. There are farms in the polder. Not all residents heard Stavenisse's siren. Some sleep, others have crawled into the attics. Suddenly the tidal wave is there. The farms are swept away like matchboxes. The ocean water takes the debris along and rams the village with it. The fields change into a seething sea. The people had always thought they were safe behind the sea dykes.

This night, from Saturday to Sunday, February 1, 1953, the sea enters the fields with a giant leap. The dykes do not mean a thing. The sea takes huge bites out of them. The salt water sweeps and swirls into the polders in wide streams. This night very many people, cows, horses, sheep, dogs, etc. drown. Of all the villages in Zeeland, Nieuwerkerk and Stavenisse are hit the hardest. 153 people drown in Stavenisse.

Slager still wants to get some books downstairs. "Husband, come upstairs quickly!" shouts his wife. Suddenly, Slager sees the water pouring inside. He hurries to the stairs and runs upstairs. The door loudly bangs shut behind him by the force

of the foaming water. He is just in time! Together they see the water rising and crawl into an even higher attic.

At first there was not all that much water in the village. Some even thought the sirens had wailed because there was a fire somewhere. But now the tidal wave drives the seawater through the streets of Stavenisse. Somewhere in another house a man tugs to open the hall door, but his wife is pulling with all her might on the other side. "Open up, open up," he screams in mortal fear. He drowns in his own house. Animals perish in their stables. When the walls cave in, they lifelessly drift along with the debris and beams.

In the midst of the deafening roar of the hurricane, Slager and his wife sit close to each other. The water roars underneath them. The front and back gable ends are torn off the house. Only the sides are still standing. Through the window of the one side gable, Slager sees his furniture and books floating by.

"The omnipotence of God," he whispers, trembling with awe. They are waiting for death.

The night passes. With the dawn of day, comes deliverance. When the storm has subsided somewhat they realise how terrible the flood is. People come by with boats to pick up the survivors from the roofs and attics. At two o'clock a boat comes by Slager's house. Finally an end comes to the many hours of cold and fear. They are carefully helped into the boat.

"Potappel? Where is Potappel?" asks one of the rescuers.

Slager and his wife stare at him. "He was not with us," says Slager. "He was going to go into the attic of his own house."

"Is he not with you?" the other again asks urgently.

A deep silence falls among the occupants of the boat. Everyone looks at the place where Potappel's house stood. There were four houses along the Molenpad. Two were washed away during the night. Nothing of Leen's house remained. A leftover beam protrudes from the water at an angle. Waves wash around a remaining piece of wall. The people look at each

other in dismay. They cannot believe it. Wordlessly, they shake their heads. Between the floating dead animals and all kinds of debris, the boat finds its way to Tholen.

The rumour soon circulates among the inhabitants of Stavenisse who were rescued or had fled.

“Potappel is missing.”

At first there still is hope. Sometimes a person is found who has clung to a tree or sat on a pole for a day and a night. They do not give up hope and anxiously seek for their leader.

“Elder Potappel is a child of God. Would the Lord not want to spare him?” the people ask themselves.

Leen is found at last, together with his niece. During that night the waves had dragged him out of the house. The house had collapsed. Leen has drowned. It was the time when he may enter into the House of his Father after many tribulations. The Lord had promised that, long ago. Leen had often longed to be with the Lord eternally. But Leen first had to finish his work. The Lord had used him to warn young and old against sin. He never tired of saying that you are only truly happy when you know the Lord Jesus. Now his task is finished. In the dark night of February 1, 1953, he finally went Home to the Lord. He is delivered from care, sorrow and sin.

EPILOGUE

Friends have buried Leen Potappel in Bergen op Zoom. In the night of the disaster almost two thousand people perished. Many casualties were found after the waters receded. Later, when the island had dried up, all the people from Stavenisse who had drowned and were buried elsewhere, were reburied in their own village. If you ever come to the island of Tholan, you should go to look at the mass grave in Stavenisse. There you can find the last resting place of one hundred and twenty-eight drowned people. There you can also find the place where Leen and his niece, Maria Van Oeveren, are buried.

Slightly adapted

THE DEADLY HOOK

Did you ever hear the saying: “Using a sprat to catch a mackerel”? It came from the practice of the old-time fisherman who was prepared to lose one small good fish – used as bait – in order to catch a much larger and even better fish. The saying came into use to describe the action of a person giving away as a lure something of small value in order to obtain something of greater value.

Recently I watched some anglers fishing from a pier. They were on holiday from Glasgow and obviously enjoying the sun and soft sea breezes together with the thrill of landing fairly big fish. One little family group were all excitedly casting their baits far out into the deeper water and then reeling them in again in short bursts. Every other minute one of them would shout: “Got one,” and with rod bending and reel creaking would work the struggling fish closer until finally it lay flapping on the planks of the pier. Their only disappointment lay in the fact that every fish captured was a mackerel. Clearly they did not prize their catch as much as the old-time fishermen who knew this fish to be one of the most nutritious there is.

What specially interested me was the lure each was using. It was a bright metal strip shaped so that, when drawn through the water, it revolved. Attached to this was a deadly hook. The poor mackerel, taking the metal strip to be a small fish such as a sprat, rushed to seize it, but instead found its mouth gripped by the hook and was thus caught and drawn ashore. By this method nothing at all was given away to catch the mackerel, not even a sprat. The lure was so durable that it could be used again and again so that the fish was being caught at no cost at all, you might say.

This set me thinking. What other case did I know of, when someone appeared to be giving away something attractive in order to obtain at no cost something valuable for a prey? Why, is not this the very thing that Satan is doing all the time in order to keep sinners in his grip? He uses many lures, fully as attractive to us as the glittering spoon bait is to the mackerel.

He will say to a boy or girl: "See how attractive this forbidden pleasure is. It will be quite safe to go to the cinema, or to smoke, or to join the gang for an hour of vandalism, or to read crime stories without your parents knowing. Think of the enjoyment you will have!" Satan has some lure or other for young people of all ages. He knows exactly what appeals to each, what desires are strongest, which are the points of least resistance to temptation in each one.

It costs Satan nothing to make these offers of enjoyment. Do you remember how he showed Jesus from a high mountain all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them? Then he said: "All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." How bold and impudent he was to offer the Saviour what belonged to God! But the prince of this world, as the devil is sometimes called, speaks as if these things were his to give, and promises them in all their glittering variety to any soul that will listen to him. He offers them in return for serving him. And how can we do that? Why, just by sinning; by transgressing God's law, by coveting some earthly good or desiring some sinful pleasure, by neglecting our souls and despising Christ as Saviour, God's unspeakable Gift.

And what happens when someone yields to temptations to do these things rather than obey God's call to repent and believe the gospel? This happens: the conscience is wounded and the wrongdoer goes farther away from God. Also the sins committed tend to become habitual; further temptations are more easily yielded to; and Satan has, as it were, that person on a hook, more firmly his servant than ever.

Now if this state of affairs goes on until the end of life, the soul that so often darted after the attractive lures presented by Satan will find to its dismay that these things had no value in comparison with the loss of the soul. "What shall it profit a man," says Christ, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Beware then of sin, however pleasant a form it may take – be it the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, or the pride of

life. Satan, like the fisherman, is enticing you with something that has little or no value, in order that he may bring you to suffer with himself in the place of unending punishment.

Satan has no good features at all. He is all evil and intends only evil. May you seek God's grace to reject Satan's lures and flee to Christ, who is able to save you, soul and body, and bring you to that holy place where He dwells and where there are pleasures for evermore. Cry to Christ for help in this duty and He will not disregard your prayer.

(A. McPherson) The Young People's Magazine

THE UNWELCOME (?) STRANGER

A Warning!

A few years after I was born, my Dad met a stranger who was new to our small Texas town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer and soon invited him to live with our family. The stranger was quickly accepted and was around from then on.

As I grew up, I never questioned his place in my family: he had a special niche. My parents were very good parents in many ways. My mother taught me good from evil, and my Dad taught me to obey. But the stranger ... he was our story-teller. He would keep us spell-bound for hours, with adventures, mysteries and even comedies! (Even though we would never go to a cinema!)

If I wanted to know anything about politics, history, or science, he always claimed that he knew the answers about the past, understood the present and even seemed able to predict the future. He took the family to the first major league game (although we would never have been allowed to go and watch a match!). He made me laugh and he made me cry. The stranger never stopped talking, but Dad did not seem to mind.

Sometimes I noticed that Mum would get up quietly while the rest of us were shushing each other, to listen to what he had to say, and she would go to the kitchen for peace and quiet. (I wonder now if she ever prayed for the stranger to leave!)

Dad ruled our family with certain moral convictions, but the stranger never felt obliged to honour these. Profanity, for example, was never allowed in our home: not from our friends nor any visitors. Our long-time visitor, however, could swear with words which made my Dad squirm and my mother blush. But he was never asked to leave, as he should have been.

We were never allowed the free use of alcohol, but the stranger encouraged us to try it on a regular basis, as he did cigarettes and tobacco, which he made look “cool.”

My parents were very strict in their morals, but the stranger could talk freely (much too freely!) about things which should never once be mentioned in a Christian home. His comments were sometimes blatant, and sometimes even worse.

I know now that my early concepts about relationships were influenced strongly by the stranger. Time after time he opposed the values of my parents, yet he was seldom rebuked ... and NEVER asked to leave as he should have been.

More than fifty years have passed since the stranger moved in with our family. He has blended right in and is not nearly so fascinating as he was at first. Still if you could walk into my parents' den today, you would still find him sitting over in his corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and watch him draw his pictures.

His name?

We just call him “TV.”

He has a wife now ... we call her “Computer.”

Adapted

“It is a bad world. But I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and holy people, who have learned a great secret. They have found a joy which is a thousand times better than any of the pleasures of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not They have overcome the world. These people are Christians – and I am one of them.”

Cyprian, the Bishop of Carthage; third century AD

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XX)**Conversation**

The word conversation appears in the Bible several times, in both the Old and New Testaments. When we think of conversation, we usually mean people speaking one to another and having a conversation together. The English word conversation comes from a Latin word *conversari*, which means “to live with.” So our conversation is not only what we say, but includes what we do and our motives. In its full sense, conversation describes the way we live, and this is what the word means in Scripture. Other people see the things we do and say, and this shows how we live. But more importantly, God sees and knows the heart, and we are accountable to Him for our actions and thoughts.

The Bible tells us that we are born with a sinful nature, and are dead to spiritual things and godliness. We have “our conversation ... in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.” This is the state of all mankind by nature. Even if we are brought up to attend the faithful preaching of the Word, to read the Bible and are kept from much outward sin, this does not alter our original state. Paul tells us of his “conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion” and Peter speaks of “your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers” (meaning that outward religion alone is vain).

If we are to have an upright or good conversation, we need a new nature, “because the carnal mind is enmity against God,” and “they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” That new nature must be given from above. We must be called by divine grace, and we must have the Holy Spirit to dwell within us, and this is the gift of God.

Peter says: “As He that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” The work of the Holy Spirit in the call by grace reveals to a sinner his sin. He feels the very opposite of holy, and cannot find anything in himself to commend to God, nor can he find any improvement. But this holy conversation that God requires does not come from within. Notice the words “as”

and “so.” Just as the call comes from a holy God, and does not come from sinful nature, so (in the same manner) the holy conversation comes from God alone. By grace, the sinner desires to mortify the things of the flesh and to depend entirely on the righteousness of God in Christ; indeed it is to live with Christ.

So those who are called by grace will no longer be able to live as they once did. There will be a complete change in their conversation. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” “Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” The commandment of Almighty God to His people is: “Come out from among them, and be ye separate ... touch not the unclean thing.” Why? Because “ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them.” “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.”

The Bible describes the conversation of God’s people as holy, upright, good, honest, chaste and without covetousness, and there are many other exhortations concerning their conduct or conversation. It will be the desire of God’s people to honour the Lord in all they do. They mourn over their sins and after Christ, seeking to live humbly in His sight, and not thinking anything of themselves. It was said of the disciples that “they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.” Can this be said of us?

We are often reminded in the epistles that this life is short and that this world is not our home. Our conversation should reflect this. “What manner of persons ought [we] to be, in all holy conversation and godliness.” Paul says, “our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.” May you and I be among those who, by God’s grace have such a conversation.

Contributed

SUPERCOMPUTER TO BRAINSTORM THE HUMAN BRAIN

Engineers have created the world's fastest supercomputer, at Los Alamos Labs, USA, at a cost of \$US120 million.

This computer will perform more than a million billion (10^{15}) operations per second, or 1.1 Petaflops. This is a million times faster than a typical high performance personal computer.

Why all this “crunch” power? One purpose is to run *PetaVision*, a programme that simulates the operation of the brain's processing of visual information from the eye. For example, you might see a bird flying in the sky, which you immediately recognize as a bird. It takes such a “Petaflop” supercomputer to do a similar thing.

According to the article about this, the human brain has 10^{15} synapses (nerve connections) involved in processing the information involved in seeing, so that mimicking its operation requires a supercomputer with Petaflop performance. This computer fills a whole room – it is just as well that our brains do not have to take up so much room!

Basic brain facts

A recent article outlined some astounding facts regarding the human brain:

- Estimated total number of nerve cells (neurons): 100 billion.
- Number of connections in the brain: 500 trillion (5×10^{14}).
- Number of new nerve connections made *every second*: 1 million.
- Processing capacity: 100 trillion instructions per second (10^{14}).

Neuroscientists do not yet have much idea how the brain works. The latest ideas involve it working like a massive probability calculator, making predictions and progressively reducing the errors on those predictions. So far, for example, when listening to someone talk, we are always guessing what they are going to say next – and this can get in the way of hearing what the person actually says! This also enables us to

make sense of a distorted voice over a noisy phone line. But just how the brain does those probability calculations is a mystery.

It is no mystery to our Creator, of course. When we think of how incredible our brains are, we should spare a moment to think, using those brains, just how infinite the One who designed our brains, must be!

*Don Batten, B.Sc.Agr. (Hons.), Ph.D.
Creation June-August 2009*

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE EPISTLES

The Epistle to the Galatians (II)

Paul uses various analogies from Scripture to prove his point that we considered last month: that we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ, not by the works of the law.

God covenanted with Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law was given (chapter 3 v 17). In other words, all Old Testament believers were not justified by the law but by faith in Jesus Christ. They were watching for His appearing. "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3. 22-26). Please note that when words are in italics in our Bible, they were added by the translator. "The law was our schoolmaster ... unto Christ." Now "we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

In Chapter 2 we read: "For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified

with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Galatians 2. 18-21). Many teach that the law is the believer's rule of life. This Scripture completely contradicts that. Does it say: 'the life I now live I live by the law of God'? No!!!! It says: "The life which I now live ... I live by the faith of the Son of God." Let us be clear on this point, a Christian believer, following the Lord Jesus Christ (their Law Fulfiller), will not wish to walk contrary to the holy law of God. If we are following Christ we will not wish to break the holy law that He came to fulfil, not because we are under a legal covenant, but because we love our Lord Jesus Christ: we have that faith that worketh by love.

Another analogy he uses is in Chapter 4 verses 1-7. An heir to a great estate or fortune is under tutors and governors and not in possession of the fortune he is to inherit until the time appointed by his father. Now he says, the Christian believer is like that under the law but when he or she comes to living faith in Jesus Christ, he or she is no longer under tutors and governors. From verse 22 he uses another illustration of Abraham's sons: the one born to Hagar: Ishmael, the other born to Sarah: Isaac. Ishmael, still in bondage, always has been and always will be, so are all who are under the law. Isaac, the promised seed through whose lineage Christ would come, His spiritual seed are delivered from the law into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and will be forever. All those born again of the Holy Spirit, brought to living faith in Jesus Christ, these and these only are delivered from the law. "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (Galatians 5. 18).

I would like you to read the following Scriptures:

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans 3. 28).

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5. 1).

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5. 1).

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.” (Galatians 3. 10-12).

“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid” (Romans 6. 13-15).

He closes this epistle with those precious words: “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Galatians 6. 14).

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

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

1. What kind of questions should we not ask and why? (2 Timothy 2. 23)

2. Jesus spoke a parable about wise and foolish virgins. What did the foolish ones not do? (Matthew 25. 3)
3. Who did Jesus say was like a foolish man who built his house on the sand? (Matthew 7. 26)
4. Write two things that Solomon says of a foolish son. (Proverbs 10. 1 & 17. 25)
5. "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world..." What for? (1 Corinthians 1. 27)
6. Paul called the Galatians foolish. How had they begun and how were they expecting to be "made perfect"? (Galatians 3)
7. What did the Apostle Paul say was "to them that perish, foolishness"? (1 Corinthians 1)
8. In writing to the Ephesians, Paul warns against foolish talking and jesting. What should there rather be? (Ephesians 5)
9. How may we "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men"? (1 Peter 2)
10. Who said to his wife, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh," and what had she said?

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
2. The serpent (Satan) deceived Eve.
3. "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."
4. Esau.
5. Laban.
6. Joseph's brothers dipped his coat in the blood of a goat to make it look as though a wild animal had killed him. (Genesis 37. 31-35)
7. Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5. 1-3)
8. David was in hiding; Jonathan said he had gone to Bethlehem at the command of his brother. (1 Samuel 20. 24; 29)
9. David claimed that Saul had sent him on some secret business. (1 Samuel 21. 2)
10. Hezekiah (2 Kings 19. 10) was not deceived because God sent an angel which slew 185,000 of the Assyrian army. (verse 35)

Contributed

THE CRY OF THE POOR

With trembling and a downcast look

I take my pen in hand,

Thy ways from me, Oh God, are hid,

But plain to Thee they stand.

The meal is almost done, dear Lord,

The oil is almost out,

Great God in providence, appear

And something bring about.

The children, Lord, we greatly fear,

Will cry for lack of bread,

Thou art our only hope, Oh Lord,

Who hast the ravens fed.

Lord, give us faith to trust in Thee,

Though all things else should fail,

For Thou canst turn our night to day,

Thy power must ere prevail.

Thy providence is ordered well,

Though this we cannot see,

Thou hast provided for Thine own.

Dear Lord, provide for me.

Oh, give me patience then to bear

And wait to see the end,

The trial sure must work for good.

Oh Lord, deliverance send.

(Lines composed by Mary Ann Parish (mother of John Parish, minister at Oakington and Abingdon) at a time of great need).

We need not wonder why the Word of God has been prized in all ages by the family of God; for it is written with such infinite wisdom, that it meets every case, suits every circumstance, fills up every aching void, and is adapted to every condition of life and every state both of body and soul.

J.C. Philpot

The Friendly Companion



A Fragment from an Ancient Manuscript of the Gospel of Mark

“And they went forth, and preached every where,
the Lord working with them, and confirming
the Word with signs following.” Mark 16. 20.

September 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

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

Please note: As from 1st October all correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. D. Christian, 5 Roundwood Gardens, Harpenden, Herts. AL5 3AJ.

Volume 135

September 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	195
Our Front Cover Picture	196
For The Very Little Ones: "Speak The Word"	198
Colouring Text: Matthew 8. 8.	199
Bible Lessons: A Sinful Woman Forgiven	200
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XXI)	202
The Scottish Covenanter	204
Cain's Wife	208
Er Grace	209
"Under The Shadow Of The Almighty"	210
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
The Epistles: The Epistle To The Ephesians	211
Bible Questions: The Life Of Moses	213
Poetry: "In Me Is Thine Help"	214
List Of Names	215

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

How often we are reminded by unexpected events that only God truly knows the future. We may plan and fully expect to do what we have planned, but the words “if the Lord will” should always be added.

Those of you in England who are used to Special Services, will know that in the south it is common to have two services and a tea provided between the services. When I was a boy the words “tea provided” were the most important to my young mind! This was before I had any appetite for spiritual things, which, of course, was the reason for which the services were held. However as I have grown older the words “God willing” are to me much more important than “tea provided,” realising that it is only with God’s permission that our lives continue and that as David said: “My times are in Thy hand.”

I knew of a godly man, who when he was a boy, went on holiday without his parents for the first time. Of course, like all Mums and Dads they were very anxious to know that he arrived safely and that he was safe and well. So they expected a card from him to put their minds at rest. The young lad thought it rather a chore to have to write postcards, so he decided to get it out of the way by writing a suitable card beforehand and then posting it when he arrived. Whilst he was writing that he had had a good journey and was enjoying himself immensely, the solemn thought crossed his mind: “What if I do not get there?”

This put an end to his project, and for the first time in his life, he said that he learned to remember: “If the Lord will we will do this or that.”

How Haman fully expected to hang Mordecai on the gallows he had erected, little thinking that God would so order events that he would be the one to hang there! You can read of this in the Book of Esther.

Sometimes the Lord overturns our designs to bring in something better. David wanted to build the Temple, and

Nathan, at first, told him that this was the Lord's will. However the Lord sent the prophet back with the message that it would be Solomon who would build the earthly Temple, but that God would give David something much better than an earthly temple. He promised him that the Saviour would come from David's family. He would, of course, be called the Son of David. So David proved that the overturning of his way and the bringing to pass of God's way was infinitely better.

Disappointment became His appointment, so David could say: "Who am I, O Lord GOD? and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto?"

May God help us each to say:

"Lord I would indeed submit;
Gladly yield my all to Thee;
What Thy wisdom sees most fit,
Must be surely best for me."

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture on our cover is a manuscript copy of the Gospel of Mark. The following remarkable incident shows how God used this shortest of the gospels, to open the eyes of hardened criminals to the truth.

In the days of Communism in Russia, it was illegal for ministers to preach the gospel, especially in the open. However, many brave preachers continued to do so despite the risk of being imprisoned. One such brave man was caught by the Communists in the act of preaching and was sentenced to serve a term in prison. It took two days for this man to be transferred from the court where the sentence was passed, to reach the prison he was, at first, allocated to. He arrived very weary, and was kept waiting with other prisoners to be given a cell. He was the last one to be dealt with and found himself in a cell with twenty other men, all of whom had committed

murder, some of them more than once.

They crowded around their new inmate and asked him how many murders he had committed.

"None," he replied, "I am in prison for preaching the gospel."

"We do not believe it!" they shouted back, "prove it!"

To prove his point he took out of his bag a copy of the Gospel of Mark, and began to read it to his companions.

After reading a chapter he asked if they would let him sleep, as he had had none for two days, and was very tired.

So he went to sleep. When he awoke, to his amazement he found the prisoners were still awake and were just reading the last few verses in Mark 16. They had been reading the entire gospel.

They gathered around him and they asked: "Is there forgiveness for murderers?"

"Yes," the minister replied, "where there is real repentance and heartfelt sorrow and confession of sin."

Soon he had to move on to another prison, and was packing his few belongings including the Gospel of Mark. His fellow-prisoners pleaded with him to leave it behind. He could easily get another one, but they would almost certainly never have another opportunity to have one for themselves.

So he left this treasure behind him, and with it the prayerful desire that the apparent awakening of these hardened criminals might prove to be a genuine work of the Holy Spirit.

As he went on his way, he thought of the wonder-working God. His enemies who had tried to silence his preaching, had unwittingly opened a door for him to proclaim God's mercy to sinners!

How true it is that God always has, and always will, have the last word.

True religion is ready to make sacrifices.

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***“SPEAK THE WORD”**

A Roman officer, called a centurion, had a servant who was very dear to him. This servant was sick and ready to die. After hearing about Jesus, the officer sent leaders of the Jews to plead with Him to come and heal his servant.

Quickly, Jesus agreed to go with them. When they were near the home, the officer sent a message saying: *“Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the Word only, and my servant shall be healed.”* The officer had a hundred soldiers under his command, and they all did what he told them to do. He believed that Jesus was so much greater than himself. Surely, He needed only to speak the Word, and it would come to pass.

Jesus marvelled at the great faith of the centurion. He turned about and said to those following Him: *“I have not found **so great faith**, no, not in Israel.”* When the messengers returned to the house, they found the servant had been made well.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was very sick and ready to die? (2 words)
2. What did the officer believe Jesus had only to do? (3 words)
3. What did Jesus say He had not found in Israel? (3 words)

*Please send your answers to the Editor. (See page 194 for the address.) Remember to give your name and address and to write the word **ANSWERS** on the envelope.*

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------|---------|
| 1. Nothing. | 2. Fishes. | 3. Men. |
| <i>Contributed</i> | | |

*“Lord, I am
not worthy
that Thou
shouldest
come under
my roof: but
speak the
Word only”
Matthew 8. 8.*

BIBLE LESSONS**A SINFUL WOMAN FORGIVEN**

What a wonderful conclusion to the Feast of Tabernacles! The last day was always special. No work was done on it. A very solemn assembly was held. Even children could feel a climax to the week of events. Though sacrifices had been offered every day, the offering made by fire on this day was for all of Israel. The last day of this feast was so different, especially because of that wonderful cry of Jesus: *"If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, ... out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."* Oh the love expressed in the invitation! Many people heard it that day, yet few believed it.

Poor thirsty souls are still invited to Jesus. Yet, you and I are not able to come; what is more, we will not come. The reason is because we are dead in trespasses and sin. What is needed? Jesus tells the answer: *"No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."*

Do you remember how the officers returned to the chief priests and Pharisees without taking Jesus as a prisoner? They were reproved by the Pharisees, who asked them: *"Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?"* It is still the same today. Leaders of nations, as well as many other famous people, mock and scorn those who believe and follow the Lord Jesus.

When Jesus returned to the temple early in the morning, people quickly gathered around, and He sat down and taught them. Soon there was a great commotion. What was happening? The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman to Jesus, telling Him that they had found her committing an evil sin. She had been a very wicked woman, and the Law of Moses stated that she should be stoned to death.

Sadly, they were not so concerned about what the woman had done, but rather how they might catch Jesus in a snare. If He said that she should be put to death, He would be in trouble with the Romans, for no one could be put to death

without their permission. If He said to let her live, they would accuse Him of breaking the Law of Moses.

What would Jesus do? To their dismay, He stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger as if He never heard them. The Pharisees were proud of themselves. They felt sure they had cornered Jesus so that He could not give an answer. They asked more urgently what should be done unto the woman. Suddenly Jesus stood up and said to them: *"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."* Then He again stooped down and wrote on the ground.

The Pharisees were amazed at His answer. Everyone was silent, waiting to see what would happen. The Pharisees must have looked at one another as if waiting for direction on what to do next. Finally the eldest, and no doubt most respected of the Pharisees, turned and walked away. Likewise the rest, right down to the youngest, went out one by one, being convicted by their own conscience.

When Jesus stood again and looked around, all the Pharisees had gone, and the woman alone remained. He asked her: *"Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?"* The woman must have been filled with wonder as she answered: *"No man, Lord."* What gracious words Jesus then spoke to her! *"Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."*

You can read about this in John chapter 7 verses 37 to 48 and chapter 8 verses 1 to 11.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who are invited to Jesus?
2. Why will we not come to Jesus? (8 words)
3. Whom did Jesus say should cast the first stone at the sinful woman? (7 words)
4. Who condemned the sinful woman?
5. What did Jesus say to the woman? (last 5 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor. (See page 194 for the address.) Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

1. The Feast of Tabernacles.
2. Booths (or huts).
3. His wisdom.
4. "Let him come unto Me and drink."
5. Never man spake like this Man.

G.L. TenBroeke

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XX1)**Salvation**

The salvation of our God is a great subject, and is set forth in the true preaching of sin and salvation in the gospel. I expect you think of the word salvation as meaning saving, and being saved from sin, and that is right.

There is another word which comes from the same origin, and that is "salvage." When we use the word salvage, we think perhaps of rescuing a ship or its cargo from the sea, or of saving goods from being destroyed by a fire. There are also salvage merchants who look for valuable things from waste, or who process scrap metal so that it can be used again.

We would not speak irreverently, but in a most glorious sense, salvation by the grace of God is the salvaging of sinful man from ruin. Mankind lost the right to any peace or happiness when he first sinned in the Garden of Eden. Through that sin of disobeying the commandment of God, and because man sins continually, he deserves the wrath of God. Not only so, but sin has so completely ruined mankind, that he is unable to do anything that is pleasing to God. What hope is there then, that man can be saved? Man has no hope in himself, but blessed be God, there is a way of salvation which God has made.

We see God's salvation when, in eternity, before the world was created or man sinned, God chose a number from all mankind, and set His love upon them. When our first parents sinned, although God justly cursed the earth, He also gave the gracious promise of salvation. God promised that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, meaning that One should come to rescue His ruined people. In the fulness of time, Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God was born on this earth:

“made under the law to redeem them that were under the law.” Salvation is seen on that great and solemn day when Jesus Christ was crucified, and the sin of all His people was laid upon Him. He suffered the punishment due to their sin, and completely took away the curse of the law for them, saving them from God’s wrath. Salvation is seen where God the Holy Spirit quickens the sinner from death to life, convincing him of his sin, separating him unto God and godliness, and showing Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the lost to the quickened and convinced sinner.

Salvation is seen now that the Lord Jesus has ascended to heaven, and He saves “them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” There the Lord Jesus shows the wounds He received when He suffered and the blood that He shed at Calvary, and they are the evidence of the salvation of His people. Therefore His people must be saved and shall safely reach heaven.

Salvation is described as an everlasting salvation because it is from everlasting to everlasting. It is entirely the work of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. It cannot be earned and it is not deserved. Salvation is all of God’s grace. “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” God plucks sinners as brands from the burning. He works salvation in their hearts, giving them a new heart. Their affections are changed and this change will always be seen in that they leave their old ways and now walk humbly with the Lord their God.

Many know about the way of God’s salvation, but the vital and important question for you and for me is whether we are amongst those whom God has saved. Do we know God’s salvation personally? The soul, knowing that eternity is before us each, and taught something of its sin, will seek for salvation in Jesus Christ. The Psalmist’s prayer was: “Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.”

Contributed

THE SCOTTISH COVENANTER

It was a lovely summer morning. Over the edge of the moor the sun was sending the golden light that tells us that it will soon be seen. The birds in their nests were beginning to wake up, and to make that light stirring and twitter that sounds so sweet and joyous in the early morning. The blackcock's call began to be heard over the moor; the sheep and small shaggy hillside cattle were already on their feet, and enjoying a good meal of the fresh grass before the dew on it had dried.

But upon that lonely hillside there was another kind of creature besides the wild birds and the sheep. In a place sheltered between two high rocks, a man had been lying all night, a pile of dry grass for his bed, a few branches laid across from rock to rock: his only roof. I think he had slept sweetly, for a smile of peace and happiness might often have been seen on his face while he dressed. But at the same time, his sleep had been light. For whenever the wind had made more noise than usual among the trees; whenever the wild cat had stolen stealthily past his resting place, or the owl had hooted in the woods below, he had lifted his head to listen. Now the first twittering of the birds awoke him. When he opened his eyes and saw how far daylight had come, he rose at once from his bed.

The first thing he did – before even he left his hiding place – was to kneel upon the heap of dried grass and give hearty thanks to his Father in heaven for the quiet night's rest He had given him. Then on his hands and knees he crept out from beneath his leafy covering, and, lifting his head cautiously above the large stone behind which he had been sleeping, he looked anxiously all around. Nothing was in sight to harm him. He might suffer his eyes to go where his heart always stayed, to that fair quiet home of his, nestling in the valley below, that home where his wife and children lived. A little white farmhouse it was, simple and unpretentious, but neat and bright-looking, and oh, how dear to the heart of the wanderer that now looked down upon it!

“But why was he a wanderer?” you will ask. “Why did he sleep

up in that wild hillside, instead of in his own quiet cottage?"

I will tell you. John Paterson was one of those godly Covenanters of whom we Scottish are so thankful: one of those men who loved the will of God far better than house or lands, wife or children, aye, better than life itself. Because he would not join himself to a church that he thought corrupt, because he was resolved to worship the Lord as he believed the Lord had bid him worship Him, therefore the rulers of the land were set to do him all the evil they could. Bands of soldiers had been sent out to take him prisoner, or to shoot him down like a wild beast; and to save his life he had been obliged to leave his home – like so many hundreds of his brethren – and to seek a hiding place in the dark woods, on the lonely hillsides, in the dens and caves of the earth.

For many weeks he had lived in this little hole between two stones, on the top of Benbeoch crags, never going down to see his wife and children except in the early morning, or through the dark night, when he sometimes ventured to step into his own house for an hour: an hour spent in fear and trembling, when they constantly checked each others' speech, to be silent and listen for that clang of horses' hooves and troopers' swords, only too well-known to them. Such a hurried visit he was going to make this morning. As soon as he made sure that no enemy was in sight, he began to go swiftly down the hill, keeping his eye constantly upon the road that led to his farmhouse: that road by which the soldiers had come so often to search for him.

It was a lovely morning. Everything looked bright and calm and happy. Poor Paterson's heart swelled with joy at the thought of holding his wife and children in his arms again. Already he was so near to the house as to see the blind of the little bedroom drawn back, and his wife looking anxiously up the hill towards his resting place, when suddenly his ear caught the sound of a flock of sheep scudding over the moor, and, looking round to find out what had startled them, he saw a whole troop of soldiers coming, not along the high road, but

straight across the country towards him.

Instantly he turned to flee to his hiding place. But already the troopers had seen him, and with fierce whoop and holloa urged their horses across the moor. A dry stone wall girded Benbeoch crags round, a little way from the foot. Paterson had to get over it, and paused for a minute on the top to look round and see where his pursuers were. Ah! How fast were they gaining ground on him. Almost he seemed within their clutches, and gave himself up for lost. He sprang down from the wall, and tried to clamber as best as he could among the large blocks of granite that lay strewn all over the surface of the hill. He fought on, stumbling, climbing among the stones, and tearing his way through the tangled thorns and briers, but with little hope in his heart of escaping altogether. For already the dragoons had leaped over the wall, and, some on foot, some still on horseback, were close after him, keeping him full in view.

"Then," to use Paterson's own words: "I cried mightily to the Lord; for there was no help in me and no help in man. 'Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings,' Lord," I cried aloud. "O, save me, for I trust in Thee." And while the words were still in my mouth, while the curses of the foremost dragoons were almost in my very ears – their hot breath seemed almost to touch my cheek – I stumbled over a large block of stone and fell heavily to the earth. To the earth? No, through it. Down into the very depths I fell, away from the daylight, away from the sight of man, away from the wrath of mine enemies. When I ceased falling, I was for a minute stunned, but not at all hurt. Presently, rising to my feet, I found myself in a large, dry, airy cavern in the heart of the crag, a place that seemed to me a perfect paradise in comparison to my poor little hiding place on the top of the hill. I could hardly believe my senses. It was as if the Lord had commanded the earth to open, and take me down to its loving bosom, to rest there in peace and safety. And while I heard the fierce dragoons overhead, raging and cursing, and calling out to each other, I knelt down, and with

all my heart gave praise and thanks to the Lord, who had thus directed my steps according to His grace.

“Never in all my life did I enjoy such a blessed time of communion with my Lord as in the hour that followed. Was it not as if I could feel the everlasting arms underneath me, His left hand under my head, His right arm embracing my soul? It was as if I were even losing myself in delight at the fulness of His love. And again and again did I cry aloud, that half an hour of such joy in the light of His countenance would have made up for a whole lifetime of persecution, of sorrow and danger.”

When Paterson had heard the voices of his persecutors die away in the distance, and when for a long time he had enjoyed that blessed communion with his loving God and Saviour, he began to think of the fears his wife must be suffering on his account, and to devise a way of sending her news of him. He found means to reach the opening of the cavern which he had so unexpectedly entered, and looking out to see if the troopers were really gone, he heard the call of a woman's voice near to him. It was his wife, who, having seen the troopers in such hot pursuit after her husband, and then seeing them ride away in the direction of the county town, was sure that they had found him, and slain him on the hillside.

She was seeking his dead body when Paterson heard her voice, and called to her, and I am sure you can well imagine for yourselves her joy and gratitude in seeing him quite well and safe. With his help she climbed down into the cave, and kneeling together on the bare floor, they consecrated this new home for the wanderer by united prayer and praise to the God of their help. Afterwards, by degrees, bedding and a little furniture of different kinds were brought to this cave God had so wonderfully pointed out to them. And in a short time it was made a most comfortable and secure hiding place, not only for John Paterson, but for many of the persecuted brethren of the countryside.

Religious Stories for Young and Old. Volume I.

CAIN'S WIFE

The following question was asked of Mr. J.C. Philpot: a question which maybe has perplexed some of us. It was the fact of Cain going into the land of Nod after he had killed his brother Abel, and marrying a wife and having a son, who was called Enoch; the seeming problem being that Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, were the only human kind upon the earth, so where did Cain's wife come from?

Mr. Philpot's reply was: "If we will but carefully read Genesis 4. 16-17, we will find no contradiction real or apparent. The sacred text does not say that Cain found a woman in the land of Nod whom he made his wife, but that he had a wife in the land by whom he had a son. The solution of the apparent difficulty is that he married her *before* he went into the land of Nod.

So who was his wife? A daughter of Adam and Eve whose name is not mentioned. Do we not read that Adam begat sons and daughters (Genesis 5. 4)? And may we not well suppose that one of these daughters might be old enough to be Cain's wife before he slew Abel? For we read: 'And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground' (Genesis 4. 3). It would appear, therefore, that neither Cain nor Abel was very young at the time of Abel's martyrdom, and there might have been several daughters born before that time. But say there was only one: why then could she not have been Cain's wife?

But you will say: 'Why, then, Cain must have married his own sister!' Yes, surely. And whom else could he have married if there were but one man and one woman on the earth? 'But how shocking!' How could any of Adam's sons marry at all unless it were their own sisters? It was then permissible, for there was no other way of marriage for that generation; but, of course, in the next generation cousins might marry and then the necessity for brothers and sisters to marry would cease. Thus we do not consider the objection to this Scriptural record of Cain's life to carry any importance, and if infidels have no stronger argument than this, they should remain silent."

Adapted

ER GRACE

Did you know that there are three men in the Bible who were called "Er"? Sadly one of these was a very wicked man. Another is mentioned as an ancestor of Joseph and Mary in Luke 3. Perhaps the parents of Er Grace had him in mind when they gave him this unusual name. It was, however, an easy name to spell for a little boy!

Now Er's surname was "Grace." How this became the family name we do not know: but one thing is certain, this member of the family, by grace alone, (not by his family name) became an eminent child of God. He would not have said that, as he was a most humble man, but the grace of humility shone through him, especially when he was called to be a preacher, and later the pastor at Ossett in Yorkshire where he was greatly loved and esteemed.

Er was also a coal miner. In fact, he worked down the pits for well over fifty years of his life. He began working when he was only eleven or twelve years old. Here, after he was called by grace, deep down inside the earth Er was able to show the world how a Christian should live. His colleagues remembered him especially for his honesty. Children and young people, the fear of the Lord in the heart will make a man honest before God and man.

The following illustration shows vividly how important it is to be honest before the world.

It was the practice for miners to put in a claim to the owner for the coal they had hewn out of the seam. They were only to be paid for the actual coal, and not all the debris and rubbish which would inevitably come away when the seam was attacked. Each miner was responsible for filling his tub, and then wheeling it to the tramways to the mine outlet. Sadly, because the work was poorly paid and some of the seams were not so rich in coal, great hardship was endured by miners, especially those with families to look after. In fact, because of his Christian principles, sometimes Er was deliberately put in these poorest seams. There was thus a temptation to disguise

the true content of the tub, by putting rubbish in the bottom and covering it with coal on the top. Some of Er's colleagues did falsify their claims in this way. However, one of Er's colleagues said, that in all the fifty or more years that he worked with him in the pits, never once did he see Er put in a false claim! Er had a terrible fear of the sin of covetousness.

When this was put to Er at the end of his working life, he trembled to think that he had been so closely watched by the world, and that he could have, by a false step at any time, brought reproach upon the Lord whom he loved and served.

Sometimes he was deliberately put in the more dangerous areas of the mine. Yet some of the miners, notwithstanding that, preferred to work with him because they felt safer!

When the church wanted to put his very modest salary up from 25 shillings a week (125p) to 30 shillings (150p) he was most concerned lest this should be a snare to him!

His principles also cost him the loss of a considerable amount of money which he had earned in dividends in the Co-op store when he refused to do business there when they opened on the Lord's Day.

Such men are an example to us of how grace can uphold God's children in the most difficult of circumstances. May we seek and be given like grace as Er Grace had.

"Them that honour Me, I will honour."

(From details kindly supplied by Mr T. Abbott of Ossett.)
Editor

"UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY"

A young soldier had been fighting in the Second World War, and had now returned to his home and friends. Of course, everyone was eager to hear of his experiences and pressed him to tell of them.

He was very reticent to say much about it, probably because many of his memories were very painful. War is a very unpleasant business, and a sad fruit of the Fall.

After being continually pressed to say what impressed him

most, he said: "Well, the thing which impressed me most was the number of bullets that missed me." No doubt his mind went to other and better men than he who were hit, whilst he was spared. He did not put this down to chance, but rather to God's protection of him.

Adapted

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE EPISTLES

The Epistle to the Ephesians

Just as Luke begins his gospel, we could quote the same regarding the letter of Paul to the Ephesians: "... those things which are most surely believed among us."

At the commencement, he writes to them of the wonderful insight the Lord gave him into the mystery of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the eternal nature of it, "before the foundation of the world." He traces the work of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost most prominently in chapter 2: "For through Him (Christ) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." One of the things that stands out in the Epistle to the Ephesians is, whether he writes of doctrine, experience or practice, he centres everything in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul does this, of course, in all his letters. He does so by using the following expressions; "in Him," "through Him," "unto Him," "by Him." The great thing is this: is our religion centred in the Person and work of Jesus Christ? Does our doctrine or the experience of that doctrine centre in the Person of Christ and the outworking of it in our practice, because we love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth?

One of the prominent points in this letter is the effect of the grace of God and the fruit of it in the true believer. In chapter 2: "By grace are ye saved ... not of works." A sinner is justified by faith in Jesus Christ and it is a faith that works by love. The effect of this is to unite believers together. If you carefully read this letter you will find this word "together" used again and again. All this is the effect of the sacred grace of the Lord Jesus

Christ. In chapter 2 we read of the sacrifice of Jesus, the blood of Christ, and it is clearly asserted that this is how we are made nigh, or reconciled to God and the zenith of this experience is to bring the believer into union with the triune Jehovah. "For through Him (Christ Jesus) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2. 18). Precious experience: may we aspire to it.

Another prominent part of this letter, which follows this same theme of union and communion, is in chapter 5 when the institution of marriage is likened to the sacred union between Christ and the church, the bride of Christ. The whole of Solomon's Song teaches us of the intimate sacred spiritual union between Christ and the church, based on love. The closest union we can know on earth is the intimate union between husband and wife. Ephesians 5 teaches us that marriage was instituted by God to show forth this sacred union between Christ and the church. If we have low sinful views on the doctrine and sanctity of marriage, it will inevitably lead to low views of the sacred union between Christ and the church.

Consider the words of the Lord Jesus Christ: "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me" (John 17. 21).

The Christian's pathway is likened to a battle: Satan is the enemy. So in chapter 6 the Lord Jesus Christ is presented to us as the Christian's armour, to protect and defend the believer. We must look at this armour and solemnly note that there is no armour for the back: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

"Your loins girt about with truth" – Jesus said: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

"The breastplate of righteousness" – In Jeremiah the Lord Jesus is called Jehovah Tsidkenu: "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

"Feet shod ... gospel of peace" – the Gospel of our Lord

Jesus Christ.

“The shield of faith” – Faith looks to and feeds upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

“The helmet of salvation” – “Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.”

“The sword of the Spirit ... the Word of God” The holy incarnate Word is revealed to us in the Word of God: the revelation of Jesus Christ.

If you read The Acts of the Apostles chapter 19 it records the preaching of the Apostle Paul at Ephesus.

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about incidents in THE LIFE OF MOSES. 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. Who gave Moses his name and what does it mean? (Exodus 2. 10)
2. What “great sight” did Moses turn aside to look at whilst leading his sheep in the desert? (Exodus 3. 2-3)
3. How old was Moses when he stood before Pharaoh to ask for the release of Israel from their bondage? (Exodus 7. 7)
4. On one occasion two men held up Moses’ hands. Who were they and why did they do it? (Exodus 17. 9-12)
5. What quality was Moses especially noted for? (Numbers 12. 3)
6. What two signs did God give to Moses by which the Israelites would be assured that God had sent him? (Exodus 4)
7. On one occasion Moses’ brother and sister spoke against him and God solemnly reproved them. What did they find fault with Moses for? (Numbers 12)
8. We often read words such as: “And Moses did as the Lord commanded.” On one occasion he was provoked to disobey. What did he do wrong and how did he suffer for it? (Numbers 20)

9. What did Moses do "by faith" when he "was come to years"? (Hebrews 11)
10. It is not always wrong to be angry. Find at least two occasions in the life of Moses when he was very justly angry.

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

1. Foolish questions, because they "gender strifes."
2. Take any oil with them.
3. A man who hears the sayings of the Lord Jesus but does not do them.
4. The heaviness of his mother. A grief to his father.
5. To confound the wise.
6. In the Spirit. By the flesh. (Galatians 3. 3)
7. The preaching of the cross. (1 Corinthians 1. 18)
8. Giving of thanks. (Ephesians 5. 4)
9. With well doing. (1 Peter 2. 15)
10. Job. "Curse God, and die." (Job 2. 9-10)

"IN ME IS THINE HELP"

I give Thee thanks great God of love,
For kindness shown by Thee.
Though I'm unworthy of Thy care,
Thou Lord hast helped me.

When my own heart corrupt, depraved,
Would lead me far from Thee,
Restrained by Thy power and grace,
Thou Lord hast helped me.

Temptations did beset my soul,
I knew not where to flee,
In that dread hour Thou didst appear
Dear Lord and helped me.

Darkness and doubt enclosed me round,
My way I could not see,
But lo in every trial yet,
Thou Lord hast helped me.

Up to this present hour of time,
 Mercy is shown by Thee,
 Thou Lord hast kept my soul from hell,
 Thou Lord hast helped me.

(Lines composed by Mary Ann Parish (mother of John Parish, minister at Oakington and Abingdon) in time of great providential need and after deliverance (see August Friendly Companion).

LIST OF NAMES

The following young people have answered questions during the months January to June 2009. The total number is 279, for which we would thank God.

Maia and Harry Aldridge; Tom Aldridge; Naomi Aston.

Alasdair Bailey; Sarah Ball; Joseph Banfield; Josiah and Noah Barker; Benjamin and William Bos; Abigail, Daniel, Joanna and Nathan Broome; Phebe Burden; Kezia Burgess; Jonathan and Nicolas Burton; Jennifer and Sophie Buss.

Bethany, Elizabeth and Victoria Chapman; Christopher Christie; Matthew Cooper; Lucy, Ruth and Samuel Cooper; Alice, Charlotte, Katy and William Cottingham; Annie, Lucy and Miriam Cottingham; Freddie Cottingham; Emma and Jessica Cottingham; Jacob and Zach Cottingham; Abigail, Hannah, James, Rebecca, Sarah and Thomas Crowter; Annabel, Elsie and Kate Crowter.

Esther and Louise Dadswell; Henry, Joanna, Jonathan, Marlene, Nicholas and Peter De Vogel.

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

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

Jacqueline and James Hallier; James Hanks; Eleanor, George and Jonathan Hare; Benjamin and Suzanna Hayden; Cornelia, Joseph, Joshua, Luke and Nathanael Hayden; Andrew, Marcus and Susanna Hickman; Benjamin, Heidi, Rosalie and Thomas Hickman; George Hickman; Katharine Hills; Henry and Sophie Hook; Eleanor Hope; Joseph Hydon.

Abigail and Joshua Izzard.

Emily Janes.

Helen, Joshua and Marianne Kerley; James, Rebecca and William Kerley; John and Thomas Kerley; Edward, Matthew, and Naomi Kingham; Stephen Kingham.

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

Benjamin Main; Harriet Macpherson; Alexa McIvervey; Claudia Mercer; James and Julia Mercer.

Amy Northern.

Anna, Jonathan, Rebekah and Simeon Pack; Rachel and Susanna Pack; Estella Palmer; Isaac and Josie Parish; Joseph, Matthew, Priscilla, Robert and Sarah Parish; Ruth Payne; Elisabeth and John Pickles; Heidi, James, Joseph and Katie Playfoot; Robert Pocock; Esther Pont.

Jessica and Oliver Raymond; Alexander, Joshua and Oliver Rayner; Matthew, Nathan and Owen Rayner; James Rice; Susanna Risbridger; Freddie and Harry Rokison.

Chloe and John Sadler; Jessica, Rosanna and Timothy Salkeld; Charles and Emily Saunders; Ethan and Samuel Saunders; Jasmine Saunders; Joseph and Stephanie Saunders; Clementine and Maria Sayers; Philippa Sayers; Rachel Scott; Chloe and Jessica Seymour; Ethan Starkey; Emma, Kate and Matthew Stearn; Alexander, Emma and Jessica Stevens; Ellen and Rebekah Suckling.

Harry and James Tarbin; Elisabeth, James and Paul Topping; Alison and Andrew Tugwell.

Joanna, Natalie and Thomas Warboys; Beth Wigley; Emma and Joshua Wigley; Abigail, Bethany and Charlotte Wilderspin; Bethany, Cordelia, Francesca, Gad, Jemima, Kitty and Nathanael Wiltshire; Joanna, Matthew, Susie and Thomas Wiltshire; Hugh and Jeremy Winkley; Abigail, Edwin, Hannah, Joseph, Kate, Lucy and Matthias Woodhams; Benjamin, Jessica, Louise, Timothy and Thomas Woodhams; Chloe and Lucy Woods.

Overseas Names:

Evan and Karina Baum; Calvin, Dennis and Kira Glass; Katelyn Kamp; Caleb and Isaac Knol; Jeff Legemaat; Hannah Linna; Kelly, Matthew and Thomas Mills; Paul Nowlan; Caleb, Danielle, Kelsey and Megan Oudshoorn; Emily and Jonathan Quist; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Nathaniel TenBroeke; Abigail, Bethany, Kaitlyn and Michaela Teunissen; Jessie Toogood; Arlicia and Marilene Van de Munt; Amanda, Dena, Jacob, Julie, Melissa and Steven Van Gemert; Philomena and Savannah Van Oort; Benjamin and John Van Vugt; Cody, Dylan and Tyler White.

The Friendly Companion



“Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they
shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD.”
(Psalm 107.43)

October 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be
addressed to Mr. D. Christian, 5 Roundwood Gardens,
Harpenden, Herts. AL5 3AJ

Volume 135

October 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	219
Our Front Cover Picture	220
Seven Hints	221
Editor's Postbag	221
For The Very Little Ones: "Weep Not"	222
Colouring Text: Luke 7. 13	223
Bible Lessons: A Blind Man Receives Sight	224
Bleatings Of A Lamb in Christ's Fold (I)	226
Why Rub It Out?	227
Christian Meets Atheist	230
A Safe Hiding Place	231
The Example Of Geese	233
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XXII)	234
Bible Study For The Older Ones: The Epistles	
The Epistle To The Philippians	236
Bible Questions: Things Which God Opened	238
Poetry: A Few More Years	240

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

Many of our teenage and older readers will have heard of John Gill and Matthew Henry. These two men wrote commentaries on Holy Scripture which are well-known and have been read by godly people for generations. A lesser-known commentary is that of John Trapp, in which are also found many interesting and instructive thoughts on the Word of God.

John Trapp was also a godly minister, and one day his text was: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema" The word "Anathema" means to be accursed. As is the usual practice at the end of a service, the minister was expected to pronounce the well-known benediction with which you all are so familiar: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13. 14). Instead, he is reported to have said: "I will not pronounce the benediction today, for there are some here who do not love the Lord Jesus, and who are under a curse. How can I pronounce a blessing upon them?"

In the congregation was a lad of fourteen years old, who heard the sermon and the unusual ending to the service. When he was grown up he emigrated to what is now the United States of America. He lived to the great age of one hundred years, before the Lord called him by grace. This was brought to pass by the memory of the sermon being stirred by the Holy Spirit, as he stood in his home, even though it had been eighty-six years ago! The question now was this: "Am I under the curse or the blessing?" He was given grace to plead with the Lord, to confirm that he was indeed under the blessing and not the curse, which eventually the Lord kindly did, by raising up faith in his heart in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This reminds us of the Lord's own words: "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3. 18).

Dear Readers, are you under the curse or the blessing?

“Assure my conscience of her part,
In the Redeemer’s blood;
And bear Thy witness with my heart
That I am born of God.”

Isaac Watts

Only the Holy Ghost’s witness in this great matter is to be trusted.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Many of our readers will, from time to time, have been in museums, which take us back to former ages and generations. Sadly many of these places are controlled by those who deny the work and Word of God in Creation and instead promote the godless theories of evolution.

It is thus very refreshing to see on the front cover of the magazine this month a picture, supplied by our friends Timothy and Janet Hickman, of a museum in Christchurch, New Zealand, which is not ashamed to give the honour and glory due to God’s name; at least as visitors enter the building. For the words engraved over the entrance are:

“Lo, these are parts of His ways: but how little a portion is heard of Him?”

These are the words which you will find in Job 26. 14. One would hope that the founders of the museum believed in God and it is good that even in today’s atheistic society the words of truth still confront visitors to the museum.

If only man has eyes to see it, all of Creation points to its Maker.

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

But whilst Isaac Watts’ words are so true in this first verse,

his next verse is infinitely more important. It tells of God's greatest work, that of the salvation of sinners.

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

Isaac Watts

It is that work which interests God's children most, although they rejoice to see His hand in Creation too.

SEVEN HINTS

Seek grace to live as in the sight of God. This is what Abraham did: he walked before God (Genesis 17. 1). This is what Enoch did: he walked with God (Genesis 5. 24).

- Think nothing you would not like God to know (Psalm 19. 14).
- Do nothing you would not like God to see (Genesis 16. 13).
- Say nothing you would not like God to hear (Psalm 141. 3).
- Sing nothing that would not be melodious in God's ear (Psalm 105. 2).
- Write nothing you would not like God to read (2 Kings 19. 14).
- Go nowhere you would not like God to find you (1 Kings 19. 9).
- Read no book of which you would not like God to say: “Show it to Me” (Psalm 119. 37).

The Messenger (August 2009)

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from EDWARD and THOMAS JARMAN and CALEB WILTSHIRE.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**“WEEP NOT”**

Jesus went to a city called Nain, along with His disciples and a crowd of people. As they came near to the gate, loud cries of weeping were heard. A young man had died and was being carried out of the city to be buried. His mother was a widow. First she had lost her husband, and now her only son was dead. How she wept as she followed after Him, along with many others!

Jesus was moved with pity for the poor woman. He had come at just the right time to help her. Very kindly He spoke: *“Weep not.”* Those who carried the dead man stood still, and Jesus said: *“Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.”* To the great joy of his mother, he sat up and began to speak.

Quickly the news of this miracle spread through the land. Only God could bring a dead man back to life. Fear came on them, and it was said: *“That a great Prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited His people.”*

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was being carried out to be buried?
2. What did Jesus say to the woman?
3. Who could bring a dead man back to life? (2 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor. (See page 218 for the address.) Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. A servant.
 2. Speak the word.
 3. So great faith.
- Contributed*

*“He had
compassion
on her,
and said
unto her,
Weep not.”
Luke 7. 13.*

BIBLE LESSONS

A BLIND MAN RECEIVES SIGHT

One Sabbath day Jesus was forced out of the temple by the Jews who were angry with Him. But what could have angered them so? They claimed they were Abraham's descendants, and that he was their father. Jesus told them that if they were true children of Abraham, they would believe Him. He said: *"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad."* The Jews reasoned that Jesus was not yet fifty years old. How could He have seen Abraham? Jesus answered: *"Before Abraham was, I am."* The Jews thought such a statement made Him worthy of death. Thus, they were going to cast stones at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

Passing through the city, Jesus saw a blind man sitting by the roadside begging. This poor man was born blind. He had never seen the face of his father or mother. Just think of his sad life as a youth: he could not run and play with other children; he never saw a sunrise or sunset; his world was always dark. The long years of loneliness and grief passed by, and the blind boy became a man. To support himself, he sat by the roadside and begged from all those who passed him.

As they passed by, the disciples asked Jesus whether this man, or his parents had sinned so grievously, that he was born blind. The Jews believed that such a sad affliction was punishment for some particular sin. Jesus told them it was not because either this man or his parents had sinned, *"but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."* By healing the blind man, Jesus would glorify His Father and manifest that He was *"the light of the world."*

Jesus then spat on the ground and made a lump of clay with the spittle. He rubbed the clay on the eyes of the blind man and told him: *"Go, wash in the pool of Siloam."* What a strange remedy to cure one's eyesight! Surely some anointing oil or eye salve would have seemed more hopeful than clay. Yet Jesus used this strange way to show His power and bring

glory to God. O the trial of the blind man!

What a sight it must have been, as the blind man made his way through the gate of the city, down the valley to the pool of Siloam. He slowly felt his way down the steps to the water and began to wash the clay off his eyes. Immediately his eyes received sight. O the wonder of it! A lifetime of darkness had passed. It is just the same when the Lord opens the eyes of understanding for His people.

As the man went back into the city, he no longer had to feel his way along. He could walk at a quickened pace. When he returned to his neighbourhood, the people looked at him in wonder. They questioned if he was the same man that always sat by the way begging. Some said that he was definitely the blind man. Others said that he was only like him. But the man answered: *"I am he."*

Now the people crowded around him, asking: *"How were thine eyes opened?"* It seemed impossible that such a miracle could have happened. The man answered: *"A Man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight."*

The people remained unconvinced. They asked the man where Jesus was. They would question Him regarding the blind man. The man who had been blind answered: "I know not."

You can read about this in John chapter 8 verses 39 to 59 and chapter 9 verses 1 to 12.

QUESTIONS:

1. What were the Jews going to do to Jesus in the temple?
2. How did the blind man support himself?
3. What did Jesus anoint the eyes of the blind man with?
4. Where was the blind man told to go and wash?
5. What does Jesus open for His people?

Please 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.

G.L. Tenbroeke

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Thirsty souls.
 2. Because we are dead in trespasses and sin.
 3. He that is without sin among you.
 4. No man.
 5. "Go, and sin no more."
-

BLEATINGS OF A LAMB IN CHRIST'S FOLD (I)

My dear Teacher,

I expect you have been looking for a letter before this. I quite meant you should have had one, but have not had time. I wrote to Mrs. Dann last week and told her my feelings.

Now I must tell you, well, I feel quite happy but I am very low sometimes. I do think the Lord has begun His work of "grace" in my heart. I do hope He has. I have many feelings about my soul. I am really concerned about it and eternity. I fear sometimes I am not His: then perhaps have a little hope that I am. I feel sin a burden to me every day and feel that I am a sinner. I am sure you would not think I am called by grace if you knew what a wicked heart I have, or as I feel to have sometimes: I often wonder if I have a right religion:

"True religion's more than notion,
Something must be known and felt."

I have known it and felt it too; I have often asked the Lord to impress our minds with thoughts and feelings that His dear people have. I do have them sometimes. I want to feel assured I am one of His children. I feel I should be happy then. I feel I am pardoned of my sins through the precious blood of Christ. It is a very great mercy to be taught to: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not." I often wonder if the other girls are in the same state as I am in.

Now I must leave this. I should much like to hear from you. Good-bye with much love from your loving scholar, Lizzie Smith. Wishing you many happy returns of the day.

October 15th 1884.

WHY RUB IT OUT?

"I had better write that down at once before I forget it," we find ourselves saying, now that the blessing we have enjoyed so long is beginning to fail in some strange way. We are apt to be cross with ourselves about this forgetfulness, until we find someone else who says: "Do you know I cannot remember names and it is so awkward sometimes!"

"Ah, but just a minute, is there just one Name you can remember?" "Yes, indeed there is," you say, "and I hope I shall never forget that Name." There is no need for us to tell you children what that Name is, but in case you do not know (which is very unlikely) ask Grandfather or Grandmother. How wonderful that that Name is engraven in so many hearts! There is no need to write that one down, or a word or two of what He has done for you.

Nevertheless "writing it down" is a safe way of keeping the subject in our minds, and certainly it is the way God has chosen to keep His Words and ways in the minds of all men, and in a particular way for His people, for as Paul writes in Romans 15. 4: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." What should we really know of Creation, or ourselves – everything, in fact, if He had not written it down by way of revelation? And one of these writers tells us how it was done: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1. 21).

Then, of course, the written word is always proof: as men say today: "Well, put it in writing." How many times did Jesus say, both to His friends and His foes: "It is written." Three times during His temptations (Matthew 4. 4, 7, 10), He answered Satan with these three words, and Satan knew He was right. So right, in fact, that the devil quoted from Scripture himself in verse 6. We must always bear in mind that Satan knows the Bible as well as we do, perhaps better!

But what is equally worthy of notice is that on one occasion God wrote with His finger on the two tables of stone which He

gave to Moses (Exodus 31. 18 and 24. 12). This was some of the most important writing that ever was written, and God will never forget it, neither will Satan, for the words on it were a battlement against him.

Yet thinking on these lines how blessed is the other writing about which Paul speaks in 2 Corinthians 3. 3, where he glances back to those tables of stone, and now sees them fulfilled by Jesus so that he is able to preach a gospel which is written “in fleshy tables of the heart.” And looking down this chapter we can see how full the apostle was of the truth of this glorious exchange. When a memorial tablet in memory of some great person is to be uncovered, we often see a picture of some equally great person pulling the cord and uncovering it before those who have not seen it. So did Paul, by God’s help, seek to remove the veil or cover from the eyes of his own brethren, and ours, too.

When we write we know what we are writing about, but many who wrote on God’s behalf did *not* know. The prophets, like Isaiah, were wondering very much what their words really meant when they “testified beforehand.” But those words have never been lost, and they are now opened so much that they tell us we should not fashion ourselves as once we did, but be “as obedient children.” Although you may think of clothes when you read about “fashion,” it goes much deeper than the outside, for Peter (1 Peter 1. 14) is meaning what is inside as well, namely “lusts,” just as Jesus did when He said: “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man” (Matthew 15. 11).

You may remember that on one occasion “Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground” (John 8. 6). Not on a table of stone this time, but what He said was directly to do with those tables. The men concerned knew that it was too, and they were convicted *inside*, “by their own conscience,” which went through every one of them, and “they

went out one by one, beginning at the eldest.” So we have both sides of the matter which is one of the great marks of God’s Word, otherwise we should have few of the black marks, the “convictions” as these men had; none of the prayers of confession, and pleas for mercy as we have for instance in the Psalms.

No, children, the things that were written aforetime give us both sides, the light and the dark. So much so that in some lives, Samson for instance, we sometimes wonder where the light side really was. And where was it in Rahab? Yet both are written among those who died in faith (Hebrews 11. 31,32). Do you not think that Abraham would like to have forgotten that he twice denied that Sarah was his wife, or that Peter would have liked to have forgotten that he denied his Master three times? But this is where the comfort of the Word comes in (Romans 15. 4 again) – they were sinners just the same as we are. So there is no question of “writing it down in case we forget.” David prayed that God would not even remember the sins of his *youth* (Psalm 25. 7) quite apart from the sins of his later years. If he did not want God to remember them, it follows that he did not want to remember them himself. But they were written in God’s book, and so are yours and mine, and only one thing can *blot* them out. He uses this word in Psalm 51. Have we ever used it for the same purpose?

The longer we go on thinking of these things which God has written for our instruction in so many different ways, and about so many different matters, the more do we see why Paul impressed upon Timothy that “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3. 16).

So why follow those who want to rub a part of it out?

L. R. Broome
(*Friendly Companion* February 1984).

CHRISTIAN MEETS ATHEIST

Now after a while they perceived afar off one coming softly and alone, all along the highway, to meet them. Then said Christian to his fellow: Yonder is a man with his back towards Zion, and he is coming to meet us.

HOPEFUL: I see him: let us take heed to ourselves now, lest he should prove a Flatterer also.

So he drew nearer, and at last came up to them. His name was Atheist: and he asked them whither they were going?

CHRISTIAN: We are going to Mount Zion.

Then Atheist fell into a very great laughter.

CHRISTIAN: What is the meaning of your laughter?

ATHEIST: I laugh to see what ignorant persons you are, to take upon you so tedious a journey; and yet are like to have nothing but your travel for your pains.

CHRISTIAN: Why, man? Do you think we shall not be received?

ATHEIST: Received! There is not such a place as you dream of in all this world.

CHRISTIAN: But there is in the world to come.

ATHEIST: When I was at home in mine own country, I heard as you now affirm, and from that hearing went out to see, and have been seeking this city these twenty years, but find no more of it than I did the first day I set out.

CHRISTIAN: We have both heard and believe that there is such a place to be found.

ATHEIST: Had not I when at home believed, I had not come thus far to seek; but finding none (and yet I should, had there been such a place to be found, for I have gone to seek it farther than you), I am going back again, and will seek to refresh myself with the things that I then cast away for hopes of that which I now see is not.

Then said Christian to Hopeful his companion, Is it true which this man hath said?

HOPEFUL: Take heed, he is one of the Flatterers: remember what it hath cost us once already for hearkening to such kind of fellows. What! No Mount Zion! Did we not see from the

Delectable Mountains the gate of the city? Also, are we not now to walk by faith? Let us go on, lest the man with the whip overtake us again. You should have taught me that lesson which I will round you in the ears withal: "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." I say, my brother, cease to hear him, and let us "believe to the saving of the soul."

CHRISTIAN: My brother, I did not put the question to thee for that I doubted of the truth of our belief myself, but to prove thee, and to fetch from thee a proof of the honesty of thy heart. As for this man, I know that he is blinded by "the god of this world." Let thee and me go on, knowing that we have belief of the truth, and "no lie is of the truth."

HOPEFUL: Now do I "rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

So they turned away from the man, and he, laughing at them, went his way.

J. Bunyan. (Pilgrim's Progress)

A SAFE HIDING PLACE

A mother, with a child upon her arm, was travelling through the mountains in Scotland. It was a rough and narrow path, and at some places the valleys were very deep, and the path winding along the edge.

All of a sudden the weather changed. The sky became cloudy, and a powerful wind began to blow. The nice sunny weather disappeared in a moment. Hail and snow flew in the face of this woman. She wrapped her child in the blanket and held it close to her bosom. It became more difficult all the time for her to keep going. The path became slippery and very dangerous, yes, impossible! What must she do? She saw a big cleft in a rock, and she laid her baby in it. She herself would try and reach the civilized world to seek help for her child. But on account of the severe weather condition and the thick darkness, she lost her way. Her neighbours who had missed her, went out to look for her, and found her the next morning. She was lying in the deep snow, nearly frozen from the cold,

and not able to move any more. This mother was not able to tell them exactly where her child was. The neighbours did not lose courage, but went to search for the child. Finally they heard a child cry. They went towards the place where the sound came from, and soon they found the child unharmed, safe in the cleft of the rock.

Many, many years later, an aged soldier came from a far country back to his Scottish fatherland. For years he had served his fatherland in another country as a soldier. He had been wounded many times, yes, severely wounded. But each time he had recovered again. This time, however, he feels that he will not recover from his last wounds. Therefore he received an honourable discharge from the service. His only desire now is to hear the gospel preached in the language of his fatherland. Therefore he goes to church the very first Lord's Day, although with much difficulty. Amazingly, the minister seemed to be someone who came from the same place the soldier was from. He hears this immediately in his accent. But he is moved still more in the midst of the sermon when the minister tells about the history of a widow and her child. As safe as that child was years ago in the cleft of the rock, so safe is also the church of Christ under His protection. This soldier had heard this told him many times by his mother, but she also had told him how she had cried to the Lord at that time out of deep distress of soul for deliverance and help from the Almighty God.

A few days later, this minister was called to the sickbed of a dying man. Can you guess who this man was? The old soldier.

He told the minister that he was the son of the woman he had told about in his sermon.

He told the minister he was going to die, and asked him if he would bury him next to his mother. He said: "The Lord has heard the prayers of my mother. As a child I found a safe place in the cleft of a rock. But now as an old man I have found a much safer place."

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty” (Psalm 91. 1).

This is the Rock of all ages.

Religious Stories for Young People (Volume III)

THE EXAMPLE OF GEESE

Those stately geese I find especially impressive. Winging their way to and from a warmer climate, they often cover thousands of miles before reaching their destination. Have you ever wondered why they fly as they do? It is fascinating to read what has been discovered about their flight patterns, as well as their in-flight habits. Four come to mind:

1. Those in front rotate their leadership. When one lead goose gets tired, it changes places with one in the wing of the V-formation and another flies at the point.

2. By flying as they do, the members of the flock create an upward air current for one another. Each flap of the wing literally creates uplift for the bird immediately following. One author states that by flying in a V-formation, the whole flock gets 71% greater flying range than if each goose flew on its own.

3. When one goose gets sick or wounded, two fall out of the formation with it and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with the struggler until it is able to fly again.

4. The geese in the rear of the formation are the ones who do the honking. I suppose it is their way of announcing that they are following and that all is well. For sure, the repeated honks encourage those in front to persevere.

As I think about all this, one lesson stands out above all others: it is the natural instinct of geese to work together. Whether it is rotating, flapping, helping, or simply honking, the flock is in it together, which enables them to accomplish what they set out to do.

Can you fathom the blessing of God that would come upon His church if His people conducted themselves as wisely as geese?

Insight Into (August 2009)

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XXII)**Adversity**

The word adversity means something that is adverse, being against us or causing difficulty. So for example, adverse weather is when it is rough or stormy, perhaps with strong winds or heavy rain. You may have seen road signs saying “adverse camber” meaning the surface slopes to oppose the direction of travel. The Bible has much to say about adversity, and it means circumstances which are difficult or appear to be against us.

Solomon writes in the Ecclesiastes of the day of prosperity – meaning when things appear to be going well – and the day of adversity – when things appear to be against us. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, he tells us that in the day of adversity we are to consider. What should we consider? We should consider that God has set one over against the other: that is, God has ordered our times of prosperity and adversity. We should be thankful for all He has provided for us.

We are to consider that because of our sins, we do not deserve to receive any good thing from Him. Taught by God, we have to acknowledge that many of the adversities we suffer are as a result of our sins. We should consider that we often need to be corrected and God may bring us into adversity to show us that we have displeased Him. We must also be shown the vanity of this world, so that we do not seek our pleasure here.

If we are one of the Lord’s people, we shall be taught to consider by experience that all our times are in His hand. “We know that all things” - including adversity – “work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to His purpose.” Jacob, on the apparent loss of his sons Joseph and Simeon, said, “All these things are against me.” However, he lived to prove that those trials were working for him, not against him, and were part of the fulfilment of God’s promise to him. At the end of his life, the adversity had been sanctified to him and he could look back with thankfulness. When things seem against us, we need grace to humble ourselves under the

mighty hand of God, and to cast all our care upon Him.

But there is a far greater adversity than any difficult circumstance in providence, however hard and sad those adversities may be. That adversity is sin: is it an adversity to you and me? The Psalmist said: "Iniquities prevail against me." He was taught the awful nature of sin and its consequences. His sins were truly adverse to him: they testified against him and they were a greater adversity than he could deal with. How could he be saved from such a great adversity? He acknowledges that his sins were not only against himself, but also against God. When given true repentance, he confessed: "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight." He knew God would be just to condemn him eternally for his sin. He knew too, that even his best deeds and the best sacrifice he could offer could not make up for his sin. But he pleaded for mercy and God did have mercy upon him. So David was enabled to say with thankfulness: "Thou hast known my soul in adversities," and "The LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity."

What is the way of deliverance from this adversity? No sinful man can deliver himself or another. God Himself must save, and God in the person of His Son gave Himself for the sins of His people. Solomon tells us: "A brother is born for adversity." Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, took into union with His divine nature a human nature. He was made like unto His brethren, yet without sin. He was born upon this earth, coming right where His people were, so that He could take their place. The sins of all His people were laid upon Him, and He was made sin for them, who knew no sin. He satisfied God's divine justice, and so removed the adversity, and instead gave His people the righteousness of God in Him.

May we be taught something of the adversity of sin, and be given a saving knowledge of Him who alone has conquered sin.

Contributed

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE EPISTLES****The Epistle To The Philippians**

Philippi was the chief city of western Macedonia, a part of Greece. At the time of Christ and the apostles, it was a Roman colony. The name Philippi comes from a famous king of Macedon, Philip. He developed and modernised the city before the Roman times. It is also historically famous for two great battles fought near this city at Campi Phippici. Those of you who have or are studying literature at school or college will recognise the famous, or we should say, infamous names of the leading people in these battles. One was between Julius Cæsar and Pompey the Great. Another was fought with Augustus and Anthony on one side and Cassius and Brutus on the other.

To Christian believers it is famous for the church that was planted and settled there through the ministry of the Apostle Paul. Firstly, the remarkable call Paul had to Macedonia, recorded in Acts chapter 16: "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them" (Acts 16. 9-10). The other striking thing is the small beginnings of this church and yet what should encourage us is that it was to grow. We are reminded in Holy Scripture: "Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase" (Job 8. 7). This is often the case in the personal spiritual experience of the child of God.

In Acts 16 we are informed how the Lord opened the heart of Lydia at a prayer meeting by the riverside in Philippi. My dear young friends, do not despise or neglect the prayer meetings: they are a very important and spiritually profitable part of church life. The spiritual liveliness or otherwise of a church can be measured at the prayer meetings. John Bunyan called the Book of Psalms the lungs of the Bible, so the prayer meetings are the lungs of the church, and personal private

devotions are the lungs of the true believer: if any of these are neglected it will be to our spiritual detriment.

Then came bitter, painful persecution and imprisonment. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." But see the wonderful unfolding of the Lord's purposes in the conversion of the Philippian jailor and all his house. What a wonderful truth is the doctrine of divine sovereignty, unspeakably solemn to the wicked, very precious and glorious to the righteous. He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.

"His providence unfolds the book
And makes His counsels shine;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfil some deep design."

This church had a very special place in the heart and affections of the Apostle Paul in spite of the trouble and persecutions. This epistle was written to a flourishing church, walking in the fear of the Lord. He exhorts them to greater love and in chapter 2 sets the Lord Jesus Christ before them as an example for all believers to follow. Then in chapter 3 he speaks of his own personal faith and life in Christ Jesus and exhorts them in the same path, following Christ only, seeking Christ only. In verse 9 he makes that clear distinction between a righteousness of the law, that is our own fleshly righteousness and the righteousness of Christ which is obtained by faith.

How he commends them for their fruitfulness in good works and practical godliness in sending to help him in his labours in the gospel in other regions. May we follow this example and be fruitful in every good work and do good unto all men especially the household of faith. What a mercy if it could be said of us and of our church: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe" (Philippians 3. 1).

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about THINGS WHICH GOD OPENED. 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 write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. "And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass." Whose ass was it and what were the first words the ass spoke? (Numbers 22. 28)
2. What did Elisha's servant see when the LORD opened his eyes? (2 Kings 6. 17)
3. Of whom was it written: "whose heart the Lord opened"? (Acts 16. 14)
4. Jesus once said to a man: "Ephphatha." What does the word mean and what happened to the man? (Mark 7. 34-35)
5. David once prayed: "Open Thou my lips." Why? (Psalm 51. 15)
6. "Then opened He (Jesus) their understanding?" Of whom was this spoken and why did they need it? (Luke 24)
7. In the same chapter we read of two others who had two things opened. What were they? (Luke 24)
8. In Genesis 7, what were opened and who did God shut in?
9. Isaiah 22.22 says in prophecy: "he shall open, and none shall shut..." In which verse in Revelation 3 does the Lord Jesus show that this is fulfilled in Him?
10. Many years before it happened, God promised that He would cause the gates of a strong city to be left open to allow an invading king and his army to conquer it. Who was the king? (Isaiah)

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Pharaoh's daughter. "Drawn out".
2. A burning bush which was not consumed.
3. 80 years old.
4. Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands, because when they did so, Israel prevailed against its enemies, the Amalekites.
5. Meekness.

6. A rod which turned into a snake. Moses' hand became leprous when he put it into his bosom. (Exodus 4. 1-7)
7. Moses had married an Ethiopian woman. (Numbers 12. 1)
8. Moses smote the rock instead of speaking to it. He was not suffered to enter the Promised Land. (Numbers 20. 10-12)
9. Moses "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." (Hebrews 11. 24-25)
10. Exodus 11. 8; 16. 20; 32. 19; Numbers 16. 15; 31. 14; Leviticus 10. 16.

Contributed

A visitor to a china factory in the North of England, was astonished to see how much black colour was being painted on the china before it went into the kiln; a furnace in which the clay was dried.

It was pointed out to him by the owner of the factory, that although it is black before it goes into the fire, it is gold when it comes out!

This is the picture of the dealings of God with His children. It needs the fires of trial to bring to light the gold of grace.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8. 31).

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1. 9).

But how much depends on that little word "*If*." Philip of Macedon sent a threatening message to the Lacedæmonians: "If I enter Laconia, I will level Lacedæmon to the ground." Their answer is well worth remembering. It was to send back the little word "*IF*." That tiny word told the proud ruler that those brave men had confidence they would be able to resist his invasion: it showed that all depended on "*if*" he entered; "*if*" he was victorious. How much for us hinges on two little *ifs*!

A FEW MORE YEARS

A few more years shall roll,
A few more seasons come,
And we shall be with those that rest
Asleep within the tomb.

A few more suns shall set
O'er these dark hills of time.
And we shall be where suns are not –
A far serener clime.

A few more storms shall beat
On this wild rocky shore,
And we shall be where tempests cease,
And surges swell no more.

A few more struggles here
A few more partings o'er,
A few more toils, a few more tears,
And we shall weep no more.

A few more Sabbaths here
Shall cheer us on our way,
And we shall reach the endless rest:
The eternal Sabbath day.

Then, O my Lord, prepare
My soul for that great day:
Oh, wash me in Thy precious blood,
And take my sins away.

Only if the last verse is our heartfelt desire, then the previous five verses will be true of us. Ed.

*Hymns of Salvation (C.P. Hammond)
(Taken from Gospel Magazine 1871)*

The Friendly Companion



**Simpson's Folly,
Canford Cliffs,
Sandbanks,
Dorset.
Left - 1882
Below - 1946**



“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid,
which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 3. 11)

November 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£11.50	\$32	A\$35	€25.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to Mr. D. Christian, 5 Roundwood Gardens, Harpenden, Herts. AL5 3AJ.

Volume 135

November 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	243
Our Front Cover Picture	244
Jumping To The Wrong Conclusion	245
For The Very Little Ones: Questions And Answers	246
Colouring Text: Psalm 91. 15	247
Bible Lessons: The Blind Man's Confession	248
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XXIII)	250
Opening Blind Eyes	252
The Mysterious Horseman	254
Working On The Lord's Day	258
Bleatings Of A Lamb In Christ's Fold (II)	259
John's Five Evidences Of The New Birth	260
Apples	260
Bible Study For The Older Ones: The Epistles	
The Epistle To The Colossians	261
Bible Questions: Escapes From Danger	262
Poetry: "Be Careful What You Say"	264
Editor's Postbag	264

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

Many years ago at a service held in one of the Scottish churches a great number of people gathered to hear the Word of God. One man arrived rather late and could not find a seat inside the church and had to stand outside the door, where he could still hear the sermon being preached. He was a man who had come to God's house for a purpose and would not be easily dissuaded from worship. As the service proceeded it began to pour with rain outside and everyone expected the man would hurry away to find some shelter. But he was so taken up with hearing the gospel for himself that he was totally oblivious to the fact that he was drenched through with the rain! Here was a man who would rather be a doorkeeper (dwell on the threshold) in God's House than be found anywhere else, however inconvenient the circumstances. How sad it is to compare this man's love for God's house and the trivial excuses many make that keep them away from worship.

The Bible tells us of another man, who had been a slave to his master. At the year of Jubilee (every fifty years), God had commanded that all slaves be set free. But this man loved his master so well, and enjoyed working for him, that he did not want to be released. So his master took an awl (a long nail), and pierced the lobe of his ear and for a moment nailed him to the doorpost of his house. From that time onwards this man bore a permanent reminder, that was visible to all, that he had chosen his master's house rather than go free.

Dear young friends, the time will come when you reach your independence and take the responsibility for your own actions and decisions. How will you use this freedom I wonder?

It would be a great mercy, if having reached this milestone in your life, you say like the slave: "I do not want to be free from God's house and His people." As Jesus said: *"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. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

May the Lord graciously teach each one of us the true meaning of Christ's words.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The pictures on our front cover this month illustrate the foolishness of all those who deliberately try to prove the Word of God wrong. The Lord Jesus Christ in His Sermon on the Mount spoke of the foolish man who built his house on the sand, and the great fall of it when the winds and the rain came. Such are those, said the Lord, who hear the Word of God and do not obey it.

A sea-faring man called Simpson, many years ago tried to prove the Lord Jesus literally wrong! He spent a great deal of money building an elaborate concrete house (the first of its kind) on the sands at Sandbanks near Bournemouth. He seemed to have achieved his object when at last he moved in. The view of the sea was, of course, uninterrupted, and may well have been the envy of his neighbours. However, he lived in his house for just four days! A severe gale sprang up and washed out the foundations, so it was immediately declared unfit for human habitation.

It stood empty for many years until it was eventually blown up in 1890. For many years this blackened heap of rubble stood as a lasting monument to the folly of Simpson. Eventually in 1960 it was removed by the local council to make way for a coastal protection scheme.

We do not know if this foolish man benefited from this salutary experience. However, we may learn from it the folly of going contrary to God's Word in any matter, and the extreme folly of building on any foundation other than the Lord Jesus Christ for eternity.

JUMPING TO THE WRONG CONCLUSION

In the days before the mass-communication that we are so used to, important pieces of national news were often given by means of semaphore. This interpreted signals by moving lights, or arms to spell out words.

Especially in the Napoleonic Wars, people would anxiously wait for news of how the English army, which was led by the Duke of Wellington in fighting Napoleon and the French, was doing.

At last word reached the citizens of Winchester. On top of the famous cathedral the semaphore message began to be spelt out.

It went as far as "Wellington defeated ..." and then dense fog settled over the city and the message could no longer be seen. The discouraging news quickly spread around the countryside. "Wellington had been defeated."

But after a time the fog lifted again, and the whole message became visible on the cathedral roof: "Wellington defeated the enemy."

Now the great despair suddenly turned into joy, as news of defeat was turned to news of victory.

How much more must have been the change from despair to joy, when the disciples who mourned the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, realised at length that He had risen again on the third day!

So also a sinner convinced of his sin, and seeing no hope in self or any other, is on the borders of despair, until he is led to see Jesus as the Saviour of lost sinners. What a transformation. I wonder how many of our readers have known their sorrow turned into joy, even as that of the disciples was, even as Jesus had promised?

"Ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (John 16. 22).

"... but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16. 20).

Editor

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

John the Baptist reproved King Herod for his sin. This made the king angry, and he put him in prison. From prison John heard of all the wonderful works of Jesus. He called two of his disciples and sent them to ask Jesus: *"Art Thou He that should come? or look we for another?"*

Jesus answered their questions by showing His great power. In the same hour Jesus cured many who were sick, and cast out evil spirits. He told those disciples to: *"Go and shew John again"* the things they had seen and heard. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the lepers are healed, the dead are raised, and to the poor the gospel is preached. Jesus added: *"And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me."*

When they did not understand, the great prophet, John the Baptist, sent disciples to ask Jesus. We may also go to Him in prayer with our hard questions. The Bible says: *"Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not"* (Jeremiah 33.3).

QUESTIONS:

1. Where was John the Baptist?
2. Where did he send two of his disciples?
3. He answered their question by showing what? (3 words)

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. A young man.
 2. Weep not.
 3. Only God.
- Contributed*

*“He shall
call upon
Me, and
I will
answer
him.”*

Psalm 91. 15.

BIBLE LESSONS

THE BLIND MAN'S CONFESSION

The opening of the blind man's eyes caused a great stir. It was a miracle indeed! No doubt all his neighbours would have rejoiced with him, if only he had not mentioned the name of Jesus. That name stirred up hatred and malice. His neighbours thought it best to bring him to the Pharisees. They would know how to handle the situation.

What a sight it must have been: the former beggar confronted by the distinguished, learned, and highly esteemed Pharisees! They probably saw him begging by the wayside many times and looked upon him with disgust. To them his condition spoke of what a great sinner he must be. They never had time for him as a poor, blind beggar; but now it was a different matter. They must examine him very closely. They asked the beggar how his eyes were opened. Oh the simplicity of his answer! *"He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see."*

Some of the Pharisees noted that it was the Sabbath day and said: *"This Man is not of God, because He keepeth not the Sabbath day."* Others answered: *"How can a Man that is a sinner do such miracles?"* Being divided among themselves, they asked the blind man: *"What sayest thou of Him that He hath opened thine eyes?"* What wisdom the blind man was given. Although his eyes had only just been opened, he could declare more of Jesus than all the Pharisees together. He said: *"He is a Prophet."*

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind until they called his parents and questioned them. His parents answered: *"We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not."* They were afraid to say any more, because the Pharisees had threatened to cast out of the synagogue any who confessed that Jesus was the Christ. They quickly added: *"He is of age; ask him."*

Again they called for the man who had been blind, saying: *"Give God the praise: we know that this Man is a sinner."* He

answered them: *"Whether He be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."*

Hoping to find fault with the blind man's confession, they asked him again what Jesus had done to him. He answered that he had already told them and they would not hear. Would they now listen to him? He said: *"Will ye also be His disciples?"*

How the Pharisees reproached the man! They said: *"Thou art His disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this Fellow, we know not from whence He is."* The man who was born blind listened to their words with wonder. How was it possible that Jesus had opened his blind eyes and yet the Pharisees could not tell from whence He came? Since the world began it had never been heard that one born blind had been given sight. He said: *"If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing."*

This was too much for the proud Pharisees. They answered: *"Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?"* In their anger they cast him out of the synagogue.

Jesus heard of it and found the man. He asked him a very searching question: *"Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"* He answered: *"Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?"* Jesus told him: *"Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee."* With his heart full of love to Jesus, he cried out: *"LORD, I BELIEVE."* Then he did more than the Pharisees in the synagogue ever did: *"And he WORSHIPPED HIM."*

You can read about this in Jobn chapter 9 verses 13 to 41.
QUESTIONS:

1. What did the blind man declare of Jesus?
2. What one thing did the blind man know? (7 words)
3. What did the Pharisees do with the man in their anger? (6 words)
4. Who found him?
5. What did he say to Jesus (3 words) and what did he do? (2 words)

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. Cast stones at Him. | 2. He sat and begged. |
| 3. Clay. | 4. In the pool of Siloam. |
| 5. The eyes of understanding. | |
-

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XXIII)

Adversary

When we considered the word “adversity” we saw that it meant something that is against us. Adversary is a similar word, but it means someone against us, or someone that opposes us. An adversary may also be referred to as an enemy.

At one time the Apostle Paul wrote: “There are many adversaries” – against his faithful preaching at Ephesus, where “a great door and effectual” was opened unto him. The true preaching of the gospel which exposes sin and false religion will not be accepted by man’s wisdom, and so there will be adversaries to the truth. If we are one of the Lord’s people and live in humble dependence upon Him in obedience to His Word, we shall find that we are opposed by the world. “It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord.” “Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”

The child of God has another adversary, and that is self. In the words of Joseph Hart: “Mighty enemies without, much mightier within.” Like the Apostle Paul, the child of God finds that “the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” The child of God, taught the evil of sin by the Holy Spirit, will strive by the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body and live.

The Bible refers to “your adversary the devil,” who “as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” He can also appear as an angel of light. He is a constant adversary, seeking if he could, to take one of the Lord’s people

as his own. He will tempt them to forsake the ways of God, for example, to mix with the world and enjoy its pleasures for a season, and to forsake “the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is.” We cannot stand against him in our own strength, and our nature and the world will quickly be in agreement with him.

Satan opposes God’s people as “the accuser of the brethren.” This reminds us of a court of law. The accuser brings an accusation and speaks against the one who is accused. We read he “accused the brethren before God day and night.” Satan would delight in their condemnation if that were possible.

How can such a strong adversary be overcome? A child of God is not strong enough to defend himself against such a mighty adversary, but the promise of God is: “I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.” Satan would accuse them against the demands of God’s holy law, but that law has been taken away for ever for God’s people. The Word of God assures us that Satan’s accusation will be cast out. Christ for His people has “forgiven ... all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.” The Lord Jesus Christ has once suffered for them, satisfying God’s justice for ever, and so no accusation or opposition can now succeed against them. Jesus said: “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.”

Although Satan may often tempt a child of God, he is a defeated adversary. This is not because of the strength of man against Satan, but through the strength of God in Christ. Christ “hath suffered being tempted,” but He overcame. Through the victory that Christ has gained, God’s people shall be found at last with Him in glory, with no more adversaries.

May we be among them, for otherwise God will be our adversary for ever, and how solemn our end will be.

Contributed

OPENING BLIND EYES

The following thoughts were prompted originally by the pen of our esteemed friend Mr John Watts (former General Secretary of the Bethesda Fund) after a stay in the Harpenden Home.

Having, a few days previously, read John 9 at one of the morning readings in the Home, a member of staff remarked “what a long chapter all about one miracle!”

This remark set off a chain of thoughts as he read again the chapter privately, and began to think about other instances in Scripture of blind eyes being opened.

First, in the garden of Eden, we read of Adam and Eve: “The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked” – they felt shame as they experienced the conscious need of a covering. They felt conviction of sin. What an essential blessing (although painful) to have our eyes open to see our need and our lost condition!

“O the pangs by Christians felt,
When their eyes are open.”

Joseph Hart

Then in Isaiah 6, we read: “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His throne filled the temple.” Isaiah’s eyes were opened as never before to see the holiness, majesty and greatness of God. He was filled with reverential awe.

Then we read of the well-known prayer in the Psalms: “Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.” This was, of course, wonderfully fulfilled on the road to Emmaus, and then in the upper room where the risen Lord Jesus opened the understanding of His disciples that they might understand the Scriptures. None can truly understand, unless the Lord opens their understanding in this way. So we read of the disciples at Emmaus that “their eyes were opened and they knew Him.” What a discovery!

Then we have that most beautiful word in Isaiah: “Thine

eyes shall see the King in His beauty.” What a prospect to see the Lord Jesus Christ, face to face! BUT at present we only see “through a glass darkly; but then face to face.” There will be no veil between then, for those whose eyes were first opened by God here below. Solomon speaks of the Lord “showing Himself through the lattice” (another word for a window in Bible days.)

The Scriptures and the gospel are like a window through which the Lord reveals Himself.

The well-known hymn-writer John Newton, could say: ‘I once was blind, but now I see.’ How many of our readers could join with him?

Of course, there was more than one blind man whose eyes were opened by the Lord, as He said in His message to John: a message which meant not only the opening of naturally blind eyes but even more importantly, the spiritually blind eyes!

But then how solemn not to have our eyes opened whilst in this life! We are told in the Revelation that the time will come that “every eye shall see Him,” but not all with pleasure. Some will call for the rocks to cover them from the sight, so dreadful will it be, for those who lived in unbelief.

If the Lord were to return today, how would we greet His return? Upon that important question hangs our eternal destiny....

Read hymn 698 and see how good William Gadsby presses the point!

Editor

The following appeared in the letters column of a national newspaper recently. In the twenty-first century we are reaping the terrible consequences of such ignorance.

“The chief danger of the twentieth century will be religion without the Holy Ghost, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, politics without God, salvation without regeneration, and Heaven without Hell.”

THE MYSTERIOUS HORSEMAN

The following incident was narrated by the late John Jones of Holywell, Flintshire. He was a man of high principle and unblemished character, and was renowned through the principality for his zeal and fervour as a preacher. I was very much impressed at the time by the story, and was convinced that the narrator firmly believed that each event had happened as he described it. Here is the story, in his own words as near as I can recollect:

“One fine day in the summer, some forty years ago, I was travelling from Bala to Machynlleth. I left Bala about two o’clock in the afternoon, and travelled alone on horseback. I was on my way to attend the annual meeting of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, having to pay the treasurer a sum of money, collected in small weekly subscriptions in my district of Flintshire, for the erection of chapels in North Wales.

My journey lay through a wild and desolate part of the country, and one which was at that time almost uninhabited. When about half the distance I had to traverse, as I was emerging from a wood situated at the commencement of a long and steep incline, I observed coming towards me a man on foot. He appeared from his dress, and more particularly from the sickle which he carried sheathed in straw over his shoulder, to be a reaper in search of employment.

As he came up to me, I recognised him as a man whom I had seen at the door of the village inn at Llanuwchllyn, where I had stopped to bait my horse. On now meeting me, he touched his hat, and asked if I could tell him the time of day. I pulled out my watch for the purpose of answering his question, and I noticed at the time the peculiar look which the man cast at its heavy silver case. Nothing else, however, occurred to excite any suspicion on my part, so, wishing him ‘Good afternoon,’ I continued my journey.

When I had ridden about half-way down the hill, I noticed something moving, and in the same direction as myself, on the other side of a large hedge which on my left hand ran nearly

parallel with the road, and ultimately finished at a gate through which I had to pass. At first I thought it was an animal of some kind or other, but I soon discovered by means of several depressions in the hedge, that it was a man running in a stooping position. I continued for a short time to watch his progress with considerable curiosity, but my curiosity changed to a vague feeling of uneasiness when I recognised in him the reaper with whom I had just been conversing, and to one of positive fear when I saw him tearing off the straw band which sheathed his sickle. He hurried on till he reached the gate, and then concealed himself behind the hedge within a few yards of the road. I did not then doubt for a moment but that he had resolved to attack – perhaps murder me for the sake of my watch and whatever money I might have about me. I looked around in all directions, but not a single human being was to be seen, so, reining in my horse, I asked myself in a state of considerable trepidation, what I should do.

Should I turn back? No: my business was of the utmost importance to the cause for which I laboured, and as long as there existed the faintest possibility of my getting there, I could not think of returning. Should I trust to the swiftness of my horse, and endeavour to dash by the man at full speed? No: this was out of the question, for the gate through which I must pass was not open. Could I leave the road and make my way through the fields? I could not, for I was hemmed in by rocky banks or high hedges on both sides. The idea of risking a personal encounter could not be entertained for a moment, for what opportunity would I, weak and unarmed, have against a powerful man with a dangerous weapon in his hand? What course should I pursue? I could not tell; and at last in despair, rather than in a spirit of humble trust and confidence, I bowed my head and offered up a silent prayer. This had a soothing effect on my mind, so that refreshed and invigorated, I proceeded anew to consider the difficulties of my position.

At this juncture my horse, growing impatient at the delay,

started off. I took up the reins (which I had let fall on his neck) for the purpose of checking him, when, happening to turn my eye, I saw to my utter astonishment that I was not alone. There on my right hand I beheld a horseman, in dark dress, mounted on a white steed. In intense amazement I gazed upon him; where could he have come from? He appeared as suddenly as if he had sprung from the earth. He must have been riding behind and have overtaken me.

And yet I had not heard the slightest sound; it was mysterious, inexplicable. But the joy of being released from the peril which menaced me soon overcame my feelings of wonder, and I proceeded to address myself to my companion. I asked him if he had seen anyone, and described to him the dangerous position in which I had been placed, and how relieved I felt by his sudden appearance, which now, of course, removed all cause for apprehension.

He made no reply, and on looking at his face, he seemed to be paying but little attention to me, but was intently gazing in the direction of the gate, now about a quarter of a mile ahead. I followed his gaze, and saw the reaper emerge from his concealment and cut across a field to our left, re-sheathing his sickle as he hurried along. He had evidently seen that I was no longer alone, and had relinquished his intended attempt.

All cause for alarm now being removed, I once more endeavoured to enter into conversation with my deliverer, but again without the slightest success. Not a word did he deign to give me in reply. I continued talking, however, as we rode on our way towards the gate, though I utterly failed to see any reason for – and indeed felt rather hurt at – his continued silence.

Once, however, and only once, did I hear his voice. Having watched the figure of the reaper disappear over the brow of a neighbouring hill, I turned to my mysterious companion and said: ‘Can it for a moment be doubted that my prayer was heard, and that you were sent for my deliverance by the Lord?’ Then it was that I thought that I heard the horseman speak,

and that he uttered the single word: 'Amen.' Not another word did he give utterance to, although I still continued endeavouring to elicit from him replies to my questions both in English and Welsh.

We were now approaching the gate: I hurried on my horse for the purpose of opening it, and having done so with my stick, I waited at the side of the road for him to pass through. He came not; I turned my head to seek for him – he was gone. I was dumbfounded; I looked back in the direction from which he had just been riding, but though I could command a view of the road for a considerable distance, he was not to be seen.

What could have become of him? He could not have gone through the gate, nor have made his horse leap the high hedges which on both sides shut in the road. Where was he? Had I, after all, been but dreaming? Could it be possible that I had seen no man or horse at all, and that the vision was but a creature of my imagination? I tried hard to convince myself that this was the case, but in vain; for, unless someone had been with me, why had the reaper resheathed his murderous-looking sickle and hurried away? No: this horseman was no creation of mine. I had seen him – who could he have been?

I asked myself this question again and again, and then a feeling of profound awe began to creep over my soul. I remembered the singular manner in which he first appeared. I recollected his silence, and then again the single word to which he had given utterance. I called to mind that this reply had been elicited from him by my mentioning the name of the Lord, and that this was the only occasion on which I had done so. What could I then believe? But one thing, and that was that my prayer had indeed been heard, and that help had been sent me at a time of peril. Full of this thought, I dismounted, and throwing myself on my knees on the greensward at the side of the road, I offered up a prayer of thankfulness to Him who had so signally preserved me from danger.

I then mounted my horse and continued my journey.

Through the long years that have elapsed since that memorable July day, I have never for an instant wavered in the belief that I had had a special providential deliverance."

Such was the aged minister's story as near as I can remember it. On making enquiries afterwards I heard that he related the facts to the assembled brethren on his arrival at Machynlleth. I find also that the incident is recorded in a biographical memoir of Mr Jones, which was published in the January number for 1853 of the *Traethodydd*, a Welsh quarterly periodical. The version is substantially the same as that which I have given from memory. Mr. Jones died in 1830. He had often narrated the story, so that when it was published it was nothing new to his own friends. The published narrative states that the event occurred near a lonely, desolate mountain pass called in English "the pass of the cross," known to many tourists.

Selected

WORKING ON THE LORD'S DAY

Mr. William Gadsby used to relate the following instance to answer those who called him and his friends Antinomians (against the law). Many years ago during a war with France, he was supplying in a church near Plymouth where many people worked in the shipyards. An order came from London that because of the extremity of the times they had to work on Sundays as well as in the week. They would be paid double time for this.

Many begged to be excused, as they believed the Lord's Day should be a Sabbath Day. However there was no relenting of the order. Mr. Gadsby said that it was very noticeable that the ones who stood firm, whilst the others yielded, were those who had been called Antinomian because they believed the gospel to be their rule of life, whereas many, who had derided his followers for this, compromised their consciences, and they were willing to work on the Lord's Day. Many of William Gadsby's people in Plymouth lost their jobs because of this, but they retained the answer of a good conscience, a very precious thing to them and to God.

Editor

BLEATINGS OF A LAMB IN CHRIST'S FOLD (II)

My dear Teacher,

I will try to tell you a few of the Lord's dealings with me, a poor hell-deserving sinner. Well, I told you the last time I wrote that I felt sin a burden to me and felt I was a sinner. I do not feel so now. Christ has washed all my sins away. I found Him on 24th November 1884.

I thought when I had found Him I should have no foes, but I find more now than before. Christ says: "Marvel not ... if the world hate you." I find many trials now: for two whole years I have been seeking after better things than this poor world can give. I could believe I should find Him sooner or later. I am very low sometimes now and then I have been raised up again to hope in His mercy.

The verse you spoke of in your letter has been my prayer for a long time: "Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O visit me with Thy salvation." I hope that He has favoured me at times: what a great mercy, is it not, to be prepared for death and the grave! If ever I was led to feel the weight of sin upon my conscience it was just before I found Him. I shall never forget it as long as I live. I saw the blood that He had spilt and that it was because of my sins. It was then that I crept beside Him as a worm and saw Him bleed for me. I have had many portions of the Word of God sent home to my heart since then.

Mr. Vine has been very encouraging to me. I do love him and all the Lord's people. What a great mercy to be led to trust in a blessed Redeemer. I do not know how to thank Him enough for all His mercy towards me.

"His love was great His mercy free,
Which from the pit delivered me."

Now I must leave this. Goodbye. With much love I remain your loving scholar, Lizzie Smith.

"Sinners can say, and only they, how precious is the Saviour."

JOHN'S FIVE EVIDENCES OF THE NEW BIRTH

FAITH *"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat loveth also him that is begotten of Him."* (1 John 5. 1)

PURITY *"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."* (1 John 3. 9)

LOVE *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."* (1 John 3. 14)

PERSEVERANCE *"We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."* (1 John 5. 18)

CONQUEST *"For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."* (1 John 5. 4)

Editor

APPLES

One of the sad sights of our Somerset village is apple trees loaded with luscious fruit which are not picked (unless they be cider apples) but just left to fall and rot. However, if the predictions of an end to cheap food come true, apples will, no doubt, come back into their own.

Apples are mentioned in the Bible though not in the place most people imagine: there is no mention of an apple in the story of the garden of Eden.

The exact relationship between the wild apple (crab apple) found in Turkey and the immediately surrounding countries, and the cultivated and probably hybridised apple of the Bible, is debated, but there seems little doubt that the Biblical fruit is a genuine apple and appears to have been valued.

"As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." (Song of Solomon 2. 3.)

British Church Newspaper

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***THE EPISTLES****The Epistle to the Colossians**

This letter is principally addressed to the church in the city of Colosse, but not exclusively. The Apostle Paul requests, in the fourth chapter, that it be read in the church at Laodicea; he also mentions Hierapolis. Colosse was the chief city of the province of Phrygia right in the centre of what is now Turkey. The other two cities were close to it. This church was not settled by the Apostle Paul, but most likely by Epaphroditus, an evangelist. The apostle calls him a faithful minister of Christ and a fellow-labourer. It shows a wonderful spirit of impartiality in the great apostle that even in churches where he had not been nor laboured yet, his burden for them was very great.

I think that one of the most beautiful chapters in this epistle is the first. From verse 12 we have a setting forth of the glory of Jesus Christ as the holy Son of God; the glory of the cross and the wonder of redemption through His blood. Jesus Christ is the great King and Head of the church, even of the whole of creation. The apostle labours throughout this epistle to lay and re-lay this glorious foundation. He is very jealous that they should not move away from the simplicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ and that everything in real religion is centred in Him only. My dear young friends, may this teaching sink deep into your hearts. The source and centre of all real religion, doctrine, experience and practice, is the Person and work of Jesus Christ. He warns them of human philosophy. Greek philosophers had great influence in those days: read the account of the Apostle Paul in Athens in Acts chapter 17.

Now one of the principle things he warns them of, is Jewish teachers in the church teaching them to observe the ceremonial law. This was a serious problem in many of the early churches. Hebrew believers found it very difficult to lay aside the Old Testament rituals and forms of worship. Paul is clear, and points out to them that the keeping of holy days, new moons, etc. were a shadow of things to come. But to the

Christian believer he instructs: "Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men" (Colossians 2. 21-22).

He exhorts them to look alone to the Lord Jesus Christ: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Colossians 3. 1-5).

They were to be careful in all their dealings with unbelievers and rightly use their time: "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Colossians 4. 5-6). What we do in our spare time should be to the glory of God, not to please ourselves. We should be found redeeming the time for the days are evil. The Christian believer should be fruitful unto every good work. Sadly the first thing we consider is ourselves.

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about ESCAPES FROM DANGER. 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. To whom was it said: "Escape for thy life"? (Genesis 19. 17-18)
2. "And they escaped all safe to land." How many escaped and what did they escape from? (Acts 27. 44)
3. How did the Apostle Paul (Saul as he then was) escape from Damascus when the Jews sought to kill him? (Acts 9. 25)

4. Complete the solemn warning given in Hebrews 2. 3: "How shall we escape..."
5. Which king of Israel tried to escape from the Babylonian army surrounding Jerusalem, but was captured? (Jeremiah 39. 4-7)
6. What solemn words did Jesus say to the Pharisees, beginning: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers..."? (Matthew 23)
7. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." What does God promise to do? (1 Corinthians 10)
8. Some men tried to escape, but were stopped and asked to pronounce a word. What was the word and what happened if they pronounced it wrongly? (Judges 12)
9. David had many escapes when being hunted by King Saul, but one place he escaped to was not a wise one. What was it, and why do you think it was not wise? (1 Samuel 27)
10. In which chapter do the words: "I only am escaped alone to tell thee," occur four times?

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS

1. Balaam's ass. "What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?"
2. The mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.
3. Lydia.
4. "Be opened." "His ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain."
5. That he might praise the Lord. "And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise."
6. The eleven disciples, that they might understand the Scriptures. (Luke 24. 45)
7. Their eyes were opened that they might recognise the Lord Jesus. The Scriptures prophesying of the Lord Jesus were opened to them. (Luke 24. 31-32)
8. The windows of heaven were opened; God shut Noah in the ark. (Genesis 7. 11 & 16)
9. Revelation 3. 7.
10. Cyrus. (Isaiah 45. 1)

Contributed

“BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY”

In speaking of a person's faults,
Pray don't forget your own.
Remember, those with homes of glass
Should seldom throw a stone.
If we have nothing else to do
Than talk of those who sin,
'Tis better we commence at home,
And from that point begin.

We have no right to judge a man
Until he's fairly tried;
Should we not like his company,
We know the world is wide.
Some may have faults – and who has not? –
The old as well as young;
Perhaps we may, for aught we know,
Have fifty to their one.

Then let us all, when we begin
To slander friend or foe,
Think of the harm one word may do
To those we little know.
Remember curses, sometimes, like
Our chickens, “roost at home”;
Don't speak of other's faults until
We have none of our own.

Anon

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **ESTHER CROWTER, ELYSIA and SOPHIA PARISH; ISOBEL SEBADUKA and LEAH YMKER.***

The Friendly Companion



“He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”

Isaiah 40. 11.

December 2009

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

Tel: 01249 656910. Email: gdbuss@tiscali.co.uk

All correspondence to be sent to the Editor.

Annual Subscriptions inc. postage:

U.K.	U.S.A. & Canada	Australia	Europe (Netherlands)
£12.60	\$34	A\$38	€24.00

All correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed
to Mr. D. Christian, 5, Roundwood Gardens, Harpenden, Herts.
AL5 3AJ.

Volume 135

December 2009

CONTENTS

Our Monthly Message	267
Our Front Cover Picture	268
The Sheep And Their Shepherd	268
How Do You Treat Jesus?	269
For The Very Little Ones: Lost And Found	270
Colouring Text: 1 John 1. 9.	271
Bible Lessons: Jesus The Good Shepherd	272
Times And Seasons	274
Luther's Snow Storm	275
Editor's Postbag	276
Bible Words/Words Of Scripture (XXIV)	277
The Infidel's Sermon To The Pirates	279
The Saviour	281
The Deity of Christ	282
"Thy Will Be Done"	283
Four "W's" In John's Gospel	284
Bible Study For The Older Ones:	
The Epistles: 1 & 2 Thessalonians	284
Bible Questions: Laws Moses Gave To The	
Israelites In The Wilderness	286
Poetry: The Star	288

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

What a wonderful event it is in a family, when God gives the gift of a child, and one to thank God for! As soon as baby is born then the next question is: "What shall the name be?" Usually the parents have given thought to this long before baby is born.

This month it is a custom to especially remember the birth of the most important Child that this world has ever, or will ever know: the birth of Jesus Christ, the Lord. Neither Mary, nor her husband Joseph, chose the name for this wondrous Child. He was named by His Heavenly Father, who instructed His angel to tell Joseph to name Him, Jesus. This is the Name that all who believe in Him delight to hear of.

It is sadly a Name derided, scorned and hated by most in this day in which we live. It is very sad that recently, for example, it is reported that at prayers in the United States House of Representatives, those who prayed were instructed not to mention the name of Jesus. How else can sinners approach to God, but through the Lord Jesus Christ? As Peter said: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

The great point to remember is that He who is this wondrous Babe, is also the Son of God. The Angel Gabriel told Mary that He would be called the Son of the Highest. As there is none higher than Almighty God, so we know that He is the Son of God, as was also confirmed to Mary.

However, to truly understand this mystery we need the Holy Spirit to teach us of it. As the hymn says:

"No man can truly say,
That Jesus is the Lord,
Unless Thou take the veil away,
And breathe the living Word."

In the coming days may this be the prayer of us each, and then

we may truly say as Thomas did when he saw Jesus risen again: "My Lord and My God."

With best wishes from your sincere Friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The lovely picture of a ewe with her two lambs is a reminder to us of the tenderness of the Lord Jesus who came into this world as the Shepherd of His children. He called Himself the Good Shepherd because He laid down His life for the sheep, and, of course, the lambs also! It was fitting that the first news of His wonderful birth should be given to humble shepherds outside Bethlehem. The lovely children's hymn below sets forth the tenderness and pity of Christ for His sheep. May we be seeking that faith in Him which is the mark of His sheep. He said: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10. 27).

"How loving is Jesus, who came from the sky.

In tenderest pity for sinners to die!

His hands and His feet were once nailed to the tree,

And all this He suffered for sinners like me.

How precious is Jesus to all who believe,

And out of His fullness what grace they receive!

When weak he supports them, when erring He guides,

And everything needful He kindly provides.

How gladly does Jesus free pardon impart

To all who receive Him by faith in their heart!

His glory is for them, their home is above,

And Jesus will fetch them to dwell in His love."

Anon

THE SHEEP AND THEIR SHEPHERD

A certain person made a journey through Syria and told us the following: "On my journey I saw three shepherds who let their sheep drink at the bank of a little river. It was a great mingling of sheep, and it seemed impossible to separate them

into three flocks.

When the animals were finished, one of the shepherds came to the front and called in the Arabic language: 'Follow me.' Immediately there was movement in the great flock, and more than thirty sheep climbed behind the shepherd up a little hill.

Afterwards the second shepherd called: 'Follow me,' and also the second flock separated itself and followed him.

Surprised, I turned to the third shepherd who made himself ready to depart. I asked him: 'Will the sheep also follow me when I call them?'

The man shook his head and said: 'Under no circumstances, sir.' I asked him then if he would allow me to put on his shepherd's mantle for a moment. The man permitted this and even put his turban on my head. Then I also called in the Arabic language: 'Follow me.' In the whole flock, there was not a sheep that moved. They scarcely looked at me with their dreaming eyes.

I asked the shepherd: 'Do they not ever follow a person other than you?'

The shepherd answered: 'No, only when a sheep is sick: then it will walk along with any body.'"

*Taken from the Kerkblad of the Old Reformed Denomination
Banner of Truth July 2009*

HOW DO YOU TREAT JESUS?

How do you treat the blessed Jesus? Where do you lay Him: in the inn or in the outhouse? I mean thus: do you receive Him into your hearts and affections, or do you take Him only into the outhouse of an empty profession? Truly a lifeless, graceless profession of Christ is only laying Him in the outhouse; but a hearty embracing of, and a holy affection to, Christ is taking Him into the inn. Now when God, by any providence, embitters created things to us, this makes us remove Christ out of the manger into the inn – out of a lifeless profession into our hearts and affections.

Matthew Mead

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**LOST AND FOUND**

Jesus told a parable about a father who gave all that he had to his two sons. The younger son took his money and went far away from home. How happy he was to do just as he pleased! He lived a very sinful life and wasted all that he was given.

Then a great famine came. Having no money, he was sent into the fields to feed pigs. He was so hungry that he ate of the pig's food. At last the son began to think upon his sinful ways. He longed for his father's house, where even the hired servants had plenty to eat. He would return to his father and say: *"I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."*

When he was yet far off, his father saw him coming. He ran to meet him and kissed him. He said to his servants: *"Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: ... For this my son ... was lost, and is found."*

His father forgave his sinful son and received him with great joy. Jesus said: *"... likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth"*

QUESTIONS:

1. Where did the younger son go? (4 words)
2. What would he say to his father? (first 3 words)
3. The father saw him coming when he was yet _____. (2 words)

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. Contributed

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. In prison.
2. To ask Jesus. (To Jesus.)
3. His great power.

*“If we
confess our
sins, He is
faithful
and just to
forgive us
our sins.”
1 John 1. 9.*

BIBLE LESSONS

JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Do you remember what the Pharisees did to the blind man? They cast him out of the synagogue. What a terrible thing to do! They were supposed to be teachers and shepherds of the people. Is this how a shepherd would treat one of his sheep? No, indeed not!

From the dealings of the Pharisees with the blind man, Jesus taught the people the great difference between false shepherds and the Good Shepherd. He began by saying: *"Verily, Verily (of a truth, of a truth), I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep."*

It may seem like a strange parable, but what precious truths it reveals! In our country, sheep graze very peacefully in pastures that are fenced or hedged in. However, in the land of Canaan, shepherds led their sheep through open fields and brought them to a sheepfold at night. A sheepfold was a large area with walls around it. There was an opening in the wall for the sheep to enter in and be safe through the dark night.

Could the sheep really be safe at night if there was no door? Perhaps one might wander out through the opening, or a wild beast might creep in to kill and devour a sheep. Jesus answered: *"I am the Door of the sheep."* When the sheep were all safe in the sheepfold, the shepherd would sit down in the opening. In this way he became the door. If a wild beast, like a wolf or a lion, tried to enter the sheepfold, the shepherd would rise up and defend his flock, even if it cost him his life. An hireling (someone hired to watch the sheep in place of the shepherd) would flee at a time of danger because he did not really love the sheep.

Jesus declared to the people: *"I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep, ... I lay down My life for the sheep."*

Again Jesus said to them: *"I am the Good Shepherd, and*

know My sheep, and am known of Mine." In eastern sheepfolds there were often many flocks mingling together at night. How would a shepherd separate his sheep and be sure he had all his own flock? In the morning he would go a little distance from the sheepfold and begin to call his sheep. The Bible calls this "hissing" for them.

What a scene it must have been to see one sheep after another perk up its ears, make its way out of the sheepfold, and go after their shepherd. The other sheep paid no attention at all to the shepherd's call. The Lord tells us the secret. The sheep know the voice of their shepherd and they follow him, but the voice of a stranger they will not follow.

The Bible often compares the Lord's people to sheep. Perhaps you have memorised the well-known Psalm beginning with: *"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."* What a beautiful picture of the Lord's people in the world! They are taught to hear His voice and follow Him. *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."* They can say: *"... it is the voice of my Beloved."*

What the Lord told the Jews in His day is also true of many today. *"But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep."* You can read about this in John chapter 10 verses 1 to 29.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is the Door of the sheep?
2. What kind of Shepherd did Jesus say He was?
3. What would He lay down for His sheep?
4. Whose voice would the sheep not follow?
5. What did Jesus say His sheep would do when they hear His voice. (2 words)

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.

G. L. TenBroeke

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. "He is a Prophet."
 2. "Whereas I was blind, now I see."
 3. Cast him out of the synagogue.
 4. Jesus.
 5. "Lord, I believe". Worshipped Him.
-

TIMES AND SEASONS

We have no superstitious regard for times and seasons. Certainly we do not believe in the present ecclesiastical arrangement called Christmas; firstly, because we do not believe in the mass at all, but abhor it, whether it be said or sung in Latin or in English; and secondly, because we find no Scriptural warrant whatever for observing any day as the birthday of the Saviour; and consequently, its observance is a superstition, because not of divine authority.

Superstition has fixed most positively the day of the Saviour's birth, although there is no possibility of discovering when it occurred. Fabricius gives a catalogue of 136 different learned opinions upon the matter; and various divines invent weighty arguments for advocating a date in every month of the year. It was not until the middle of the third century that any part of the church celebrated the nativity of our Lord; and it was not until very long after the Western church had set the example, that the Eastern adopted it.

Because the day is not known, therefore superstition has fixed it; while, since the day of the death of our Saviour might be determined with much certainty, therefore superstition shifts the date of its observance every year. Where is the method in the madness of the superstitious? Probably the fact is that the holy days were arranged to fit in with heathen festivals. We venture to assert, that if there be any day in the year of which we may be pretty sure that it was not the day on which the Saviour was born, it is the twenty-fifth of December.

Nevertheless, since the current of men's thoughts is led this way just now, and as I see no evil in the current itself, I shall launch the bark of our discourse upon that stream, and make use of the fact, which I shall neither justify or condemn, by

endeavouring to lead your thoughts in the same direction. Since it is lawful, and ever laudable, to meditate upon the incarnation of the Lord upon any day of the year, it cannot be in the power of other men's superstitions to render such a meditation improper for today. Regarding not the day, let us, nevertheless, give God thanks for the gift of His dear Son.

C.H. Spurgeon.

LUTHER'S SNOW STORM

Most of our readers probably do not know that Martin Luther, one of the greatest and best men who ever lived, was in his boyhood so poor that he went about the streets of the city singing songs for a little money to buy food to keep him from starving. But he was a faithful student, and God raised up friends for him, and made him, at last, the great and useful man that he was.

On a cold, dark night, when the wind was blowing hard, Conrad, a worthy citizen of a little town in Germany, sat playing his flute, while Ursula, his wife, was preparing supper. They heard a sweet voice singing outside:

“Foxes to their holes have gone,
Every bird into its nest:
But I wander here alone,
And for me there is no rest.”

Tears filled the good man's eyes as he said: “What a pity that voice should be spoiled by being tried in such weather!”

“I think it is the voice of a child. Let us open the door and see,” said his wife, who had lost a little boy not long before, and whose heart was opened to take pity on the little wanderer.

Conrad opened the door, and saw a ragged child, who said: “Charity, good sir, for Christ's sake.”

“Come in, my little one,” said he, “you shall rest with me for the night.”

The boy said: “Thank God!” and entered.

The heat of the room made him faint, but Ursula's kind care soon restored him. They gave him some supper and then he told them that he was the son of a poor miner and wanted to be a priest. He wandered about and sang, and lived on the money people gave him. His kind friends would not let him talk much, but sent him to bed. When he was asleep, they looked in upon him and were so pleased with his pleasant countenance that they determined to keep him if he were willing. In the morning they found that he was only too glad to remain. They sent him to school, and afterwards he entered a monastery. There he found the Bible, which he read, and from which he learned the way of life. The sweet voice of the little singer became the strong echo of good news: "Justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Conrad and Ursula, when they took that little street-singer into their house, little thought that they were nourishing the great champion of the Reformation. The poor child was Martin Luther! "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers."

Friendly Companion 1928

QUESTION: Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

ANSWER: Christ's humiliation consisted in His being born of a woman, made under the law, and becoming a servant, though He was Lord of all; in His undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; and in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

*Isaiah 53; Matthew 12. 40 & 27.46; Luke 22. 42-44;
1 Corinthians 15. 3-4; 2 Corinthians 8. 9; Galatians 4. 4;
Philippians 2. 5-8; Hebrews 5. 7-8.*

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from HARVEY HOOK.

BIBLE WORDS/WORDS OF SCRIPTURE (XXIV)**Angel**

There are many different ideas about angels. We should not always think of angels as being shining creatures with wings; if that were the case, it would not have been possible for some to “have entertained angels unawares.” Nor can all angels be called the angels of God. There are angels that kept not their first estate; the devil has angels and everlasting fire is prepared for them.

The word angel really means a messenger. Angels are sent with a message, and they serve the One who sends them. We have a definition of God’s angels in Hebrews 1:14. Paul is writing of the glories of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who is “made so much better than the angels”. After quoting from the Psalms, Paul concludes: “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” So angels are spirits, who God sends to His people, so that they shall receive salvation. The angels may be visible or invisible to man. We shall see this by looking at some examples.

When we think of angels, that scene in the fields around Bethlehem often comes to mind. There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. These humble shepherds were heirs of salvation, and the angel of the Lord was sent to them with a personal message of that salvation. The good tidings of great joy were of the coming of their Saviour, Christ the Lord. The effect of the faithful gospel message was that having received the good tidings, the shepherds left their earthly possessions and cares, and sought their Saviour.

Angels were sent to Sodom to command Lot to escape from the wicked city of Sodom, which was about to be destroyed. The angels took Lot by the hand as he lingered: “the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.” So Lot was saved from destruction with the wicked.

In the well-known account of Daniel in the den of lions, his

testimony was: "God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." Again we see how God sent an invisible angel, right to where Daniel was, for his salvation.

The message that the angel Gabriel gave to Mary was a message of salvation. Mary would conceive in her womb by the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, JESUS, the Saviour. Having received the tidings by faith, she was able to say: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

You will remember when Paul was being taken by ship to Rome, they were caught up in a most violent storm. Luke, who was travelling with him, wrote: "All hope that we should be saved was then taken away." But it was that night that the angel of God stood by Paul and brought a message of safety. So it is spiritually, when all hope of salvation in the flesh has been taken away, the soul is then prepared by the Holy Spirit to receive the message of God's salvation.

Those who are truly anointed by God the Spirit to preach the gospel are also called "angels," for example in Revelation 2 and 3. They and they only are sent of God; they neither receive their commission from man, neither are they taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. They are sent by God with one message, Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the only way of salvation. God sends His servants to where His tried and tempted people are, and enables them in weakness to speak the 'good news of salvation in Jesus the Lamb,' "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

Angels will also be messengers of salvation to God's people in the last great day at the end of the world, to take them for ever to glory. "The Son of Man ... shall send His angels, with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Contributed

THE INFIDEL'S SERMON TO THE PIRATES

A native of Sweden, who had drunk in infidel views, had occasion to go from one port to another in the Baltic Sea. When he came to a place from which he expected to sail, the boat was gone. On enquiring, he found a fishing boat going the same way, in which he embarked. After being for some time out to sea, the men, observing that he had several trunks and chests on board, concluded he must be very rich, and therefore agreed among themselves to throw him overboard. This he heard them express, which gave him great uneasiness.

However, he took occasion to open one of his trunks, which contained some books. Observing this, they remarked among themselves that it was not worthwhile to throw him into the sea, as they did not want any books, which they supposed were all that the trunks contained. They asked him if he were a priest. Hardly knowing what reply to make them, he told them he was: and at this they seemed much pleased, and said they would have a sermon on the next day, as it was the Sabbath. This increased the anxiety and distress of his mind, for he knew himself to be as incapable of such an undertaking as it was possible for anyone to be, as he knew very little of the Scriptures, neither did he believe in the inspiration of the Bible.

At length they came to a small rocky island, perhaps a quarter of a mile in circumference, where was a company of pirates, who had chosen this little isolated spot to deposit their treasures. He was taken to a cave, and introduced to an old woman, to whom they remarked that they were to have a sermon preached the next day. She said she was very glad of it, for she had not heard the Word of God for a great while.

His was a trying case, for preach he must; still he knew nothing about preaching. If he refused, or undertook to preach and did not please, he expected it would be his death. With these thoughts he passed a sleepless night; and in the morning his mind was not settled upon anything. To call upon God, whom he believed to be inaccessible, was altogether vain.

He could devise no way whereby he might be saved. He walked to and fro, still shut up in darkness, striving to collect something to say to them, but could not think of even a single sentence.

When the appointed time arrived for the service, he entered the cave, where he found the men assembled. There was a seat prepared for him, and a table with the Bible on it. They sat for the space of half an hour in profound silence: and even then the anguish of his soul was as great as human nature was capable of enduring. At length these words came to his mind: "Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth." He arose and delivered them: then other words presented themselves, and so on, until his understanding became opened, and his heart enlarged in a manner astonishing to himself. He spoke upon subjects suited to their condition: the rewards of the righteous, the judgments of the wicked, the necessity of repentance, and the importance of a change of life.

The matchless love of God to the children of men had such a powerful effect upon the minds of these wretched beings, that they were melted into tears. Nor was he less astonished at the unbounded goodness of Almighty God, in thus interposing to save his spiritual as well as natural life; and well might he exclaim: "This is the LORD'S doing, it is marvellous in our eyes."

Under a deep sense of God's goodness, his heart became filled with thankfulness, which it was out of his power to express. What a marvellous change was thus suddenly brought about by divine interposition! He who a little while before disbelieved in communion with God and the soul, became as humble as a little child; and they who were so lately meditating on his death, now were filled with love and goodwill towards each other, particularly towards him; manifesting affectionate kindness, and willing to render him all the assistance in their power.

The next morning they fitted out one of the boats, and

conveyed him whither he desired. From that time he became a changed man; from being a slave to the influence of infidelity, he was brought to be a sincere believer in the power and efficacy of the truth as it is in Jesus. C.H.S.

Bible Stories for the Young

THE SAVIOUR

In the days when Mr. J.C. Philpot was a minister in Stamford, many people would write to him with questions for him to answer publicly in the *Gospel Standard*. One question asked was the meaning of 1 Timothy 4. 10 where it says: "*who is the Saviour of all men.*" Perhaps such a question has gone through your mind. If so, may the Lord help you to understand a little more of His truth by the answer given.

Some people use this text to try to overthrow the truth of the gospel as preached and believed in our chapels, that salvation is the gift of God, and not man's free will.

1. Now, we must lay it down as a broad, undeniable principle that no single, isolated texts must be interpreted so as to overthrow grand fundamental truths. All truth, especially God's truth, must be consistent with itself.

2. This text, with others of a similar character, may be explained as representing the wide character of the gospel as compared with the narrow, restricted spirit of the Jewish dispensation. According to that covenant, no one had any right or title to the mercy or favour of God, who was not either a lineal descendant of Abraham, or admitted as a proselyte to the Jewish privileges. It is this declaration of the will of God that salvation no longer belongs to the Jew, which opens the way whereby the gospel may be preached in every place and to every creature. This does not prove that Christ died for all, or that salvation is offered to all, or that the will of God is to save every human being, but as it is not manifestly known who God's elect are, while in the unregenerate man, a way is opened for the gospel to be preached in the hearing of all, leaving it to the Holy Spirit to apply the word to those whom

God has in His own mind predestinated unto eternal life.

3. Unbelieving men stumble over such Scriptures as this one, whereas the believing and obedient submit their minds to the teaching of God and leave to God what they cannot altogether understand.

4. But the text admits a different, and an easier solution. The words: "*Saviour of all men*," it will be observed, are spoken of God the Father, not of Christ; and, therefore, seem rather to mean that He is the preserver of all men in a *temporal* sense, which He is by giving them food and raiment, (Deuteronomy 10. 18 and Acts 14. 17) watching over them, and keeping them in a thousand different ways in the same way as He feeds the raven, and holds up the sparrow (Matthew 10. 29). In that sense, God is the Saviour, or Preserver "*of all men*," but in a more especial sense "*of those that believe*," for He will take more peculiar and constant care of their bodies, seeing He has loved and redeemed their souls through the blood of His dear Son.

We do not, therefore, consider that the word: "*Saviour of all men*," as spoken of God here generally, has any reference to the salvation of the soul, but simply means the preservation of the body. It is evident that God does not save all men in a spiritual sense, but all are indebted to Him for their preservation from day to day and hour to hour as long as they live upon earth.

Adapted

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

"Uncle, is the other Lord, Jesus?" asked young Marcus Bergmann. The uncle was a Rabbi, and was teaching him to read the Hebrew Scriptures. They had reached Psalm 110. 1. "The LORD said unto my Lord." The Rabbi was so vexed that he boxed his nephew's ear with a blow that deafened him for the rest of his life. Marcus Bergmann grew to manhood, was called by grace, called to the ministry, ministered to the Jews in East London, and twice translated the New Testament into Yiddish.

Yes, the other Lord is Jesus! The deity of Christ is implicit in the Old Testament, and explicit in the New. In Isaiah 9. 6-7 it is written: "Unto us a Child is born." That refers to the virgin birth of the Child Jesus. "Unto us a Son is given." That has reference to the Son of God coming out of eternity into time. "His name shall be called the Mighty God." That speaks of the omnipotence of God the Son. "The everlasting Father." That tells of the eternal Being of the eternal Son. Likewise in Micah 5. 2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." (Margin: "From the days of eternity.")

In some mysterious way, far too deep for the best human brains to fathom, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is both God and man. Theologians call it "Hypostatic Union." This is but the English form of a Greek word which means essence, nature, substance. It may define, but does not explain the union between the Lord's Godhead, and His Manhood. God the Son is essentially – in essence – the same as God the Father and God the Spirit. He is really and truly God: the same as They are really and truly God.

H. J. Galley (Truth Unchanged, Unchanging)

"THY WILL BE DONE"

My God and Father, while I stray
Far from my home, on life's rough way,
O teach me from my heart to say:
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!

Charlotte Elliott

FOUR "W'S" IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

In the Gospel of John, the first four chapters all have a theme beginning with "W."

Chapter 1 is the chapter of the **Word**: the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, equal with His Father, and yet made flesh, to reveal His Father's will and fulfil His Word.

Chapter 2 is the chapter of the **wine**. In the first miracle at Cana, we witness the miraculous power of the Lord Jesus, in meeting the need of the guests, by turning water into wine. It was freely confessed that the best wine (typical of the gospel) had been left to the last.

Chapter 3 is the chapter of the **wind**. The Lord Jesus, emphasising to Nicodemus the necessity of being born again by the Holy Spirit, and how the sovereign direction and power of the natural wind is a picture of the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit in salvation.

Chapter 4 is the chapter of **water**. The woman of Samaria comes with her water-pot to the well, and finds the Lord Jesus there. By the time their conversation had ended she leaves her water-pot and takes the glad tidings of living water from Christ Jesus to the men of Samaria.

What a precious Book is the Bible! There is always something new to learn, even if we may have read it over many years!

Editor

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

THE EPISTLES

The First and Second Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians

In the Acts of the Apostles chapter 17 we read of the preaching of Paul and Silas (in this epistle he is called Silvanus.) Their preaching was blessed of God to the Jews first and then many devout Greeks. If there was a synagogue in a city, that is where the apostle preached first. When the Gentiles (non Jewish people) believed, then the unbelieving Jews were envious, and bitterly persecuted Paul and Silas,

rioting in the city so much that Paul and Silas fled to Berea. There is a beautiful testimony to these first Berean believers in Acts 17: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few" (Acts 17. 11-12). What a great blessing is a ready mind, may the Lord grant it to us each.

It is obvious from these letters that this church became very fruitful and well established in the gospel of Jesus Christ. These three ministers: Paul, Silas and Timothy, took great care and much labour among them both in prayer and preaching the Word. Timothy preached unto them. This sets us a pattern for a gospel church: consistent preaching of the Word of God with the church labouring in prayer for their minister and for the salvation of souls. One thing the apostle could say, having seen the effect and fruits of it at Thessalonica was: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake" (1 Thessalonians 1. 5).

What a blessing to a church when the members are well established in and assured of the truth in their hearts! My dear young friends, we need more than a speculative or intellectual knowledge of the truth of the gospel.

One thing that we often hear today is that we must move with the times and cast aside old-fashioned ideas. Consider what the apostle writes to these believers: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thessalonians 2. 15). We certainly do not want just a traditional religion: we need a vibrant, living religion wrought in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, but in the practice of religion there are certain traditions which we habitually practise: the way we conduct our services and our

ordinances, etc. We need to hold fast to these.

Again, in the fourth chapter of the First Epistle he emphasises the need for a godly walk and example by church members, both to fellow Christians and “those that are without”: that is, unbelievers; that we should work hard at our secular employment and provide for our own families. Elsewhere he exhorts that we should give to him that needeth. We live in a very selfish day and that same selfish spirit has crept into the churches: expensive holidays and cars, instead of spreading out our wealth to others. There is nothing wrong with a restful holiday or buying a car but when we only think of ourselves, our comforts and our luxuries, we are breathing and living the very spirit of this present world.

One of the things brought forth by the apostle in both epistles is the second coming of Jesus Christ. In the fourth chapter of the First Epistle he instructs them of the blessed state of believers when they die and the glorious hope of resurrection at the appearing of Jesus Christ. They were not to be overwrought in mourning at the death of a believer as it was but a happy release from this evil world to be taken into the glorious liberty of the children of God. He exhorts them to comfort one another with these blessed truths. Then in the first chapter of the Second Epistle he solemnly opens the awful terrible reality of the second coming of Jesus Christ for the wicked, but the rejoicing of the righteous. Finally, he speaks of the last great antichrist on earth, whom he calls that ‘Wicked.’ But he will be consumed and destroyed at the coming of Jesus Christ.

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about LAWS MOSES GAVE TO THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS. 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 write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. What kind of animals were the children of Israel allowed to eat? (Leviticus 11. 3)
2. What did Moses say about telling tales? (Leviticus 19. 16)
3. What had to be done when a new house was built, as a safety precaution? (Deuteronomy 22. 8)
4. What did there always have to be before anyone could be put to death? (Deuteronomy 17. 6)
5. How many feasts in a year were there in which all the men had to take part? (Exodus 23. 14, 17)
6. A man had his clothes torn, his head bare and cried out "Unclean, unclean"? What was wrong with him? (Leviticus 13)
7. We should never act on hearsay (rumour or gossip). "If thou shalt hear say..." what three things were they to do before any action was taken? (Deuteronomy 13)
8. Every fiftieth year was to be special. What was it called and write down two things that happened? (Leviticus 25)
9. A king of Israel was not to "multiply horses to himself," nor "multiply wives to himself" (Deuteronomy 17. 16-17). Which king of Israel did both of these? (1 Kings 10 & 11)
10. It doesn't appear that criminals were put in prison. Yet on two occasions a person was "put in ward" for a time. What was it for in each case?

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Lot.
2. 276. They escaped from a storm which threatened to wreck the ship.
3. Paul was let down the city wall in a basket.
4. "...if we neglect so great salvation."
5. Zedekiah.
6. "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matthew 23. 33)
7. "Make a way to escape." (1 Corinthians 10.13)
8. "Shibboleth". They were killed if they pronounced it wrongly. (Judges 12. 5-6)
9. David escaped into the land of the Philistines, which was unwise as it was the land of the enemies of Israel. (1 Samuel 27. 1)
10. Job 1.

Contributed

THE STAR

One star above all others,
Shone in the eastern sky,
To guide the wise men onwards,
And fill their hearts with joy.

For they were seeking Jesus,
The Saviour born a King,
Who came to bring salvation,
And cleanse from every sin.

From lands afar they travelled
With eager steps each day,
To bring them ever closer
To Christ who is the Way.

And so the Star of heaven
Brought these wise men to see,
In Bethlehem, where Jesus
Desired for them to be.

Now they were filled with gladness,
And joyful too were they.
The Star had led them to Him,
Then o'er the house did stay.

For when they saw the Christ-Child,
Whom they had longed to see,
'Twas Him they truly worshipped,
On humble bended knee.

Then from their opened treasures,
Three gifts for Him they bore.
Most fitting for His Person,
The One we should adore.

May Christ the blessed Day Star,
Within our hearts appear.
To know His love and mercy,
And His real presence near.

Lance Morley

THE FRIENDLY COMPANION

*A Monthly Magazine for Children
and Young People*

Editor: G.D. Buss

2009
Volume 135

GOSPEL STANDARD PUBLICATIONS
12(b) ROUNDWOOD LANE, HARPENDEN,
HERTS. AL5 3BZ

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 Pearl Of Great Price, 111; A Remarkable Conversion, 42; "But Mary Kept All These Things, And Pondered Them In Her Heart", 126; Conquering Grace, 91; Emptying The River!, 127; Er Grace, 209; Four "W's" In John's Gospel, 284; God Is, 140; God Is In Control!, 109; God Uses Little Things, 86; John's Five Evidences Of The New Birth, 260; Jumping To The Wrong Conclusion, 245; Marine Cuisine, 77; Opening Blind Eyes, 252; "Perception" (A New Magazine), 48; The Great Teacher, 159; "To Whom Else Can We Go?", 161; What Is God?, 113; Working On The Lord's Day, 258.

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

5, 60, 85, 107, 135, 151, 173, 221, 264, 276.

BIBLE LESSONS (G.L. TenBroeke)

A Blind Man Receives Sight, 224; A Lunatic Son And His Father Helped, 56; A Sinful Woman Forgiven, 200; Christ Foretells His Death, 8; Jesus Teaches A Lesson On Forgiveness, 104; Jesus The Good Shepherd, 272; Jesus Transfigured In The Mount, 32; The Blind Man's Confession, 248; The Feast Of Tabernacles, 176; The Money In The Fish's Mouth, 80; The Ten Lepers, 154; The Unfriendly Brethren And Samaritans, 130.

BIBLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Deception, 166; Escapes From Danger, 262; Foolish Things, 190; Forgetting And Remembering, 118; Laws Moses Gave To The Israelites In The Wilderness, 286; Lot, 23; Ships, 142; Soldiers And Warfare, 94; The Beginning Of The World, 46; The Holy Spirit, 69; The Life Of Moses, 213; Things Which God Opened, 238.

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

The Epistles; Introduction, 20; The Epistle To The Colossians, 261; The Epistles To The Corinthians 1 & 2, 116, 140; The Epistle To The Ephesians, 211; The Epistle To The Galatians, 164, 188; The Epistle To The Philippians, 236; The Epistle To The Romans, 21, 44, 67, 92; The Epistles To The Thessalonians 1 & 2, 284.

COLOURING TEXTS

Genesis 22. 8, 55; John 1. 23, 31; John 1. 39, 129; John 2. 5, 153; 1 John 1. 9, 271; Luke 5. 5, 175; Luke 7. 13, 223; Luke 15. 2, 79; Luke 18. 13, 103; Matthew 3. 17, 7; Matthew 8. 8, 199; Psalm 91. 15, 247.

CONTRIBUTED AND SELECTED PIECES

Anonymous	A Boy From Stavenisse, 10, 34, 58, 82, 106, 132, 156, 178; Bible Words/Words of Scripture, 18, 39, 63, 84, 114, 134, 162, 185, 202, 234, 250, 277; Bleatings Of A Lamb In Christ's Fold, 226, 259;
-----------	--

- Cain's Wife, 208; Commanding Rhyme, 87; Gold, 160; Jesus Affirmed Scripture!, 29; Lying Slander, 91; Navigation, 112; Old Books, 19; The Heavenly Weaver, 167; The Mysterious Horseman, 254; The Saviour, 281; The Unwelcome (?) Stranger – A Warning!, 183; "Under The Shadow Of The Almighty", 210; Warnings, 65; "Whatsoever A Man Soweth, That Shall He Also Reap", 173.
- Bible Stories for the Young British Church Newspaper
- Broome, L.R. Apples, 260.
- Bunyan, J. Why Rub It Out?, 227.
- Campbell, M. Christian Meets Atheist, 230.
- Creation Magazine Early Days, 136.
- Cardinal Fish, 150.
- Supercomputer To Brainstorm The Human Brain, 187.
- Watch A Glasswing Passing, 14.
- Daily Manna "The Heart Is Deceitful Above All Things", 88.
- Elliott, C. "Thy Will Be Done", 283.
- Friendly Companion Luther's Snow Storm, 275.
- The Fear Of The Lord, 127.
- Hambridge, R. Israel, 12, 36, 61, 88, 108, 137.
- Insight Into The Example Of Geese, 233.
- Mead, M. How Do You Treat Jesus?, 269.
- "Our Daily Bread" Him Only, 43.
- Ramsbottom, B.A. Bearing The Reproach, 163.
- Randalls, A. The Person Of Christ And The Koran, 41
- Religious Stories for Young and Old The Scottish Covenanter, 204.
- Religious Stories for Young People A Safe Hiding Place, 231.
- Spurgeon, C.H. Times And Seasons, 274.
- The Banner Of Truth Being Carried, 65.
- The Sheep And Their Shepherd, 268.
- The Messenger Seven Hints, 221.
- The Young People's Magazine The Deadly Hook, 181.
- Truth Unchanged, Unchanging The Deity Of Christ, 282.
- Vermeer For Christ's Sake, 16.
- Watts, J.A. Opening Blind Eyes, 252.
- Windridge, F. "Father, Forgive Them", 87.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES (Contributed)

A Great Prophet, 30; "At Thy Word", 174; "Come And See", 128; "Do It", 152; His Father's Business, 6; Jesus Came For Sinners, 78; Lost And Found, 270; Questions And Answers, 246; "Speak The Word", 198; The Lamb Of God, 54; Two Men Who Prayed, 102; "Weep Not", 222.

FRONT COVER PICTURE

A Gate At Jerusalem, April; A Lion And A Lamb, March; A Signpost, February; A Sundial, August; An Ewe With Two Lambs, December; Geneva Bible, June; Manuscript Of The Gospel Of Mark, September; Museum In Christchurch, New Zealand, October; Simpson's Folly, Sandbanks, November; St. Pierre's Cathedral, Geneva, July; T.B.S. Advertisement On London Bus, May; The Chronophage Clock, January.

LIST OF NAMES

71, 215.

POETRY

A Few More Years, 240; "Be Careful What You Say", 264; "God Is Everywhere", 47; "He Shall ... Gather The Lambs In His Arms", 70; "In Me Is Thine Help", 214; "O, Think Of The Lamb, Who On Calvary Died", 96; The Cry Of The Poor, 192; "The Eye Of Faith", 144; The Plan Of The Master Weaver, 168; The Secret Of A Happy Life, 24; The Star, 288; There Are No Clocks In Hell, 120.

OUR MAGAZINES

Once more through the mercy of God we are spared to see the completion of another year in the history of The Friendly Companion. We are deeply indebted to our loyal band of contributors, typist and proof readers who have so faithfully worked to ensure that the magazine appears each month on time.

We have been encouraged also by letters of encouragement and constructive suggestions about the magazine, for which we express our warm appreciation.

In these increasingly dark days it is important that the standard of truth be not lowered, and that under God's blessing the contents each month may be of help to our readers, young and old, 'to follow on to know the Lord.' We would ask for your continued prayerful support that 'the bread cast upon the waters may indeed be found after many days.'

The annual subscription for the Friendly Companion for 2010 will be £12.60 posted direct. The full range of prices can be found on the inside cover of this month's magazine.

"Brethren, pray for us."

G.D. Buss (Editor)