

The Friendly Companion



“The LORD hath made all things for Himself.”
(Proverbs 16. 4.)

January 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

As you pick up the *Friendly Companion* this month it will be to read the first issue of another year. How quickly, to those of us who are older, do the years fly past! When you are younger, often time seems to drag, and there is a danger that you might wish your time away faster than God intends. Many of us look back and wish we had spent our earlier days more profitably, especially when we think of days when we did not fear God. How Paul exhorts us, to 'redeem the time, for the days are evil.'

What did he mean? To redeem, means 'to buy back.' How can we 'buy back' our time? We certainly cannot become younger and relive those days that are gone, but we should seek, with God's help, to live our remaining days more profitably. How Zacchæus sought to do that when his life was changed by the Lord Jesus Christ. He restored the money he had stolen from others, fourfold, and gave the half of his goods to the poor. Saul of Tarsus redeemed the time by using his considerable zeal to defend Christ's cause, the very opposite of what he had done before his experience on the Damascus Road.

But when all is said and done, as we look back over 2013, we all have to say how far short we have come of this standard! How much of our time have we spent in unprofitable conversation? How much of our time have we wasted by being too engrossed with the world around us and have forgotten the one thing needful, which is Christ?

Young people in our day have many attractions that are often really nothing other than time-wasters, if not worse. This is the great snare of such things as 'Facebook,' which seems to be the craze with many in our day. Addiction to the internet and television are equally harmful, especially in those growing years when the mind is formed. To use the world and not to abuse it needs a power greater than we can summon up. If you compare how much time you spend reading your Bible, with the hours you may be spending using (or misusing?) the

media, I am sure many of you would be staggered to see the imbalance.

It is a saying which has a lot of truth in it: "We should treat the world as a man doing business in the rain. As soon as he is finished he goes indoors." So while we cannot altogether divorce ourselves from current technology, we should use it only as much as is necessary to carry on our daily lives honourably, and only ever to the glory of God. Any other use is not only displeasing to God, but also harmful to our souls and should be turned from and avoided.

May God help us each to use the days of 2014 to Him and not to ourselves.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Those of you who live in England will no doubt be aware of a cull of badgers which is taking place. The environmental authorities say that up to 70% of badgers in certain areas need to be culled to avoid the spread of tuberculosis among cattle. Strong views have been expressed on both sides of the argument, and it is not for us to take sides, we not having all the necessary knowledge to hand.

However, did you know that the badger has a very important place in Scripture? The Tabernacle was covered with badger skins. Now godly scholars tell us that it was probably not the same species of badger that we are used to in this country, but nonetheless there are some lessons we can learn. The Tabernacle was so designed to teach spiritual lessons to the Israelites.

Firstly, the skin's dark colour in such contrast to the glories within the Tabernacle, reminds us of how the Lord Jesus veiled His glory when He became a Man. Isaiah tells us: "*He bath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him*" (Isaiah 53. 2).

Secondly, the black exterior of the Tabernacle reminds us that when the Lord Jesus came, He came to bear the sins of His people. Their sin was to be laid to His charge to bear the punishment: *“For He bath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”* (2 Corinthians 5. 21).

Thirdly, the badger skin was very hard wearing. It gave adequate protection from all of the elements in the long wilderness journey, from the searing heat of the midday sun and the ferocious sand storms which are common in desert lands. Isaiah, again in his prophecy says in chapter 32. 2: *“And a Man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; ... as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”*

Even though the children of Israel had not the full revelation of the Word of God as we have, yet God taught those who had ears to hear, in these ways, the great fundamental truths of salvation. We are blessed with a complete Bible. Do we value it enough? Have we been made wise unto salvation through its sacred teachings?

GOOD WISHES

The present season prompts my mind to send
These, my kind wishes, to my Christian friend:
I wish you much increase of every grace;
I wish you strength to run your Christian race;
I wish you patience under every rod;
I wish you much sweet fellowship with God;
I wish you joy and comforts all divine;
I wish your evidence bright may shine;
I wish you very strong in “precious faith”;
I wish you well through life, and well in death;
I wish you safe on the celestial shore;
And *there*, I wish you *well for evermore*.

Samuel Medley

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**NAOMI RETURNS**

There was a famine in Israel in the time of the judges. One family left their home in Bethlehem and went to stay in the land of Moab. There was plenty of food in Moab, but they could not go away from the judgments of God.

After a while the father died. The two sons married women of Moab named Orpah and Ruth. Ten years went by and the two sons also died. The mother, Naomi, heard that: *"the LORD had visited His people in giving them bread."* She wanted to return to Bethlehem. Orpah and Ruth went on the way with her. Naomi told them to go back to their old homes in Moab. They wept together and Naomi urged them again to go back. Orpah kissed Naomi goodbye, but Ruth refused to leave her. She did not want to go back to the idols of Moab. Ruth said: *"... thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."*

The people of Bethlehem were amazed to see them. They said: *"Is this Naomi?"* But she told them to call her Mara, which means bitter. She said: *"the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty."*

QUESTIONS:

1. What land did one family go to stay in?
2. Who refused to leave Naomi?
3. How did she say the Almighty had dealt with her? (2 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (See page 2 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

Contributed

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Delilah.
2. Samson's great strength.
3. His hair to be shaved off.

*“So Naomi
returned,
and Ruth the
Moabiteess,
her daughter-
in-law,
with her.”
Ruth 1. 22.*

BIBLE LESSONS**THE BURIAL OF JESUS**

What a striking silhouette the crosses must have made in the late evening sky! The historic, though solemn, events of the day had come to an end. The GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT was finished! A lonely figure was carefully taking the sacred body of Jesus down from the cross. It was Joseph of Arimathæa, who had received permission from Pilate. As he struggled, another lonely figure came toward him. It was Nicodemus. He had come to Jesus by night before, probably because he was afraid. Now he came boldly to help Joseph.

Together they gently removed the body from the cross. Even in this, the Father took care of the sacred body of His dear SON. He did not leave it to the crude hands of the Roman soldiers. Rather, He constrained these two secret disciples, whose wealth enabled them to give Jesus an honourable burial.

Joseph had brought some very fine linen, no doubt paying a good price for it. Nicodemus brought some very costly spices: myrrh and aloes. They began to wrap the body of Jesus, sprinkling the spices over the body and between the layers of the linen cloth. David prophesied of this in Psalm 45: *"All Thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, ... whereby they have made Thee glad."* Perhaps you remember that myrrh was one of the gifts the wise men brought.

Near the mount where Jesus was crucified was a garden. In it was a new tomb that Joseph owned and had carved out of the rock. Joseph had likely prepared the tomb for himself. Now he and Nicodemus carefully laid the body of Jesus in it. The gospel writers tell us that no man had been laid in the tomb before. Any place where a dead person had lain was considered unclean. Isaiah wrote of this hundreds of years before: *"And He made His grave with the wicked (the two thieves), and with the rich in His death"* (Isaiah 53. 9).

Two of the women who followed Jesus, Mary Magdalene and another Mary, kept a sorrowful watch near the cross. They followed Joseph and Nicodemus as they carried the body to

the tomb. They watched to see how He was laid. They watched until Joseph and Nicodemus had rolled a great stone over the mouth of the sepulchre.

The long, sad day was now over. The women returned to their homes and prepared spices and ointments. They intended to go early on the first day of the week, after the Sabbath was over, and further anoint the body of Jesus.

As the Sabbath day dawned, the disciples of Jesus were dispersed, each going their own way. This, too, was prophesied hundreds of years before: "... *smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered*" (Zechariah 13. 7). All that they hoped and believed seemed dashed in pieces.

Meanwhile, the chief priests and Pharisees were coming together as they always did on the Sabbath day. They were not making their way to the temple to worship though. No: they were heading to the palace of Pilate. Oh the hypocrisy of the chief priests and Pharisees! They had condemned the disciples for plucking a few ears of corn on the Sabbath to ease their hunger. They had also tried to kill Jesus for healing a man and telling him to take up his bed and walk on the Sabbath. Yet, the law of the Sabbath must not get in the way of their business now.

What was so important that they must go to Pilate on the Sabbath? They reminded Pilate that Jesus had spoken: "*After three days I will rise again.*" Therefore, they urged Pilate to command the sepulchre to be secured until the third day. They even thought that His disciples might come and take the body from the tomb and claim that He was risen.

Pilate told them to go their way and make the tomb as secure as they could. They quickly set a watch and sealed the tomb. These enemies of Jesus, along with the arch-enemy Satan, would do all they could to prevent the resurrection of Jesus.

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 27 verses 55 to 60; Mark chapter 15 verses 40 to 47; Luke chapter 23 verses 49 to 56 and John chapter 19 verses 38 to 42.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who came to help Joseph care for the body of Jesus?
2. What had Joseph brought in which to wrap the body of Jesus?
3. With what spices did they anoint the body?
4. Who watched them lay the body in the tomb?
5. What would the enemies of Jesus try to prevent?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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 Roman centurion.
2. "He keepeth all His bones: not one of them is broken."
3. Blood and water.
4. Joseph of Arimathaea.
5. Because of fear of the Jews.

G.L. TenBroeke

THREE 'B's FOR 2014

In the Epistle of Paul to Philemon, we read of three central characters, each of whom have a lesson for us. They are Paul, Onesimus and Philemon.

This one-chapter letter from Paul, tells us of a slave called Onesimus who ran away to Rome from his master, Philemon. Philemon was a Christian man, so we would hope that he was a good and a kind employer. Though we are not told exactly why Onesimus ran away, it was probably to escape the Christian influence of Philemon's home. Perhaps he had heard of the wonders of Rome and wanted to see for himself the entertaining life there of which some may have spoken to him. When Onesimus ran away, he took with him some of his master's money, so he also became guilty of the eighth commandment: "*Thou shalt not steal.*" The Roman law demanded that run-away slaves should be dealt with very harshly. Sometimes they were to be flogged, or in extreme

cases were even put to death.

Little did Onesimus realise that an all-seeing eye was watching him: that of His God, the very One whose influence he may well have been trying to avoid, having been under the home roof of his Christian employer. However when he arrives in Rome, who does he come into contact with but the Apostle Paul! Perhaps he had heard of his fame, and out of curiosity found his way to the prison, or house where Paul was being kept captive. You remember that a man called Zacchæus, out of curiosity sought to see the Lord Jesus, and what a change that brought into his life. The same grace was to be showed to Onesimus. For Paul, although he was a prisoner, would not have spent his time bemoaning the fact that he was a captive, because he tells us in Philippians 4. 11 that he had learned to **“be content”** with whatever God’s will was for him. But he would have wasted no opportunity to find out all about Onesimus, and to point out to him his great sin in breaking God’s commandments, and running away. Also Paul must have pointed out to Onesimus that there is forgiveness for those who are truly repentant over their sin, and that the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, does cleanse from all sin those who are truly sorry. For we read that Onesimus was now a believer.

To show his sincerity, Paul told Onesimus that he had to return to Philemon and that he had to say he was sorry, like David in Psalm 38. 18: *“I will **be sorry** for my sin.”* Perhaps we all know what it is to find it very hard to say: “I am sorry.” The words seem to stick in our throat, as proud nature does not like to admit it is in the wrong. But when grace reigns, then we are ready to say sorry, not only to God whose law we have broken, but to those whom we may have wronged.

So Paul sends this letter with Onesimus, entreating Philemon to forgive his slave, and even to receive him as a brother Christian! Sadly some people find it as hard to forgive, as others do to say sorry. But Paul says to Christians: ***“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one***

another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4. 32). Forgiven Christians ought to be forgiving Christians as we have every reason to believe that Philemon was to Onesimus.

May the closing prayer of the epistle be true of us each, then we will not find it a hardship to follow these three 'be's.'

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

Editor

The year 2014 marks the one-hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War, in which many men died, some in the most appalling circumstances, in the defence of the principles of freedom. Many War Memorials in our towns and cities bear the names of those who gave, what some call "the supreme sacrifice," in laying down their lives for their country and fellow-countrymen. Among those who survived this dreadful conflict was the late Mr. Harry Salkeld, a much-loved minister in our churches during the last century. The following instructive article is an extract from his book "The Vital Year" which recounts some of his personal experiences during his time as a soldier.

A DARK EPISODE

In the course of life's journey, however long or short it may be, much of our time is occupied with the humdrum routine matters of human existence, i.e. "the daily round and the common task." Occasionally, however, something unusual and striking occurs in our own experience, producing maybe pleasure or alarm, and such an incident will stand out conspicuously in the memory, like a milestone by the roadside. Such was the case during the time about which we write.

During our comparatively short spell at this part of the Western front (the Menin Road), early in 1918, there occurred one night something which was in itself so unusual (and happily rare), that it has left an indelible impression upon the mind.

Having been in and out of the front line on several occasions, we were once more, as a battalion, back at the large base camp at Dickebusch on rest.

In due time all men available were ordered to prepare, on a certain evening, for another “working party” behind the front line. A narrow gauge railway was in use for transport, and we travelled in miniature open trucks from the base camp for a distance of about three miles to the low hill which formed our reserve line, and also the stores held by the Royal Engineers, known as Canada Dump. Here, in the gathering darkness, we took up our respective loads and, company by company, in single file, slowly trudged along the narrow duckboard track, to deposit the required material at the outpost of the trench system.

Having unloaded our burdens, we set off back again to the supply dump, imagining in our youthful simplicity that the evening’s work was done and visualising a swift, if not altogether smooth, return to Dickebusch. However, any pleasant thoughts of this nature were soon dispelled, when, upon arrival at the stores dump, another load awaited us.

Hearts and hopes fell, but there was nothing else to do but to take up the second burden and set off along the track once more, for, as the famous ballad has it: “Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do and die.”

The second trip was hard going, for each load was fairly heavy and awkward to carry, especially if it was a roll of barbed wire, and the foothold on a slippery wooden track was none too reliable.

This added task was duly completed, and then followed the steady single-file trek back to the store dump, in the darkness and cold of a winter’s night and with undeniable weariness.

Arrived once more at the “dump,” three companies of the working party moved off to the railhead, to return by the light railway to camp at Dickebusch.

The remaining fourth company, which was our own, was

held back, and we were then informed that as some material still remained to be moved, we must make one more journey ourselves, to complete the night's work.

It was at this point that trouble arose, for several men refused to follow out this order, arguing hotly on the ground of unfairness.

"Why," said they, "should three companies be allowed to return to camp, and our company alone be held back and forced to make a third journey, when we were already almost at the end of our strength?"

The number of men who thus objected amounted to a mere handful of the total company.

The rest of us at first treated the matter as just an outburst of "fed up-ness," and it was felt that, with some good-humoured but straight talking, they would fall in with the main body and see the job through.

However, it was soon evident that this was not a "passing cloud," but something more serious, amounting in fact to an adamant refusal to obey the latest order.

The officer in charge, who was quite young and well liked, pointed out to the objectors the folly and danger of persisting in their course, but unhappily his caution had no effect.

Much earnest conversation ensued amongst the remainder of the company, in the chilly darkness of that winter's night, under the open canopy of heaven.

True, we were all very weary by this time, but no less truly did we realise that it was our bounden duty to obey the order given, and if there were any sense of grievance, this should be voiced later.

Several of our number, acting as spokesmen, thereupon took up the matter with our unruly comrades, in one more effort to turn them round, and bring them into line with the majority. This endeavour proved abortive and we were then faced with two alternatives. Either we (the majority) should obey the latest order, and finish the allotted task ourselves, and

so leave the recalcitrant few to face the consequences of their disobedience alone, realising how serious those consequences could or would be. Alternatively (if all our efforts failed to move them), we should throw in our lot with the few hardened objectors, hoping that such united action would cover them, if indeed there is truth in the saying: "There is safety in numbers."

Our first alternative was finally turned down, although with heavy hearts after one last endeavour to sway the few to reason and obedience, proved unavailing. The sense of comradeship in wartime strongly affected our feelings, and perhaps blinded our judgment, to such an extent that we then and there agreed to make the fateful decision and to share their guilt and disobedience.

Theirs was a wilful act of refusal to obey, whilst ours was feelingly reluctant and indeed hateful. We knew at the outset we stood to suffer the consequences, though we trusted that our united action might save them from the worst that might befall them.

Thus, the whole company returned to camp at Dickebusch, under the heavy cloud of a command broken and an ordered task unfulfilled.

The trials which followed were painful, as might well be imagined, yet the extremity of punishment which could have been exacted mercifully did not materialise. The immediate consequences included a long route march, with full pack, and also loss of pay and leave. Besides this, we as a company suffered the ignominy of a public reprimand by the brigadier-general before the rest of the battalion, who were all fully armed and formed into a square, whilst we stood together in the middle at attention in fatigue dress. Thus together we had to prove the truth of the Scripture: "*The way of transgressors is hard*" (Proverbs 13. 15).

Yet in this case the majority had, against their better feelings, sided with the disobedient minority, in order to save them if

possible from the worst consequences of their own folly and obstinacy.

The sober consideration of such a matter as this might well give rise to other thoughts concerning our eternal destiny and the great work of Christ in salvation.

We read: *"God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh"* (Romans 8. 3). In deep humility He shared our low estate.

But even more than this we learn that *"He bath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him"* (2 Corinthians 5. 21).

As one has said:

"He took the dying traitor's place,
And suffered in his stead;
For man, (O miracle of grace!)
For man the Saviour bled."

Here, it was not the many who shared the guilt of the few, but One alone, even the eternal Son of God, who in unspeakable love became the substitute for many. The Scripture doctrine of substitution is precious indeed to those who know something of the plague of their own heart, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Such people will find no fault with the worthy Puritans of old, who stressed the vital need of conviction of sin by the power of the Holy Spirit, thus bringing about *"repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Acts 20. 21). When inward conviction is a reality and Christ, the Lamb of God, is seen by faith, "Whose blood alone has power sufficient to atone," then it is He draws us to Himself. He has said: *"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me"* (John 12. 32).

"Behold a scene of matchless grace,
'Tis Jesus in the sinner's place;
Heaven's brightest Glory sunk in shame,
That rebels might adore His name."

NAAMAN

The following notes on the healing of Naaman the Syrian (slightly adapted) were sent by one of our young people, Rebecca Outten.

(You can read of Naaman's healing in 2 Kings chapter 5)

Naaman was high in society and had everything, but he had leprosy. Leprosy eats away at you, and is very contagious. In Naaman's day you would have died early.

Leprosy is a picture of sin, which leads to death. It gets worse and worse, and is hard to stop once it starts to get a hold. Sin ends in eternal punishment in hell, unless the sinner is forgiven.

The slave girl (who lived at Naaman's house) told her mistress that there was a man in Israel called Elisha, who would be able to heal Naaman.

Naaman offered a high reward to be cured. Many people think they can earn salvation or buy it. When Naaman came to Elisha he was expecting something outstanding! Instead, Elisha told him to go and wash in the River Jordan. He was too proud and at first would not obey. He was so angry that Elisha had not healed him in the way he expected. By nature people are like Naaman in that they are too proud to come to God.

"*Wash and be clean,*" was to be the cure for Naaman. The servants reminded Naaman of what the prophet had said and after washing seven times in the River Jordan, he was cured.

Naaman recognised his true state and was turned to God. This is a picture of what God does in taking away sins, as Naaman was cured of leprosy.

SIN

One of our readers has pointed out that if you take the word SIN and make other words from it you get the following reminder!

SIN IS IN I

This is a wholesome reminder to us each of our nature and how we need a new heart and a new spirit which does not have sin in it.

THE NECESSITY OF DIVINE LIFE

Some two hundred and fifty years ago, there lived in the Welsh valleys of Carmarthenshire, a quaint old man who preached regularly in cottages up and down the valley where he lived. Cottage meetings were a common feature of the days of reviving, especially in Wales.

Being a poor man, his dress would have been unconventional by our standards. He went about the valleys in a large brimmed hat which nearly covered all of his face. He also carried with him a stout stick which he was in the habit of brandishing in front of his hearers to call them to attention.

On one occasion he was due to take a service in one of these cottages. The valley-people crowded into the cottage waiting for Evan to begin. Instead, he gazed at the cottage walls which were tastefully decorated with pictures of birds. Evan seemed totally preoccupied with that at which he was gazing.

Suddenly, to the astonishment of his hearers, he jumped up and began to shout with all his might, "whoosh!" to the birds. This he did for some moments making frantic gestures at them. Of course there was no response from them, although the hens outside the cottage were thoroughly disturbed by Evan's erratic behaviour!

Suddenly Evan stopped. He turned to his waiting hearers and asked: "Why did the birds not move? Why were they not frightened by my shouting?" Without waiting for an answer he gave his own reply: "Because there was no life in them." Had they been alive they would have moved, but there can be no movement without life. Life must precede movement. "So," he said, "it is in the soul. There must be divine life in the soul before there can be any spiritual act." In other words: "*Ye must be born again.*"

Adapted

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from ELLIE BAKER; KEZIA BURDEN; RUBY FIELD and HARRY MAIN.

FASCINATING FLOWERPOTS

Noah's Flood Explains Hopewell Rocks, Canada

The Bay of Fundy in eastern Canada is famous for its enormous tides. At Hopewell Rocks, toward the end of the bay, the tide may rise as high as 14 metres (46 feet), but it does not stay high very long. The water is always moving, either up or down, and the level can change by a metre (3 feet) in 30 minutes.

The tides are eroding the cliffs and leaving stacks that are narrow at their base and look like 'flowerpots' standing on the shore. These have fascinating names like Baby Elephant, Mother-in-law, and Lover's Arch. Visitors to Hopewell Rocks, sometimes thousands a day, descend the Main Staircase at low tide and stroll across the ocean floor – until the water begins to rise again.

When I visited Hopewell Rocks some years ago, the large, modern, interpretive centre was equipped with colourful display boards and models. On-site interpreters gave talks about local wildlife, sea life, and plant life, and told the geological story about how the rocks formed. Their story was one spanning eras of unimaginable time hundreds of millions of years ago.

When I descended the steps, I saw that the 'flowerpots' were made of gravel that had been cemented into stone. Some of the chunks of rock were angular but most were rounded. This conglomerate rock, as it is called, spoke of large quantities of fast flowing water. Rushing floodwaters would not have taken very much time to deposit that gravel. As I walked across the exposed ocean floor and examined the flowerpot stacks and cliffs, I realised I was looking at evidence from the global Flood of Noah's time.

Time was the key. Although the interpretive boards spoke of millions of years, I reminded myself that that time was not in the rocks I saw. And, after suitably adjusting the times that were quoted, the sequence of geological events shown on the interpretive board fitted well with what was expected from Noah's Flood. The Flood explained it well, giving new insights

into features like the origin of the buried vegetation that turned to coal. When we apply the new interpretation to the interpretive boards it changes the way we see the world.

Tas Walker (Creation)

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

**LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (I)**

As we look at this deeply instructive subject in the light of the holy Word of God, I believe we shall, by the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, be instructed in the ways of truth and righteousness. Thus if we seek to follow the rule of interpretation of Holy Scripture by seeking the mind of the Spirit on those portions that shine like beacons, and interpret the more obscure portions in the light of the clearer statements of divine truth, we shall not err in our quest. I make this point because many have erred greatly when they take a very obscure Scripture and try to build a doctrinal edifice on it. This is a very unwise thing to do and can lead us into gross error. The other thing we must always bear in mind is that Scripture never contradicts itself. If it appears to do so, it is because of our own lack of light and understanding. Another very instructive way of studying Holy Scripture is to look at the first reference to a subject in the Old Testament and then in the New Testament.

This subject of light and darkness is dealt with from Genesis to Revelation. Indeed it is the central theme of the whole of the revelation that the Lord has given us in His Word. In Genesis chapter 1 we have recorded the creation of light and darkness: these two states are diametrically opposed. *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light*

Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."

This theme of night and day, light and darkness, is given a spiritual significance throughout Holy Scripture. The Holy Spirit has recorded in 2 Corinthians 4. 6: *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* How instructive these Scriptures are. Because of our fallen condition in Adam, we are *"born in sin and shapen in iniquity."* In other words we are born in a state of spiritual death and darkness and it is only as Almighty God speaks or commands, as He did in the creation of the world, that we are, or can be delivered from that awful state in which we are all born: *"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."*

My dear beloved friends we are taught very clearly and plainly in Holy Scripture that God is an absolute sovereign in salvation, it is a divine act of grace to bring a poor sinner from a state of spiritual darkness into a state of spiritual light.

The first reference to light in the New Testament is a quotation from the prophesy of Isaiah 9 as we read in Matthew 4. 16: *"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."* Notice the connection between darkness and death. This was of course a prophecy of the birth of Jesus Christ and the condition of mankind, death and darkness. But O that glorious light that shined in the birth, life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ! Think of those lovely words of Jesus Christ: *"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* This glorious light or life is revealed to us in the opening chapter of John's gospel in the first 14 verses of this chapter. Life and light are used as synonymous terms, the one meaning the other; then speaking of the glorious incarnate Son of God manifest in the flesh, it says in

verse 9: *"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."* In verse 4 we read: *"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."*

Of this deliverance from darkness the Holy Spirit reveals to us in Colossians 1. 12-14: *"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins."* As we look at this glorious kingdom we need to solemnly realise the vital need of the new birth. Listen to the words of Jesus: *"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again"* (John 3. 5-7).

Are you in this kingdom of light and liberty? Have you been born again by the Holy Spirit? Has the Holy Spirit shown you your lost helpless condition? Has He revealed to you that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life? These are very vital questions concerning your eternal welfare.

(To be continued)

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about WASHING AND MAKING CLEAN. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 2 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Who came down to the river to wash herself, and found a baby hidden in a basket of bulrushes? (Exodus 2. 5)
2. Who washed his face because he had been weeping, after seeing his younger brother for the first time in many years? (Genesis 43. 31)

3. David said, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." From what did he want to be washed and cleansed? (Psalm 51. 2, 7)
4. God says of Israel: "Though thou wash thee with nitre¹ and take thee much soap..." What was not washed away? (Jeremiah 2. 22)
5. What "cleanseth... from all sin"? (1 John 1. 7)
6. Who washed his hands before the multitude before his unjust condemnation of the Lord Jesus? (Matthew 27)
7. The Pharisees held traditions such as "the washing of pots and cups". What did Jesus say was wrong? (Mark 7)
8. What can never be cured by washing, yet on one occasion was miraculously removed when a man washed himself seven times in the river Jordan? (2 Kings 5)
9. Peter said to the Lord Jesus, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." What did Jesus reply? (John 13)
10. Who felt that even if he washed in snow water and was made completely clean, that God would "plunge [him] in the ditch" and leave him with filthy clothes?

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Gabriel.
2. Gold, frankincense and myrrh.
3. "God with us."
4. "Because there was no room for them in the inn."
5. "Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."
6. Bethlehem of Judæa. (Matthew 2. 4-5) (Micah 5. 2).
7. The Son of the Highest. The Son of God. (Luke 1. 32, 35)
8. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2. 14)
9. The wise men (Matthew 2. 2, 11). Herod (Matthew 2. 8, 16)
10. Six times. Angels appeared to Joseph (Matthew 1. 20; 2. 13; 2. 19), to Zacharias (Luke 1. 11), Mary (Luke 1. 26-27) and the shepherds (Luke 2. 8-15)

¹ Nitre in the Bible probably refers to Natron, mainly sodium carbonate or washing soda, which was found in Egypt. Proverbs 25. 20 refers to the effervescence of carbon dioxide which occurs when mixed with vinegar (acetic acid).

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO BROTHERS

I have a little voice within,
That always tells me when I sin;
I'm sure I know not whence it came,
Pray, brother, tell me what's its name?
There is no one, however near
Whispers so sternly in my ear;
And often when I'm out at play,
If anything I do or say
That's wrong or wicked, then I hear
This gentle something in my ear.
Think you 'tis mother's voice you hear,
Thus gently falling on your ear?
I know 'tis not my mother's tone,
Nor father's tone, for when they're gone,
It keeps on talking just the same,
If aught I do that they would blame.
And brother, does it always tell,
In kindly notes, when you've done well?
Yes, brother, that indeed is true,
I'm happy when those things I do.
What is it, brother, can you say?
For 'tis awake by night and day.
Yes. Its name is Conscience, and 'twill be
A voice from which you cannot flee.
It keeps a registry within,
Rebuking those who live in sin,
And utters words of softest tone
To those who will its dictate own.
So always heed its gentle voice,
'Twill never lead you into vice,
But like a sentinel within,
Will warn you of approaching sin,
Yet still remember, guilty stains
Are only cleansed from Jesus' veins.

The Friendly Companion



“LORD, I have loved the habitation of Thy house,
and the place where Thine honour dwelleth.”
(Psalm 26. 8)

February 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

Every one of us, whatever age we may be, has a little voice within us, to which we will give heed if we are wise. It is the voice of conscience which is God's voice to us about our thoughts, words and ways. To go against one's conscience is to do what Solomon tells us: *"But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate Me love death"* (Proverbs 8. 36).

One of the early pastors of "Jireh" Chapel, Tenterden in Kent was Reuben Weeks. When he was quite a young lad, only eleven years old, he was sent to work for a miller who ground corn and also sold bran. Bran is a food that horses like. One day his master sent him to weigh out a particular amount of bran for a customer, who whilst he was doing so asked for double the amount, with which Reuben supplied him. Having paid the full amount, Reuben was tempted to keep back half of it, knowing that his master would only have expected that amount, not knowing of the increased order. For two days Reuben kept this extra money for himself, but it seemed to burn in his pocket, whilst his conscience burned within! At last he went to his master and confessed what he had done, returning the money. His master freely forgave him, and on many occasions afterwards entrusted him with large amounts of cash to look after. Reuben's conscience spoke to him and he wisely listened. Do you listen to your conscience? Solomon tells us: *"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy"* (Proverbs 28. 13).

The Bible warns us against a "seared conscience." What is that you might ask? It is one that ceases to do its work of warning and reproving. This is a most dangerous state to be in, and one which, unless grace intervenes, will end in eternal ruin.

When I was a lad at school, there were two entrances to the school. However at one point by cutting through a hedge, a

much quicker way could be found into the school. Although this was forbidden, some began to use this short cut. The first to do it got quite badly scratched, and the next few not quite so much, until there was a gap wide enough to pass through without being caught in the hedge. It was still against the rules to go this way but because the hedge did not scratch any more it became a common route for the pupils to use. A seared conscience is like that. It has been ignored so many times that it ceases to warn, even though the path is as wrong as ever.

Dear young friends, if in some matter your conscience is seared like that, ask God to close up the gap, and put a hedge about you to keep you from evil.

Isaiah tells us: *"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; ..."* (Isaiah 1. 16, 17).

May God help us each, so to do.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Many of our readers will be familiar with the picture of our chapel at Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA: a place some of us have felt the Lord's gracious presence within. The extract below is from writings of our dear friend the Pastor, Mr. J.K. Stehouwer, in his book entitled, "Kept." If spared to February 23rd he will be ninety years of age and I am sure all of our readers wish him the Lord's richest blessing as he reaches this milestone in his life. "Kept" is still available from Gospel Standard Trust Publications.

"The day came that we had to leave Grand Rapids and go to Fort Custer for further medical examinations and our uniforms. We would be there for about a week and then sent to another camp for basic training. I can well remember bidding goodbye to my parents at the Union Depot and going by train to Fort Custer, which was about fifty miles away. Most of us on the train were eighteen and nineteen year-olds.

Although there was no cursing or swearing, there was a lot of foolish talking and some were playing cards. Whilst looking out of the window of that train, I remember continually begging the Lord that I might stand firm upon those convictions with which I was brought up.

As we were growing up, our family frequently sang hymns on Sundays and through the week, while my mother, and later my sister, played the piano. We were all very fond of singing and taking various parts. There was one particular hymn we would often sing in which there was good instruction. Some of the verses were:

‘Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin,
Each victory will help you some other to win;
Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue,
Look ever to Jesus, He’ll carry you through.

Shun evil companions, bad language disdain,
God’s name hold in rev’rence, nor take it in vain;
Be thoughtful and earnest, kind-hearted and true,
Look ever to Jesus, He’ll carry you through.’

The chorus went this way:

‘Ask the Saviour to help you,
Comfort, strengthen, and keep you;
He is willing to aid you.
He will carry you through.’

It was these particular words which kept coming to my mind: ‘Each victory will help you some other to win.’ I had determined in my mind that on my first night in service, I must take my Bible and look to the Lord in prayer. I felt if I could get over that first obstacle on the first night, from then on it would be much easier. I was convinced in my own mind that if I failed on the first night, I would be likely to fail throughout the whole of my army life.

As we came to Camp Custer, it was a day of business, as well as examinations and receiving of uniforms. We were soon

assigned to barracks, which were very crowded. There were double-decker bunks, and I was assigned to the top bunk. After our evening meal, we returned to the barracks to sort out clothing, folding it up and putting it into bags, knowing that within a few days we would be leaving that camp and assigned to another one for our basic training.

As evening came on, I kept looking around to see if anyone had a Bible open or appeared to have an interest in the things of God. I did not notice any that appeared concerned. I saw and heard a lot of foolishness, and I also heard some things that I found very shocking. I had never heard such language before. It was announced that at a certain time all the lights would be out. The man was very, very emphatic. As you can well imagine, they wanted to put fear into us, and it was necessary discipline. I continued looking around, hoping to see someone else taking out his Bible and reading it. Then finally, over the speaker we were told again in a very harsh way that in fifteen minutes the lights would be put out. How I inwardly begged of the Lord that I might not be ashamed to take out my Bible and read it. I felt miserable, and again I looked around. One person in the bunk below kept talking to me, and I just felt ashamed to take my Bible out and read it in front of all those around me. Again, the speaker came on and said that in five minutes the lights must be out, and finally the lights were turned off. As I lay on that bed, no one could have been more miserable. I felt that already I had been a total failure, and this would be the beginning of my downfall. Having failed the first night, the second night would only be worse and so on. I felt I would be overcome with all the sins and evils that were around about me.

Only the light over the door and steps into the barrack was left on. Two young fellows were gambling by the door with their dice, and nearby was an empty chair. Finally, I could bear it no longer. I reached into my bag and climbed out of my bunk with my Bible and sat on that chair. I do not know

whether those two boys remained while I was there or finally left. As I sat there, I begged the Lord to forgive my sins and cowardice. I felt completely ashamed of myself before God. Not knowing where to turn, I just opened my Bible randomly. It opened at Matthew 10 verses 32 and 33: *'Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.'* Oh how powerfully these verses struck me and remained with me! Before that time, I was not aware they were in the Word of God. They were completely new to me. Now it is true that the verse has two parts: the blessed promise to those who confess Him, but also the sad part concerning those who deny Him. As I look back over the three years that I was in the service, I feel that I failed many times, not only in confessing Him, but also I may have even denied Him through silence. So, that particular text gave me comfort, as well as a solemn warning. Still, in looking back, I believe the Lord helped me on many occasions to confess Him."

"Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."
(Acts 13. 38).

In a quiet and beautiful cemetery outside New York is a grave marked with a simple tombstone with just one word engraved on it – "Forgiven." Who is interred there is not revealed. The occupant chose not to reveal an identity but to assure the passer by of what was really important in life and before death: to be forgiven.

Brian Powlesland

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from ANNA and JETHRO BALDWIN-JONES, SOPHIE CLARK, KILEE and MONTANALEE GREYN, and AIDAN LUCAS.

The article on Naaman, page 17 of the January magazine, was wrongly attributed to Rebecca Outten.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**RUTH GLEANS**

It was harvest time when Naomi and Ruth came to Bethlehem. After reapers cut the grain, poor people were allowed to pick up or glean what was left. Ruth went out to glean in a field. It was hard work and took a long time.

The field where she gleaned belonged to a rich man named Boaz. When he came out to the field, Boaz spoke very kindly to Ruth. He told her to *"abide here fast by my maidens"* and when she was thirsty, to go and drink of the water drawn for the reapers. Ruth was surprised that Boaz took notice of her, for she was a stranger. Boaz said he had heard of her kindness to Naomi and how she had left Moab. Then he said: *"The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."*

At mealtime Ruth was asked to sit beside the reapers, and Boaz gave her food to eat. When Ruth returned to the field, Boaz told the reapers to let fall some *"handfuls of purpose"* for her to glean. What a lot of grain she brought home at the end of the day! Ruth gleaned in the fields of Boaz until the end of harvest.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Ruth go out to a field to do?
2. To whom did the field belong?
3. What were the reapers told to let fall for Ruth? (3 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (See page 26 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

Contributed

ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS

1. Moab.
2. Ruth.
3. Very bitterly.

*“So she
kept fast
by the
maidens
of Boaz
to glean.”
Ruth 2. 23.*

BIBLE LESSONS**THE LORD IS RISEN**

The Bible tells us that when the people of God (believers) die, they fall asleep. We can understand what that is, because every night when we go to bed, we fall asleep. That is the picture given to us of the body of Jesus as it lay in the tomb. Just as He rested from all His work in the creation, so now He rested from the far more exhausting work of redeeming His people. Perhaps Jeremiah prophesied of this when He wrote long before: *"Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and My sleep was sweet unto Me."* (Jeremiah 31:26)

Outside the tomb, the soldiers whom Pilate had ordered to keep a close watch, took their turns through the Sabbath day and the following night. They must make sure that no one took the body away. They need not fear His disciples though, for they were scattered.

Early on the Sunday morning, while it was yet dark, the watchers at the tomb were expecting their replacements to come at any moment. Suddenly they felt a strange sensation. The ground began to shake beneath them, and a light as bright as lightning shined above them. It was an angel sent from heaven. The whole garden was illuminated with his appearance. His raiment was white as snow! The soldiers keeping watch did shake exceedingly and became as dead men before him.

Do you remember that it was in the dark of night that Jesus was born and an angel appeared unto the shepherds? His resurrection likewise occurred in the dark of night while men slept.

The soldiers must have looked on in awe as the angel went to the door of the sepulchre and rolled the great stone away and sat on the top of it. It was their duty to protect the grave, yet how powerless they were against the angel. More importantly, they were unable to see the wonderful event that had taken place inside the tomb. The Lord Jesus was alive! **HE IS RISEN!** Hell and death are destroyed for His people. The

Son of God had taken His life again as He said He would: *"I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."* Further, because of the blinding brightness of the angel, they were unable to see the Lord leave the tomb.

While it was still dark, Mary Magdalene and the other women took the spices they had prepared and went to the sepulchre to anoint the body. As they went, they remembered that a great stone had been placed over the door of the sepulchre. They reasoned among themselves: *"Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?"* They may also not have known that the tomb had been sealed and the soldiers were guarding it. Still, they pressed on until they entered the garden. Looking through the dim light of early morning, they saw the stone was rolled away. As they approached the door of the tomb, the angel spoke to them: *"Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen, ... Come, see the place where the Lord lay."* The angel told the women to go quickly and tell His disciples the good news that the LORD IS RISEN; and lest Peter should fear to believe, they must mention him by name.

While they went, some of the soldiers went into the city to tell the chief priests what had taken place. What consternation must have come over the chief priests as the soldiers told them about the earthquake and the bright shining angel! Would they finally acknowledge they were wrong? No, pride and unbelief would not allow them to confess their error. Quickly they assembled the great Sanhedrin (chief priest, scribes, and elders of the people) to determine how to keep this news from the people. Oh what deceit! They bribed the soldiers with a great sum of money to say that *"His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept."* What a lie! First, the soldiers would never sleep on their watch. Second, if they had really slept, how could they know what had happened?

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 28 verses 1 to 15, Mark chapter 16 verses 1 to 8, Luke chapter 24 verses 1 to 10, and John chapter 20 verse 1.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jeremiah prophecy about the body of Jesus in the tomb? (last 6 words)
2. Who rolled away the great stone from the door of the sepulchre?
3. What did the women reason among themselves as they went? (13 words)
4. Whom did the angel say he knew the women were seeking?
5. Which disciple was to be mentioned by name when they told the good news that Jesus was alive?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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. Nicodemus.
2. Fine linen.
3. Myrrh and aloes.
4. Mary Magdalene and another Mary.
5. The resurrection of Jesus.

G. L. TenBroeke

GRANDFATHER'S YOUTH (I)

A striking narrative in which Wm. A. Brakel was used as a means in God's hand for the conversion of a young man.

On the sea

"Grandfather, would you like to tell me now?"

This question was spoken by a boy about ten years old at that time, but who is now himself a grandfather, to an old man with silvery hair and a kind but deeply wrinkled face.

"What do you mean, John, dear?" asked the old man.

"Well, Grandpa," was the answer, "you have promised long ago that you would tell me sometime how you came to the Netherlands. We are of German descent, says Father, but you must know all about it because you were born in Germany."

"Certainly, my dear boy," said his grandfather, and the tone of his voice as he spoke those words made it clear to any good

listener that he had not learned the Holland language in his childhood.

“And will you tell me the story now?”

“It is a long story, John, and I do not promise to finish it in one time, but I will make a beginning.”

That was just what John wanted. What he heard was very worthwhile, so much so, that I believe I am doing my readers a favour by telling them the story. If I am mistaken, I am sorry.

Grandfather, with whom John had spent the day, which was the thing he liked best to do, filled his long pipe, and made himself comfortable in an easy chair.

“What I want to tell you, my dear boy, is really a double story, for you shall not only hear how I came from one country into another, but also how I was brought from one life to another!”

I would not dare say that John at this time understood Grandfather. However, understanding came later. It will probably be the same way with my readers. That does not matter.

While Mother started another round in the sock she was knitting, Grandfather began: “I was born in Rostock. Perhaps you do not know where it is. It is in Mecklenburg on the Baltic Sea.”

“Rostock,” continued the old man, “looks quite different, at least it did when I was young, from the cities here. It is not a large, nor a beautiful city. They speak the Low German language which is something like the Dutch. Even as a boy I could understand sailors coming from Holland quite well. In one way, however, Rostock was like many cities of the Netherlands, for every day you could see ships coming in and going out. You often saw Holland vessels there.

“I will not tell you much of my early life. I did not learn very much, because I did not care to learn. But I cared all the more about ships and everything belonging to ships. Even as a little child I loved to sail. I wanted to become a sailor, as so many

boys in Rostock, and my parents had no objection. 'The eyes of the Lord are in every place,' said my Father. 'He can take care of you on land as well as on the sea.' And that was true, although at that time I thought very little of that.

"In Rostock, there was a captain who was called 'Long Lawrence' by the people, because he was so very tall. Whether he had another name I never heard. He sailed to the Levant."

"What is that, Grandfather?" asked John.

"The Levant, my boy, is the East. The word means the rising of the sun. We use that word for the harbours of Turkey and Greece, like Smyrna, Thessalonica and others. To these harbours Lawrence sailed with all kinds of goods. He was a good captain, and also an honest, God-fearing man, although he sometimes said queer things and could be very strict. Still everyone liked him, and so my parents, too, tried hard to persuade Lawrence to take me on his ship as a cabin-boy, because I was fifteen years old then and wanted to go to sea. But it didn't work out."

"Why not, Grandfather?"

"Well, Lawrence was right when he said to my parents, 'That boy can neither read nor write well, so he must have been unwilling to learn. But if he is that type, I do not want him on my ship. We will see what he has become when I come back.'"

"And what did you do then, Grandfather?"

"Well, at first I was very angry. But my parents realised that Lawrence was right, and they sent me back to school. And do you know what I did? I learned as fast and as much as I could, not because I liked to, but to be soonest done. I thought that perhaps Lawrence then would take me with him when he came back. But that time he stayed away very long, although it was not his fault, for his ship had sprung a leak and had to be repaired in Oporto. I felt very bad about the delay. I did not know then that the Lord had so directed it, as would be necessary for me later."

"And did you stay at school all that time, Grandfather?"

“Yes, but since I had about finished the regular courses there, the teacher taught me more advanced matters. Thus I learned commercial arithmetic, geography, and other things which were not usually taught in schools at that time. And when Lawrence finally returned he was so well satisfied with me that he immediately appointed me as cabin-boy. I was as happy as if I had received a treasure. Only two months later I started my first big ocean voyage. Little did I think then that it would be my last one.

“Life on board immediately pleased me very much. Of course I knew almost all about it before I went on board. But it was not so pleasant to be everyone’s errand boy, and to have nothing to say myself. It was not easy to work for the captain. I was busy all day cleaning and polishing everything, bringing something here, and getting something there, and if everything was not in order, Long Lawrence would hit me with a short rope with knots, and the mate likewise.”

“Didn’t you find it unpleasant on the ship then, Grandpa?”

“No, John, because on the other hand, I had a good life. The skipper allowed no man to bother me, moreover he was strict, but a good man to anyone who did his work well. Every morning he read a chapter out of the Bible to his crew and led in prayer. On Sundays we had services for an hour. Then we sang hymns, the Articles of Faith and the Ten Commandments were read and the Lord’s Prayer was uttered. Then the captain would read from a book of sermons and discourses. Long Lawrence was not only pious in words, but also in deeds, except, as I said, that he said queer things sometimes.

“The voyage usually went toward the East. We visited Constantinople, Smyrna, and various other places near them. Then we went to the Island of Zante, to Nauplia, and I do not know where else. When you are older you will hear those names at school.”

“And was it nice to come to all those places?”

“To tell you the truth, John, I have seen very little of them.

Usually we had to stay aboard. Only in Constantinople I went ashore a little while, but did not see much of the city. It was quite dirty and the men were not at all friendly. There were but a few of the women on the street, and they were heavily veiled. The houses look like prisons. They have almost no windows toward the street, and only a few small lattice-windows.

“After we had roamed in the Levant a few months our ship was loaded as full as possible, and we started for home. I was very happy about that, because I was longing for my parents. It was the first time I had been away from them so long. For the rest, I liked my work very much. We had had nice weather, it was summer and I got along very well with the others on the ship. The captain was also very kind to me. He had asked me to write something, and I had done it very well because I had tried hard to learn to do it. Since then I often had to copy something for him for, although Long Lawrence could do many things, he could not write neatly.”

(To be continued)

EARLY IMPRESSIONS

In those early days there were other 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 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. Whenever he entered the door I also, in a state of great 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 be 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: 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.

M. Campbell

SIMPLE SOLUTION TO MOON'S MAGNETIC PUZZLE

Two samples of volcanic basalt from the moon were found to be more strongly magnetized than expected. Study lead-author Clémet Suavet explained that when lava solidifies, it takes on the magnetic field in its environment.

Most scientists say that the moon formed 4.6 billion years ago and that churning in its molten core worked like a dynamo creating its magnetic field. If this were so, the field should have decayed long ago, but lava samples from meteor impacts show the magnetic field was much stronger for much longer than expected. Some scientists suggested that meteorite impacts may have lurched the moon and kept its dynamo going for longer. Others suggested that the inside of the moon wobbled and stirred the core, keeping the field going.

However, the latest basalt samples mean the magnetic field was even stronger for even longer, raising even more questions. Suavet said: "The question is, when and how did the dynamo decay?"

Creation physicist Russell Humphreys proposed a simple solution. First, the moon is only about 6,000 years old, appearing on Day Four of Creation Week. Second, the magnetic field comes from electric currents circulating in the core, not a complicated dynamo. Third, these electric currents decay relatively quickly, which is why the moon's field is so weak today. Finally, the magnetic field had not decayed much when the meteorite impacts formed the basalt "seas" on the moon. This was at the same time as the global Flood on earth, only 1,700 years after it formed.

Creation

SABBATH KEEPING

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in

the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." (Isaiah 58. 13, 14).

One of the most marked features of Billy's character was his love and reverence for the Sabbath. It was to him a day "most calm, most bright," the "pearl of days" in his estimation, to both rich and poor, to the poor especially. If the workingmen of England only prize the Sabbath as they should, for it comes to them with health, and blessing, and comfort, they will never permit it to be taken from their grasp under any pretence whatever. An attempt made soon after his conversion to rob Billy of this boon, failed. He showed on that occasion great wisdom and boldness. Before his conversion he had spent Sabbaths in idleness and sin, afterwards they were sanctified unto the Lord.

One of the levels of the mine in which he worked filled with water every twelve hours, which was then drawn to the surface. When it came to Billy's turn one Sunday to go to the mine to draw up the water, he was at Hicks Mill Chapel. The Lord said to him: "Stay here, and worship me this day." Billy had no doubt that the Lord did thus speak, or that it was his duty to obey. "I will, Lord," was his answer, and he left the water to find its way to the bottom of the shaft, in the full belief that no harm would come of it.

On the Monday morning he went to the mine at six o'clock, for he could not safely leave the water to take care of itself on the Monday, though he could do so with great confidence on the Sunday. The "captain" interrogated him as to his absence, and Billy frankly told him: "It was the Lord's will that he should not work on Sundays."

"I'll 'Lord's will' thee!" the "captain" angrily said; "you will not work here any more." Billy was unmoved: "For I felt," he said, "that I had the Lord of rocks and hills for my Friend, and I did not care who was against me." But when his comrade told him that he was turned away too, he quickly said: "You must not be turned away on my account; it was not your fault, and I'll go to the

‘captain’ and tell him so.” At this interview, the “captain” told Billy he must give up that foolish notion about not working on Sundays, for men in a mine must work Sundays. Billy replied: “For the wickedness of the wicked the land mourneth; and I have a new Master now, and He tells me I must not work on the Sabbath day, but keep it holy; and I shall do as He tells me.”

The clerk in the office said that if he felt like William Bray, he would not work on Sundays either. The “captain” then said he might go to work if he would, and Billy’s full cup ran over when he gave him such work to do as left him at liberty to go to the meetings every night of the week as well as Sundays.

Billy Bray

“MY GOD SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEED”

(Philippians 4. 19)

During the great depression a carpenter received a special commission. His church needed crates in which to ship clothing to an orphanage in China. The day the final crate was packed, he nailed it shut and headed home. As he was nearing home, he was dismayed to realise his glasses had slipped from his pocket and were most likely on their way to China already!

Months later the orphanage director, on furlough, spoke at a little church in Chicago. He began by thanking the people for their faithfulness in supporting the orphanage. “But most of all,” he continued, “I must thank you for the glasses you sent last year. The Communists swept through the orphanages, destroying everything, including my glasses, and I was desperate. There was no way to replace them, and along with not being able to see well, I had headaches every day and I was very much in prayer about this. Then your crates arrived, and when I removed the last lid I found the glasses. It was as though they had been custom made just for me!” The people felt the missionary had them confused with another church, but sitting quietly in the back was an ordinary carpenter realising the Master Carpenter had used him in an extraordinary way.

Selected

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (II)**

The Apostle Paul in his final exhortations to the church at Ephesus instructs us that we are not fighting an equal war; therefore we need to have the whole armour of God upon us. This armour is Christ and we can only succeed in this warfare if we are strong in the Lord and the power of His might. This reminds us of the words of the prophet Zechariah to Zerubbabel: *"This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of Hosts"* (Zechariah 4. 6). Then he shows us why it is an unequal war, because it is a spiritual warfare and the person we are fighting with is Satan, the prince of darkness. This whole armour of God protects and defends us from Satan's power and wiles. *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand"* (Ephesians 6. 12-13).

How instructive this Scripture is as it reveals that the devil is the ruler of the darkness of this world. Indeed he is the prince or ruler of darkness. Satan was an archangel before he fell. We are instructed in Isaiah 14 that he was called Lucifer, which means, son of the morning. At this time before he rebelled against God, he is the very opposite of the ruler of darkness, he is like the rising of the sun. In Revelation 12 we read of a war in heaven and Satan was cast out of heaven with all the angels that fell with him unto the earth and a solemn warning is given: *"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time"* (Revelation 12. 12). In verse 10 of this chapter it is revealed how he is defeated and destroyed: *"Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ."* This is the glorious way that

the devil is defeated, through the incarnation of the Son of God, His holy sinless life as a Man, so fulfilling the holy law, His holy sacrifice on the cross of Calvary, so satisfying divine justice and putting away the sins of His people, pouring out His soul unto death, shedding every drop of His precious holy blood, then rising from death and destroying it. Then we read in verse 11 how the Lord's people overcome sin and Satan's power: *"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb."* These, my beloved friends, are the foundation truths of our most holy faith.

In the last verse of this chapter we are instructed as to why the people of God know so much temptation and sorrow in this sinful world. They, by grace, are brought to leave this world and its sinful practices and in love and faith to follow Jesus Christ. They hear that holy command with power in their heart: *"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."* We are not promised an easy pathway to heaven, so we read in the last verse of Revelation 12: *"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."*

The Lord Jesus says to His people: *"And 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). This was true of the disciples during the sufferings and death of Christ and it is true of His people now. They have dark trying paths to walk in; perplexing things to deal with, which bring much sorrow into their heart and circumstances, but the Lord has said: *"but I will see you again."* This brings much comfort unto them; the thought that He will appear and that He will never leave nor forsake His people.

"Why through darksome paths we go,
We may know no reason;
Yet we shall hereafter know,
Each in his due season."

(To be continued)

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about NAMES OF THE LORD JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, to which all the texts below refer. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 26 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Andrew told his brother Simon that he had found Jesus. By what name did he call Jesus? (1. 41)
2. Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life." Who did He say would "never hunger"? (6. 35)
3. Jesus said, "I am the Light Of The World." Who "shall not walk in darkness"? (8. 12)
4. Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd." What did He say the Good Shepherd does? (10. 11)
5. "I am the Door of the sheep." What did Jesus call one who enters, not by the door, but climbs up some other way? (10. 1, 8)
6. What names did Nathanael give to the Lord Jesus? (1)
7. John the Baptist saw Jesus coming to him; by what name did he call Him? (1)
8. What did Philip call Jesus and why was he wrong to call Jesus by this name? (1)
9. "I am the Way..." To what is Jesus the only Way? (14)
10. Jesus said, "I am the True Vine." What are the branches of the vine likened to, and what happens to those that bear fruit, and to those that do not?

ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS

1. Pharaoh's daughter.
2. Joseph.
3. Iniquity and sin.
4. Iniquity.
5. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son."
6. Pilate. (Matthew 27. 24)
7. They rejected God's commandment in order to keep their own tradition. (Mark 7. 4-8)

8. Leprosy. (2 Kings 5. 10-14)
9. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." (John 13. 8)
10. Job. (Job 9. 30)

Contributed

"MY BIBLE"

This Book my Grandmother gave me
As I sat by her gracious knee:
My dear little fat, black Bible
It is all the world to me.

How I adore those wonderful stories
Of Moses and John and Paul;
Of how David killed the giant
And Samuel heard the call.

How Daniel dared the lions
And the angry jaws grew still;
How Jericho's walls were shaken
By the Lord's own mighty will.

But best of all how the Master
Walked the shores of Galilee,
Healing the sick and the sinner
And stilling the tossing sea.

For the word of our God is mighty
And the arm of the Lord is strong
To hold back the powers of darkness
And keep His child from wrong.

Oh the beauty of the Bible
And its glories never cease,
They fill my soul with wonder
And the angels' song of praise.

Anon

The Friendly Companion



William Gadsby Preaching

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

March 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

God, in His Word, often teaches by what many would call insignificant things; things hardly worth noticing! However, He is in control of His creative works and if we have eyes to see it, there are many lessons to learn from the smallest things in His world.

This month my mind has gone to a very familiar object on English tea tables: cake! See what the following four cakes have to teach us.

Firstly, in Exodus 12 verse 39 we read of “**unleavened cakes.**” The children of Israel were about to leave Egypt on the night of the Passover. Because they went out hastily they did not have time to mix their meal with leaven. In fact, they had to search their homes thoroughly to make sure there was no leaven in their houses at all. God was teaching them that they were to leave behind the way of life they had been living in Egypt. Each year when they celebrated the Passover, they ate unleavened bread to remind them of this, and also to keep in their minds the speed with which they left Egypt when God’s moment came. This is a lesson to each of us who desire to fear God, that we must turn our back upon this world and its pleasures and make haste to a better country.

Secondly, we read in 1 Kings 17 verse 13 of a “**little cake.**” This was what Elijah asked of the widow woman at Zarephath when he arrived at her door. God had commanded her to feed him, but with what? This was her last cake, as she thought, to share with her son, and then face starvation. To give this last little cake to Elijah was a great act of faith, but she relied on the promise God gave through His servant: “*Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.*” This is a wonderful lesson to us that whatever God may call us to do, He will always ensure there is enough to supply our needs in that path.

Thirdly, we read in Judges 7 verse 13 of a ***cake with a message!*** Gideon had been called by God to fight the Midianites. Already God had reduced his army down to just three hundred men, and to add to the several signs He had already given to encourage him, He gave him just one more. He was sent with his servant, Phurah, to overhear a conversation between two of the Midianites in their tent. One of them recalled a dream. In his dream he saw a cake of barley bread (the food of the poorest in the land) tumble on a tent in the midst of the Midianite camp, and the tent was flattened. As he told his friend the dream, his friend said that this was none other than the sword of Gideon: *"For into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host."* It must have been very humbling to Gideon to be likened to a cake of barley bread, but how encouraged he was to see that God could use the weakest of men to perform His will.

Fourthly, in Hosea 7 verse 8 we read of a ***burnt cake***. God likened Ephraim (another name for the ten tribes who had rebelled against Judah) to a cake that was not turned. Most people today have fan ovens, which keep an even temperature so that cakes are cooked evenly throughout. Before that, if you were cooking a cake, you might have to interrupt the cooking part way through, and turn the cake around, so that both sides were evenly cooked, otherwise one side would be burned and the other uncooked. God said that Ephraim was like that cake. One side of his life seemed to be warm towards God and His truth, but the other side was cold, indifferent and full of idolatry. This is like people who may go to chapel and even enjoy the services on the Lord's Day, but then in the week they live a different life altogether. That part of their life has not been exposed to the fire of God's Word. If God has mercy on our souls, He will expose all of our life to His Word and will turn us again and again so we realise that we are never outside of His authority. Ephraim's religion was not like that of the widow woman of Zarephath, or Gideon, nor like those

believing Israelites, who did as God commanded and ate cakes of unleavened bread. I wonder which of these cakes best describes us?

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

When the Protestant Reformation began to have its beneficial effect in continental Europe and then in the islands of the United Kingdom, one of the chief foundation principles was, and still should be, the primacy of the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, in worship. To our valiant forefathers thus the pulpit was to be the central piece of furniture in churches and chapels, not to honour the preacher, but the sacred office he held in proclaiming the truth to all who would hear it.

Sadly, when persecution took hold, many noble men were forced to use the countryside as their pulpit, as George Whitefield also did during the Evangelical Revival. The crowds which followed him were far too great to be held by any church or chapel.

The only place in the Bible where the word 'pulpit' is mentioned is in Nehemiah 8. 4-6, where we read: "*And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; ... and Ezra opened the Book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: and Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground.*"

The three great purposes of the pulpit were thus:

- That the Book of the Lord, the Holy Scriptures, should occupy it.
- That the Scriptures should be visible to all the people as an open testimony to all who have gathered.
- That the great name of God, the Author and Finisher of Holy Scripture, should be adored and His necessary help be entreated

for a right understanding and application of the truth.

It is also very noticeable how that the occupants of the pulpit caused the people to understand the law. It is a very great responsibility that rests upon those who occupy a pulpit that they seek to do as these good preachers did in verse 7-8. *"So they read in the Book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."* For this great work a man needs the anointing of the Spirit and for that same Spirit to give understanding to those who hear. In this case the people wept when they heard the words of the law. We do not see much of that in our days. When Murray McCheyne, the famous Scottish preacher of Dundee, went into his pulpit, the very sight of him ascending the steps made many weep in anticipation. Such was the power of the Word in those days. They felt the solemn responsibility of being a hearer almost as much as the preacher did as God's messenger.

Our front cover shows William Gadsby in his pulpit at Manchester where he was so greatly used of God, and from which pulpit the Word of God sounded forth with no uncertain sound.

"THY WORD IS TRUTH"

Some years ago, the local health officials in an Indian state were trying to discourage the people from drinking water straight from the River Ganges. To convince them of their danger, one of the officials brought with him a powerful microscope. After taking a sample of the river and placing it under the microscope, he invited the villagers to come and see what kind of water they were drinking. The sight of germs and algae swimming around in the sample so disgusted and angered one of them that he took a hammer and smashed the microscope and returned to the river to drink from it!

Similar is the true story of a tribe in Africa where mirrors had been non-existent. In one of the tribal villages, deep in the jungle, lived a princess of the tribe. From her earliest days she had been told that she was the most beautiful woman in the

tribe. In actual fact, her looks were nothing out of the ordinary, and behind her back, some of her acquaintances thought her ugly! When a Christian missionary arrived with this novelty of a mirror, all of the people wanted to see themselves in the glass. At length the princess wished to see how beautiful she was. To her horror she saw looks that were no more attractive than others of her friends, and indeed the mirror told a tale of decidedly plain features. So angry was she that she snatched the mirror and slammed it on the ground smashing it into pieces.

In both of these cases, rather than accept the truth of the message, the messenger was destroyed. This is sadly typical of people by nature. Rather than hear what the Bible has to say about their lives and behaviour, they despise the Bible and deny its true message. Jesus summed it all up with the following words: *"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God"* (John 3. 19-21).

Adapted

"BUILDING THEIR OWN PRISON"

In a town called Portland there is a large prison with exceedingly high walls around it. The story is that the prisoners themselves were, under strict supervision, the builders of that wall. Every block they put into place rendered their possibility of escape more and more remote!

How this illustrates the mind of an unrepentant person. These prisoners were forced to build their own walls, but sinners willingly, under Satan's dominion, build their own walls, thus imprisoning themselves in their sins and the consequences of them.

Adapted

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**BOAZ TAKES RUTH FOR HIS WIFE**

It was a law in Israel that when a man died, having no child, a near relative would marry his widow. In that way land would stay within a family or tribe. Naomi wanted Ruth to have a husband and a home. She knew that Boaz was wealthy and a near relative. Would he be willing to buy her land and to marry Ruth, who was a stranger in Israel?

Naomi told Ruth to go by night to the place where Boaz was threshing grain. Ruth went quietly and lay down at the feet of Boaz. She asked him to keep the law as a near relative. Boaz was pleased with the request of Ruth. He said: *"Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: ... fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest."* The next day Boaz went to the elders of the city and bought or *"redeemed"* the land of Naomi. He took Ruth to be his wife.

After a while a son was born to Ruth and Boaz, named Obed. In time he became the grandfather of King David. Many years later the LORD Jesus was born into this family.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Naomi want Ruth to have? (5 words)
2. Where did Ruth lay down at? (4 words)
3. Who was born into this family many years later?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (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. Glean.
2. Boaz.
3. *"Handfuls of purpose."*
Contributed

*“So Boaz
took Ruth,
and she
was his
wife.”*

Ruth 4. 13.

BIBLE LESSONS

JESUS APPEARS TO MARY MAGDALENE

Many of the Old Testament prophets had written of the sorrows, sufferings, and death of the Lord Jesus. Very few of them wrote of His resurrection. The prophet Hosea was led to write about it in the most beautiful language: *"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."* With what joy the Lord Jesus went out of the tomb! What now was before Him? To what was He looking forward? First, He must make numerous and wonderful appearances to His disciples and others that followed Him. Secondly, after forty days He must return to His Father in heaven.

When the women came to the tomb and saw the stone rolled away, Mary Magdalene concluded that someone (perhaps the soldiers) had taken the body of Jesus away. Leaving the other women, she went to tell the disciples what had happened. If only she had waited to hear what the angel said to the other women, she could have told them wonderful news.

Mary Magdalene ran with all her strength to the house where Peter and John were. Then she blurted out: *"They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him."* Peter and John rose with haste and ran to the sepulchre. They would see for themselves what had happened.

John was the first to arrive at the sepulchre. He stopped at the door and looking in, he saw the linen clothes lying but did not go in. When Peter arrived, he went straight into the sepulchre and he, too, saw the linen clothes lie. John then ventured in and the two disciples quietly stood and looked around. They noticed that the linen clothes were laid together and the napkin that had been wrapped about the sacred head of Jesus lay folded up in a place by itself. Everything was neat and in order. Surely the orderly manner in which the grave clothes lay gave proof that His body had not been stolen. John tells us that as he pondered the sacred scene, he believed. We

wonder why they did not see the angels? Soon they returned to their own home.

When Peter and John left the sepulchre, Mary Magdalene stood just outside the opening, filled with sadness and still believing that the body of Jesus had been taken away. Everything seemed to be going amiss. Mary's love to Jesus was so great because Jesus had done so much for her! He had cast seven devils out of her and delivered her from the power of Satan. She could not as yet understand how much more Jesus had done for her in dying on the cross and now rising from the dead. So often the Lord's people are mourning, when they have cause to rejoice. As the tears rolled down her cheeks, she stooped down to look into the tomb. As she looked, she saw two angels sitting, one at the feet and the other at the head where Jesus had lain. The angels asked: "*Woman, why weepest thou?*" With broken heart she replied: "*Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.*" Even the presence of angels could not bring comfort to her. They could not turn her captivity.

Mary turned herself from them, and as she looked up, she saw Jesus standing. Her eyes were so withholden that she could not see that it was Jesus. He tenderly spoke to her: "*Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?*" Still Mary did not perceive that it was Jesus who stood before her. She thought the Man before her was the gardener who tended the garden. She answered: "*Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.*" Jesus was about to raise her up, turn her captivity, wipe away her tears, and fill her heart with joy and wonder such as she had never known. With a voice that she would know and with power that she would feel, Jesus said: "*MARY.*" Her eyes, her understanding, and her heart were opened as she cried out: "*Rabboni; which is to say, MASTER.*" Mary Magdalene was the first person Jesus appeared to after His resurrection.

You can read about this in John chapter 20 verses 1 to 16.

QUESTIONS:

1. What was prophesied that Jesus would be to death? (5 words) and be to the grave? (5 words)
2. What did Peter and John notice about the napkin that had been wrapped about the head of Jesus?
3. What did Mary see in the tomb?
4. Whom did Mary think Jesus was?
5. What did Mary call Jesus? (6 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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. "My sleep was sweet unto Me." | 2. An angel. |
| 3. "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" | 4. Jesus. |
| | 5. Peter. |

G. L. TenBroeke

GRANDFATHER'S YOUTH (II)

Part 2 of the narrative in which Wm. A Brakel was used as a means in God's hand for the conversion of a young man.

"We had gone some distance into the Mediterranean Sea, I think about the height of Tarente, when the captain said: 'Listen, Michael, and look carefully! Do you see that white sail in the distance?'

'Yes, sir.'

'What is its shape?'

'I would say triangular, tapering to a point.'

'Right, you have good eyes,' said the captain, laying down his spyglass. 'Such a ship, my boy, is a privateer. There are pirates on it, natives of the coast of Barbary and Algiers, south of where we are now. They are mean fellows, rough and wicked, and if they can make trouble for us Christians, they will do it, for although they hate our faith, they love our money and goods. Yea, they would like to have us, too.'

'Why?' I asked.

‘To use us as slaves, Michael; I hope you never experience it.’

‘Has it ever happened to you, captain?’ I asked.

‘No, my boy, otherwise I probably would not be standing here. God has spared me thus far. Although the sea is full of pirates, I always escaped unharmed and without loss. We have had to fight a few times, but they could not win. God grant that this voyage also ends well.’

‘Is that ship coming towards us, captain?’

‘No, my boy, it is sailing away. But now you must use your eyes. And if you ever see such a sail, tell me immediately.’

“He did not need to tell me that, for I was already afraid of the pirates. After this I prayed every morning that the Lord would save us from such folk, and every evening I was glad we had not met any pirates.

“Toward the end of August we drew near to the Strait of Gibraltar. ‘Good,’ I heard the mate say, ‘we are almost out of the danger zone, and we have had no trouble.’

“The next morning I had just come on deck when I heard the lookout in the mast call: ‘Sail at port.’ I looked in that direction and soon saw a vessel. I looked again and again, while one after another came on deck and did likewise. All at once I felt cold chills go down my back. I had seen the triangular sail. It was a pirate. Without saying a word I turned around and hurried down to find the captain.

‘Captain,’ I cried. ‘A pirate is in sight.’

‘I know it,’ the skipper answered as calmly as if I had told him the coffee was ready. I went up and found the whole crew on deck. The ship was coming fast and we could plainly distinguish the sails and the red flag. ‘We shall have to fight,’ said the boatswain, with a serious look.

‘I think we shall have to use the long pieces,’ said another. “You know, John, those are the cannon,” added Grandfather.

‘There is the captain,’ cried various voices. ‘Just see now, how serious it will become.’

“For the moment, however, the captain only took a long

searching look at the pirate ship that was coming nearer. Then he ordered the men to crowd on all sail. The wind was favourable, so there was a chance that we could outrun the enemy. Apparently, the captain wanted to try it. I hoped – and perhaps many others also – that we would succeed.

“But it was not so; our schooner was exceptionally heavy laden and could not sail as fast as the swift cranky boat of the robbers.

“A moment later a cannon bullet flew through the large sail, and had been so carefully aimed that the sail immediately hung in tatters. We realised it was going to be serious: all eyes were on the captain, all were awaiting his orders. But to our surprise the words: ‘Everything ready for the fight,’ did not come. Long Lawrence stood calmly smoking his pipe and gave order to lie to.

“What is that?” asked John.

“That means to steer the boat so that we do not go away from, but approach the other vessel. The pirate understood that we dared not oppose him. Soon he was next to us and I could distinguish the rough yellowish brown faces of the pirates. They had their cannon ready, and moreover every man was heavily armed. Guns, pistols, swords, daggers and pikes glittered in the sunlight. It was a nice sight, but at that moment I was terribly sorry I had ever been foolish enough to go to sea.”

(To be continued)

LINES

*(Written by Mr. Huntingdon in a Bible
now in the possession of a friend in London)*

The soul that deigns in this to look,
If he regard and love the Book,
He must not yield to reason's plea:
The Saviour keeps the master key.
'Tis vain with truth to dare to strive;
Can truth divine submit to man?
God's counsel shall for ever stand.

THE TETRAGUATHA SPIDER

The following most interesting information about spiders was contained in a letter from one of our older readers.

In the summer, my wife and I had a very enjoyable day visiting the lovely gardens at Helmingham Hall in Suffolk. (I think this is the parish in which J. C. Ryle ministered in his early days).

The gardens are truly beautiful, full of colour and wildlife, and I bought a very nice little book, written by one of the gardeners with photographs taken by him, covering all of the flora and fauna he has found in the gardens and park.

I have been particularly struck by the description of one of the many species of spider found there. It is known as the long-jawed orb weaver – a small striped spider which makes its web between reeds in the garden moat. (*The scientific name is the Tetraguatha Spider.*) It has an amazing way of reaching the safety of other reeds, or dry ground, should it fall into the water. It curls itself up tightly and raises its front legs in such a way as to make a sail, and the slightest movement of air will push it along on the water's surface to safety. If the spider is alarmed, it stretches itself out very thinly against a leaf and becomes extremely difficult to see.

A total of 38 species of spider have been found at Helmingham and I have read elsewhere that there are about 600 different species in Great Britain and at least 20,000 world-wide. And this is just spiders!

How amazing and diverse is God's wonderful work in creation! It is good, when we can, to meditate on "all Thy works" and "to muse on the work of Thy hands" is it not? But how vital it is to have a real interest in that far greater work of salvation! "Prepare *me* gracious God ..."

K Allen

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from OLIVER PLAYFOOT and EDDIE RAYMOND.

“AS BIRDS FLYING”**(THE MIRACLE OF DECEMBER 8th 1917)**

“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets” (Amos 3. 7).

In August of 1914, the Great War broke out in Europe. General Edmund Allenby of the British Army began the war in command of a cavalry division on the Western Front. He was later promoted to command the 5th Corps of the British Expeditionary Forces in Europe. In October 1915 he took command of the Third Army, which in 1916 took part in the battle of the Somme.

The War in Palestine really began in 1915, with a Turkish offensive against the Suez Canal. It was beaten back, but in late 1916 and early 1917, when the British launched a counter offensive, they were severely repulsed by the Ottoman Turks. British Prime Minister Lloyd George commented at the time: “Nobody could have saved the Turks from complete collapse, but our General Staff.” In June 1917, General Allenby was ordered to leave his Third Army and take command of the British war effort in the Middle East.

Allenby was not excited about his new assignment. General Sir Beauvoir de Lisle saw Allenby at the Gosvenor Hotel in London before the latter left for Cairo. Allenby said to him: “The last man failed, and I do not see why I should succeed.” Sir Beauvoir, who was later to preach a sermon at St. Martin’s in the Fields about the capture of Jerusalem, consoled him with Bible prophecies of the deliverance of Jerusalem. He told General Allenby that the Bible said that Jerusalem would be delivered in that very year, 1917, and by Britain.

In 1886, Dr. Grattan Guinness had written a book titled: “Light for the Last Days” in which he demonstrated from the Scriptures that Jerusalem would be delivered from Turkish rule in 1917. In 1898, Dr. H. Aldersmith, another eminent student of Bible prophecy, wrote a book called “Fullness of the Nations,” in which he said that Jerusalem would be delivered by Great Britain in 1917. In personal conversations, Dr.

Aldersmith would say that he believed that Jerusalem would be delivered by some sort of flying machine, although the airplane had not yet been invented.

Before sailing to Cairo to take command, General Allenby was summoned to a meeting with Admiral Lord Fisher, the First Sea Lord. In one of the most extraordinary military conferences of war, recorded by Lord Fisher's secretary, Allenby was told that he would be God's instrument for the deliverance of Jerusalem in December 1917. Stunned by Lord Fisher's words, he asked him to explain his deduction. Admiral Lord Fisher, First Sea Lord, then spent several hours in discussing the Bible with General Allenby, showing him the prophecies relating to the deliverance of Jerusalem in December 1917. Armed and strengthened by this knowledge, General Allenby sailed for the Middle East.

Allenby was a devout Christian. He often consulted the Bible for spiritual direction, and for historical and geographical military guidance for an army fighting in Palestine; and would frequently ask his staff officers to bow their heads with him and to pray for success in battle with few casualties. In his biography of Allenby, Field Marshall Wavell recounts a saying among the Arabs at the time: "When the waters of the Nile flow into Palestine, then will a prophet of the Lord deliver Jerusalem from the Turkish yoke." Under Allenby the waters of the Nile did flow into Palestine via a pipeline laid by the Royal Engineers to supply the British forces. The Arabs called General Allenby "Allah en Nebi" which means prophet of God.

After many battles, the British Army finally made its approach to Jerusalem. Allenby's plan was to partially encircle Jerusalem, intentionally leaving a safe way of escape in hopes that the Turkish Army would withdraw, avoiding a siege of the Holy City.

When the British forces had come within striking distance of Jerusalem, and were coming under fire from Turkish batteries within the city, Allenby did not want to return fire because he

believed that it was unworthy of Christian Britain to fire on the Holy City. He cabled Prime Minister Lloyd George for instructions. George replied that the Cabinet was leaving him free to do whatever he thought best. Not satisfied with such an answer, he cabled the King for guidance. King George V replied simply: "Pray about it." Gathering his staff together, General Allenby followed the King's counsel.

This takes us to the morning of Saturday December 8th, 1917. The British chaplains that morning led the troops in prayer. The first lesson from Morning Prayer on that day was from Isaiah chapter 31. The very prophecy that was to be fulfilled on that day was found in that lesson: *"For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them: so shall the LORD of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof. As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also He will deliver it; and passing over He will preserve it"* (Isaiah 31. 4-5). That day, December 8, 1917, was also the Feast of Hanukkah, commemorating an earlier deliverance of Jerusalem by Judah Maccabee two centuries before Christ.

When Isaiah spoke prophetically of God defending, delivering and preserving Jerusalem "as birds flying," Allenby knew exactly what that meant.

By this time the Royal Flying Corps had complete air supremacy over Palestine. That morning General Allenby ordered British planes to make reconnaissance flights over Jerusalem and to drop leaflets calling upon the Turkish garrison to surrender, but were directed not to strafe or bomb the Holy City. With all of the British air activity, panic broke out among the garrison who had no air support to speak of, and the Turkish officers could not get the situation under control. That night Izzet Bey the governor of Jerusalem smashed all of the equipment in the telegraph office, and

wrote a letter of surrender. At 2.00 a.m. on December 9th, the Turkish garrison began leaving through the Jaffa Gate. By 7.00 a.m. the last of the Turkish soldiers were passing through St. Stephen's Gate making their way along the Jericho Road. Bey and a few frightened policemen came out of the city bearing a white flag and surrendered Jerusalem to General O'Shea of the 60th division. The Holy City had been delivered without a shot being fired.

On December 11th, 1917, General Edmund Allenby entered Jerusalem silently on foot and without fanfare. No guns were fired in salute. Only the bells of Jerusalem's churches rang. Isaiah 31. 5 had been fulfilled: "*As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also He will deliver it, and passing over He will preserve it.*" "*As birds flying,*" God had used the Royal Flying Corps to frighten the garrison into leaving. As foretold, God had delivered the Holy City and preserved it. There was no siege.

After the war, General Allenby was appointed British High Commissioner of Egypt, and made a peer of the realm, becoming Viscount Allenby of Medgidjo and Felixstowe. He died in 1936, and is buried in Westminster Abbey – a great honour for a great, noble and pious man.

Selected

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (III)

Let us now look at a Scripture already quoted in Genesis 1, but let us look at it in a spiritual light. In verse 4 we read: "*And God divided the light from the darkness.*" How true this is when the Lord in His infinite mercy begins a work of grace in the heart of His children. That work is a sanctifying work, just as the Spirit of the Lord moved upon the face of the waters, so He begins to move upon the face of the waters of the heart.

The Holy Spirit is the "sanctifier" of His people. This word: "sanctify" means to separate. He separates His people from

this world. He shows us our sinful condition: that we are lawbreakers; we have broken God's holy righteous law. Joined to that holy law is a solemn curse. We are instructed in Romans 3. 19-20: *"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."* When the Holy Spirit works in the heart He begins to show us our lost, dark condition that we are in by nature, and now we desire light and life, because He has shown us darkness and death. The sweet psalmist of Israel says: *"We see light in Thy light."* How true this is that we do not know our lost, dark, benighted condition until the Holy Spirit shines into our heart. It is then we desire and seek for light, and the Holy Spirit then works faith in the heart which leads us to Jesus. With some, this is a very sudden, quick work, whilst with others it is a work of months and even years.

For those that have to wait many years for this revelation of Christ to their souls, such promises are found in Holy Scripture that the Spirit of God makes very precious to them to encourage them to press on and patiently wait for the Lord's appearing. Such a word is found in Habakkuk 2. 3: *"For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."* Also in Isaiah 40 there is a word that was made very precious to me when a young man and in a long period of affliction. These words expressed the condition I was in and directed me to wait on the Lord: *"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."* When the Holy Spirit brings the Word of God with savour and power into our hearts He is

teaching us to live by faith and not by sight. Our circumstances and feelings may be bleak and dark, but He teaches us to “*look unto Jesus*” and here in Him we find light and life.

Those that are brought to living faith in Jesus Christ, as the Word of God teaches us, become God-fearing people. This is not a slavish fear such as we find under the law of works, but a holy filial fear that works by love. Our heart is softened and melted as the love of God is shed abroad in your heart. We shall then understand the language of David in Psalm 116. 1: “*I love the LORD, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications.*” Now this is an experience of a living child of God. The children of God in Scripture are called the children of the day, and all others are called the children of the night.

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about “NOTHING.” Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor (see Page 50 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. What does God describe as “less than nothing, and vanity”? (Isaiah 40. 17)
2. The Apostle Paul was “determined not to know any thing [to know nothing] among you, save...” What? (1 Corinthians 2. 2)
3. Finish this verse: “For we brought nothing into this world...” (1 Timothy 6. 7)
4. Who said, “For with God nothing shall be impossible”? (Luke 1. 37)
5. Which illustration was Jesus using when He said: “Without Me ye can do nothing”? (John 15. 5)
6. On two occasions Jesus was surrounded by a multitude who had “nothing to eat.” How many “did eat and were filled” on each occasion? (Mark 6; Mark 8)
7. God’s testimony concerning the time the children of Israel were in the wilderness was: “Thou hast lacked nothing.” For

- how many years did God sustain them? (Deuteronomy 2)
8. Which of the churches in Asia said: "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." What was God's verdict of them? (Revelation 3)
 9. What two things were described as "good for nothing" in the Bible? (Jeremiah 13; Matthew 5)
 10. In Esther 5 & 6 three people used the word "nothing" in referring to Mordecai. Write out the three quotations and say who was speaking on each occasion.

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. The Messiah (the Christ).
2. "He that cometh to Me."
3. "He that followeth Me."
4. "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep."
5. "A thief and a robber."
6. "Rabbi," "The Son of God," "The King of Israel." (John 1. 49)
7. "The Lamb of God." (John 1. 29)
8. "Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph." Jesus was not the son of Joseph; He had no human father. (John 1. 45)
9. Jesus is the only Way to God the Father. (John 14. 6)
10. The disciples (those who professed to be Jesus' followers) were likened to the branches. Branches which bear fruit are "purged" (pruned) to make them more fruitful; branches which bear no fruit are cut off and taken away. (John 15. 1-2)

Contributed

LIST OF NAMES

The following young people have sent answers to the monthly questions from July 1st 2013 to 31st January 2014. The total number is 265, for which we would thank God.

Daryl and Jared Aldridge; Harry and Maia Aldridge; Jessica, Megan and Tom Aldridge.

Ellie Baker; Katie and Tommy Baker; Anna and Jethro Baldwin-Jones; Daisy, Josiah, Lily and Noah Barker; Kate Barnett; Abigail, Daniel and Samuel Broome; Jemima, Josiah, Kezia and Phebe Burden; Caleb, Kezia and Olivia Burgess; Jonathan and Nicolas Burton; Emily Buss; Jennifer and Sophie Buss.

Bethany, Daniel, Elizabeth and Victoria Chapman; Anna-Louise, Isaac

and Sophie Clark; Samuel Cooper; Alice, Beth, Charlotte, Katy and William Cottingham; Annie and Lucy Cottingham; Freddie, Isobel and Oliver Cottingham; Owen Cottingham; Alicia, Emma and Jessica Cottingham; Abigail, James, Rebecca and Thomas Crowter; Annabel, Elsie, Esther, Kate and Penny Crowter.

Edward Dadswell; Louise Dadswell; Jonathan, Nicholas and Peter De Vogel.

Ruby Field.

Ella Green.

Eleanor, George and Jonathan Hare; Abigail, Cornelia, Luke and Nathanael Hayden; Ben, Kezia, Suzie and Tom Hayden; George and Leah Hickman; Marcus and Susanna Hickman; Rosalind Hickman; Katharine Hills; Caleb and Joseph Hydon.

Joshua Izzard.

Emily Janes; Edward, Eleanor and Thomas Jarman; David and George Jempson; Joshua and Rosie Jempson.

Helen Kerley; Joshua Kerley; Annabel Kinderman.

Joel and Megan Lucas.

Alex, Benjamin and Harry Main; Harriet and Lewis Macpherson; David, Henry, John and Sarah Munns.

Amy, Emily and Jethro Northern; Freya and Jessica Northern.

Rebecca Outten.

Anna, Caleb, Jonathan, Rebekah and Simeon Pack; Nathan, Rachel and Susanna Pack; Elysia, Harvey and Sophia Parish; Josephine Parish; Priscilla Parish; Oliver Pearce; Heidi, James, Joseph, Katie and Oliver Playfoot; Millie and Thomas Playfoot.

Ella and Lily Ramsbottom; Debbie, Eddie, Jessica and Oliver Raymond; Alexander Rayner; James Rice; Samuel and Tom Riche; Susanna Risbridget; Andrew, Daniel and Joseph Rosier; Isabella and John Rosier.

Grace, John and Karen Sadler; Rosanna and Timothy Salkeld; Abigail and Isaac Saunders; Emily, George and Harry Saunders; Ethan and Samuel Saunders; Joseph and Stephanie Saunders; Clementine, Maria and Nicholas Sayers; Matthew and Rachel Scott; Chloe and Jessica Seymour; James and Rosie Shaw; Ethan and Eloise Starkey; Kate and Matthew Stearn; Jessica Stevens.

Harry, James, Jemima and Phebe Tarbin; Elisabeth, James and Paul Topping.

Alec, Emma and Joshua Wigley; Chloe, Jonny and Lydia Wilkins; Bethany, Caleb, Cordelia, Francesca, Jemima and Nathanael Wiltshire; Abigail, Edwin, Joseph, Kate, Lucy, Matthias and Polly Woodhams; Benjamin, Ellen, George, Jessica, Thomas and Timothy Woodhams; Rosanna Woodhams; Chloe and Lucy Woods.

Overseas Names:

Sophie Bruere Henepowerhof, Calvin and Dennis Glass; Jarrod Greyn; Kilee and Montanalee Greyn; Cayley, Olivia and Quinton Knibbe; Isaac Knol; Luke Linna; Jessica, Kelly, Matthew and Thomas Mills; Rachel and Shelley Mol; Jacob, Joseph, Savannah and Thomas Mol, Heidi and Mariah Muis; Paul Nowlan; Emily Quist; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Caleb, Natalie and Zachary Sporte; Abigail, Bethany, Kaitlyn and Michaela Teunissen; Fred Van Gemert; Danielle Van Vugt; Jonathan and Laura Wesdyk; Cody, Dylan and Tyler White; Carissa, Carolyn, Janna and Leah Ymker.

“THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES”

(Daniel 5. 27)

Belshazzar the king made a feast to his lords,
Applauded his idols with blasphemous words –
Those idols of silver, of wood, and of stone,
To which he commended his kingdom and throne.

With daring presumption, with confidence bold,
He sent for the vessels of silver and gold –
Those sacred utensils which God had decreed
For use in His service by Abraham’s seed.

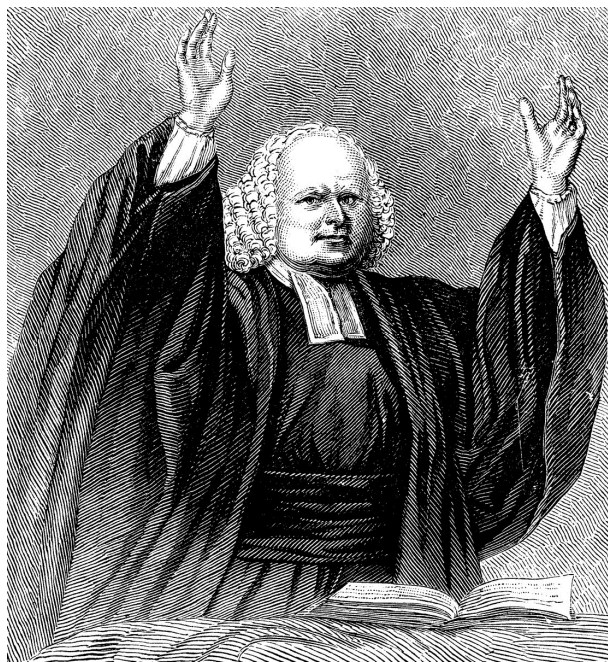
That mirthful assembly drank freely the wine,
Defiling his treasure whose name is divine;
But sudden they saw the king’s countenance fall,
For **Tekel Upharsin** appeared on the wall.

I look at this king and reflect on his doom,
I see that in horror he sank to the tomb;
But will the Heart-searcher, whose child I would be,
Write **Mene** or **Tekel** or **Peres** on me?

I have not polluted the vessels of gold,
Nor outwardly followed that monarch of old;
‘Be clean,’ none the less, is the gospel’s clear word,
‘If bearing the vessels of Jesus the Lord.’

Anon

The Friendly Companion



George Whitefield

“And they went forth, and preached every where,
the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word
with signs following. Amen.” (Mark 16. 20)

April 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

It is interesting to note that at the birth of Jesus Christ and at His death, two men, both named Joseph, showed great kindness to the Saviour.

Joseph, the husband of Mary, we know took great care of the infant Christ following the guidance of the Angel of the Lord, as we read in the gospels of Matthew and Luke.

The other "Joseph" is not so well known, yet he acted as kindly at the end of the life of Jesus as the first Joseph did at His birth.

What do we know about this Joseph?

He is mentioned in all of the four gospels, from where we learn his reputation. He was honourable; a counsellor; a good man; just and a disciple of Jesus (although secretly for fear of the Jews, until He saw Christ crucified at Calvary when he openly showed his true colours).

We also know something of his faith, because we are told he waited for the kingdom of God, and that in the Sanhedrin (the council of the Jewish leaders) he refused to consent to the arrest and trial of Jesus Christ.

We also know something of the fruit of his faith, because Jesus tells us that "*by their fruits ye shall know them.*" When he learned that Jesus had died, his heart was moved to ask, 'How can I show my love for Him?' Being a counsellor he had access to Pilate which others did not have. So he went boldly (no fear of the Jews now!) and asked for the body of Jesus. As a rich man, he also had a new tomb already prepared for himself, which now he willingly gave for the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, as it was prophesied in Isaiah 53: "*He made His grave with the wicked, (that is He died on a cross between two thieves) and with the rich in His death.*" His holy body lay in a rich man's tomb which had not been defiled with the body of any other person. This tomb must have been doubly precious to Joseph as he thought of the time when his body would lay where once the Lord lay.

Also Joseph lovingly conveyed the body to the tomb, wrapping it in fine linen. In all this we see how God, the Father, watched over the sacred body of His Son, ensuring that all that was foretold came to pass. Joseph of Arimathæa did this “for love’s sake.”

Now we know that Jesus remained in the tomb for three days and three nights, after which He rose triumphant from the dead. This tomb then became the scene of the final victory of Christ’s earthly ministry.

The question remains for us each at this time of special remembrance. Have we ever been moved as Joseph was “for love’s sake” to show whose we are and whom we serve?

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

This year, 2014, marks the three hundredth anniversary of the birth of the famous preacher and evangelist, George Whitefield, whose picture appears on our front cover this month. Few men have had such a profound influence on the religious and social health of a nation as he. Whilst many countries on the continent of Europe succumbed to violent revolution at that time, England and the other countries of the United Kingdom were spared, because another sort of revolution took place: a religious revolution which was as important in its consequences as the Reformation was in its time. George Whitefield was the most formidable of the “evangelists” of his generation, and was to become noted for his firm adherence to the precious doctrines of grace, commonly called Calvinism, whilst men like John Wesley, in particular, veered more and more towards the false and deceitful doctrines of free-will.

It could rightly be argued that this amazing change in English society laid the foundation of the greatness of Britain which peaked during the Victorian era when the British Empire was so extensive that it was said “it was an empire upon which the sun never set.”

George, the youngest of several children, was born on December 16th, 1714 in Gloucester, a city in the West of England on the banks of the River Severn. His father, who died young, whilst George was still a lad, was an innkeeper. George was born at the Bell Inn in that city, his father being the landlord. His widowed mother was left in very poor circumstances, so George, at fifteen persuaded her to let him leave school and work in the inn. However, having access to a Bible, George became an avid reader of its sacred contents, and it was at this time that the Holy Spirit began to lay the foundations, in his mind, for the work to which he was to be called in Christ's name. Persuaded to return to school by a student from Oxford University, George obtained enough knowledge to go to Pembroke College to study, paying his way as a servitor (the poorest class of students) by serving his wealthier contemporaries.

It was at Pembroke College that George met with Charles Wesley who loaned him a book entitled, "The Life of God in the Soul of Man." Through reading this book George was brought to see his state as a sinner needing mercy, and it was here that the Lord Jesus Christ was first revealed to him as his Saviour.

Eventually, after suffering ill health which interrupted his time at Oxford, George was able to complete his studies, and in 1736 was ordained as a deacon, and later a minister in the Church of England.

Right from the outset of his ministry, George Whitefield was seen as an outstanding preacher. He electrified the nation, one hearer saying that "his voice startled England like a trumpet blast." He could hold the rapt attention of as many as 20,000 people at a time when he preached on the outskirts of London at places such as Moorfields and Kennington Common. He preached for thirty-four years, crossing the Atlantic to preach in America no less than thirteen times. He died whilst on a preaching tour in Massachusetts. Because of

his extensive ministry, he became known as the “Apostle of the British Empire.” He preached over 18,000 sermons in his lifetime, at his peak preaching 500 a year.

The history of Old Baptist Chapel, Chippenham can be traced back directly to the influence of George Whitefield. After preaching to a vast crowd in the nearby picturesque village of Castle Combe (during which aqua-fortis – or nitric acid – was thrown at him and his hearers!), many were wrought upon by the Holy Spirit. Following this there was a decision taken to erect a place of worship in Chippenham, which like most of Whitefield’s churches was to be called “The Tabernacle.” This building, part of which is still standing in St. Mary’s Street, Chippenham, was opened on the very day that George died in America, on September 29th 1770. His name still appears at the head of the list of Trustees of the original building. It was from this church that in 1804, a group of believers seceded to form Old Baptist Chapel, as they wished to follow the Scriptural pattern of believers’ baptism, whereas the Tabernacle Church practised infant sprinkling, in line with George Whitefield’s Church of England roots.

Many are the quotes which made this great preacher famous. One of the most telling was this, “Other men may preach the gospel better than I, but no man can preach a better gospel.”

Editor

GOD’S USE OF A TUNE IN TIME OF DISTRESS

The years 1660-1688 were known in Scotland as Covenanting times, or sadly, because so much righteous blood was shed, the Killing times. Covenanters were Protestants who were viciously sought by those who favoured a state church, which at that time leaned towards the ritualistic Roman Catholic liturgy. The Covenanters were viewed with suspicion because they denied the divine right of kings (in this case Charles II) to govern the Church of Christ on earth. They wanted freedom of worship, something we take for granted,

but was bought at a great cost for us by these brave men and women and also children. So there was perceived by their enemies to be a political dimension to their opposition, which fuelled much of the bitterness towards them by men such as Claverhouse who acted ruthlessly on behalf of the crown.

Three of these Covenanters were, on one occasion, fleeing for their lives, the dreaded dragoons (the soldiers loyal to the crown) being after them. As they took their way they agreed to look for shelter for the night. As they proceeded they saw a farmhouse come into view, and so they headed for it. The farmer, who answered their knock at the door, at their request gave them permission to sleep in his barn for the night. Having obtained this welcome relief they thanked him most sincerely. Before they settled down for the night, as all true believers seek to do wherever they are to be found, they had worship which included the singing of a psalm. The man who was asked to lead the singing was told to sing the psalm to the tune Martyrdom, and to sing out clearly, so as to be heard by any that might be around.

At this very time the farmer was leaving the house to check that everything was safe for the night. As he walked towards the barn, he heard the men singing the Psalm. He stopped to listen and he recognised the well-known tune, Martyrdom, which the men were singing. He headed for the barn and went and invited the men to go with him to the house, where he would give them each beds for the night, as he also was a Covenanter and had deep sympathy for their cause and plight.

How wonderful are God's ways of providence in caring for His people in times of distress!

Contributed

If an unholy man were to get into heaven, he would feel like a hog in a flower garden.

Rowland Hill

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**HANNAH PRAYS**

There was a man of Israel who had two wives. One of them, called Peninnah, had both sons and daughters. The other, named Hannah, had no children. Every year they all went up to the house of the LORD in Shiloh to worship. And each year Hannah was mocked by the other wife because she had no child.

Hannah was so full of sorrow that she wept and went aside to pray. She asked the LORD to remember her. She vowed that if He gave her a son, she would give him unto the LORD all the days of his life. Hannah prayed in her heart but her lips moved. Eli the high priest saw her. He thought she was drunken and reproved her. Hannah told him that out of her sorrow, she had poured out her soul before the LORD. Eli must have been pleased to hear this. He said: *“Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him.”* Now Hannah was no longer sad.

The LORD did remember Hannah and gave her a son. She called his name Samuel, which means: *“asked of God.”* Hannah did not forget her vow to the LORD. As soon as Samuel was able to care for himself, she brought him to the house of the LORD to live. He stayed there to help Eli and to serve the LORD.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why was Hannah mocked by the other wife? (5 words)
2. What did Hannah go aside to do? (1 word)
3. What does Samuel mean? (3 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (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 husband and a home.
2. The feet of Boaz.
3. The Lord Jesus.

Contributed

*“For this child
I prayed:
and the LORD
hath given me
my petition
which I asked
of Him.”
1 Samuel 1. 27.*

BIBLE LESSONS**THE APPEARANCES OF JESUS**

What a revelation that was when Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene! Mary must have longed to fall down at Jesus' feet to embrace and kiss them, as she had done before. As she drew near to Him, Jesus said: *"Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God."*

Perhaps you have wondered why Jesus would not let Mary touch Him, while He later allowed others to do so. There may have been various reasons, but first He had an important mission for her to do. She must go quickly and tell His brethren that He was alive and would shortly return to heaven.

How wonderful are the words of Jesus: *"... go to My brethren ..."* ! Had they not all forsaken Him? Yes. But all their failings could not break that union. He still called them brethren! Jesus abideth faithful! HE NEVER CHANGES! With her heart overflowing with the good news, Mary hastened to tell the other disciples.

What about the other women who came with Mary to the sepulchre? It would seem that at the invitation of the angel: *"Come, see the place where the Lord lay,"* they lingered, trying to take in the whole scene. As they left the tomb, they trembled and were filled with amazement. They were unable to fully grasp the reality of the resurrection. As they went, they were afraid to speak to anyone.

Suddenly a man appeared before them and called out: *"ALL HAIL."* It was Jesus Himself. How their eyes were fixed upon Him! What joy and love they must have felt! *"They came and beld Him by the feet, and worshipped Him."* They, like Mary Magdalene, were given a special message for the disciples. They must tell them to go into Galilee, where Jesus would show Himself unto them.

This appearance to the women was the second that Jesus made after He arose from the dead. The appearances to Mary

Magdalene and the other women were very brief, lasting only a few moments. But there was no mistaking that it was their Lord. Not even the unbelief of the disciples could shake them from that truth.

When Mary Magdalene and the other women came to the disciples, they found them mourning and weeping. They began to tell them that Jesus was alive again. They told of the angels and their message, but especially of how they had seen the Lord themselves. Mary Magdalene would tell of the meeting at the tomb and how Jesus called her name. The other women would tell of how He appeared to them IN THE WAY and how they held Him by the feet. The disciples just could not believe the report of the women. Their words seemed nothing more than idle tales.

As yet, the Lord had appeared to none but women. You may remember that it was the women who remained at the cross. Although by nature weaker, they had not forsaken Him like the disciples had. Perhaps in this way the Lord would reprove and humble the disciples.

When Jesus vanished from the sight of the women, He made a very special appearance to one of His disciples. We might naturally think it was John, who for a time had stood by the cross with the women. But no, there was a disciple who was troubled with guilt above the rest. His dreadful actions in denying the Lord sank him lower and lower. Poor Peter felt so ashamed of what he had done. We are not told anything about the appearance of Jesus to Peter, other than that it happened. Even so, what a meeting it was! No doubt, Peter felt in an even deeper way what he had said to Jesus at an earlier time: *"I am a sinful man, O Lord."*

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 28 verses 6 to 10, Mark chapter 16 verses 5 to 11, Luke chapter 24 verses 5 to 11, and John chapter 20 verses 17 to 18.

QUESTIONS:

1. What must Mary tell the disciples that Jesus would shortly do?
2. What did Jesus call His disciples? (1 word)

3. Where did Jesus say that He would show Himself to His disciples?
4. To which disciple did Jesus appear first?
5. What had this disciple told the Lord that he was? (3 words)
Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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. "I will be thy plagues." "I will be thy destruction."
2. The linen clothes and the napkin. 3. Two angels.
4. The gardener. 5. "Rabboni; which is to say, Master."

GRANDFATHER'S YOUTH (III)

Part three of a narrative in which Wm. A Brakel was used as a means in God's hand for the conversion of a young man.

"Our crew stood by, quietly watching, although no one knew exactly what would happen. Did Long Lawrence want to just surrender his ship? He had never done that before. In the meantime the pirates had set out a few boats which were soon filled with armed men, and were rowed straight to our ship.

"As soon as the captain saw it, he motioned to the mate, whispered something into his ear and shouted to us, 'Let no man strike back.' Then he went downstairs to the cabin. That we certainly could not understand, and we became suspicious and anxious. The robbers seemed to feel likewise. They could not understand why we let them be, without making a move. However, they came closer and soon the whole gang was on board. Their leader, a man with a black beard and almost black face, and with a scimitar in his hand, stepped forward and asked in the Italian language: 'Where is the captain?'

'I will bring you to him,' said the mate, and went downstairs, followed by the leader and a few of his men."

"And what happened there?" asked John curiously.

"Just listen; Long Lawrence has told it about a hundred times himself, afterwards.

"The door of the cabin was open, and the robber chief was going in when he looked into the cabin and suddenly shouted a Turkish exclamation and quickly jumped back.

"For inside there were standing on each side about twelve kegs, all of them open to the air. They were powder kegs, as the robbers knew very well. The black kernels grinned at the robbers, and moreover they were scattered on the whole floor, so that one could not move without stepping on them, by which gunpowder could easily explode.

"In the midst of all this, Long Lawrence sat on an open keg, calmly smoking his pipe. One spark and ...

'Good friend,' said the captain in the native tongue, 'you are -'

"But Grandfather," John said suddenly, "could they understand each other's language?"

"Certainly, my boy. In the ports of the Levant the merchants, captains, seamen, and such talk to each other in a language that is a mixture of everything. They all can understand enough of it to know what is necessary to communicate.

"So Lawrence said, 'You are as you see at the gate of death. If you and your men do not turn about immediately and leave us, yes, even if you take a nail or a piece of rope, or even look mad at any of my crew, I will knock out this pipe (and we will all fly into eternity, you to yours and I to mine).'

"Oh, he meant that the ship would explode, didn't he?"

"Exactly, my boy, and as soon as the robber heard that, he took another look at the kegs, and then at Lawrence, who was still smoking. Then his yellow face became almost grey with fear. Whether it was of sorrow or of terror I do not know, but the whole troop came running back upstairs. We thought that now the fighting would begin and we grabbed our knives at least. But, no, those from downstairs shouted something we could not understand, and in a moment they jumped into the boats like madmen and rowed away much faster than they had come.

"We could hardly believe our eyes when we saw it. 'It seems as if an evil spirit is chasing them,' one of us called to a fellow

sailor. In five minutes the whole ship was empty of pirates. We saw them climb out of the boats into their ship and soon sail away. In a few hours they were out of sight.

"In the meantime the captain had come on deck. 'Put up a new mainsail,' he ordered, and before long a strong wind took us directly to the Strait of Gibraltar.

'And now, boy,' said Long Lawrence, go downstairs with a duster, sweep the floor and put the kegs back into the hold.'

"I went downstairs, followed by the captain, but as soon as I reached the cabin, I did as the pirate had done, I jumped back and screamed. 'What is the matter with you, boy?' asked Long Lawrence as he went into the cabin with his pipe which he was smoking, as was his usual custom.

"This frightened me even more, and I could only say, 'Powder! Powder!'

'Come,' said the skipper, grabbing me by the collar with his large hands, 'do as I told you. Put away those kegs with turnip seed, and sweep up what is on the floor. But do not step on it, or they will leave spots on the floor and you will have blue spots on your back.'

"With trembling hands I obeyed. Soon, however, I felt to be at ease. It really was turnip seed, a part of our cargo that was in the kegs and on the floor. To any one who knew no better, it looked exactly like gunpowder. The pirates at least had thought it was, and that had saved us. I was glad deep down in my heart that it had turned out this way and for the first time in my life I thanked the Lord God with all my heart."

"That surely was a smart captain, Grandfather," said John.

"Indeed he was, and we have never forgotten that his clever plan saved not only the cargo, but also our lives. Without him, humanly speaking, we would never have seen Germany again. Within four weeks we were home, and I tell you, my boy, that I had tears in my eyes when after such a long time I again walked the streets of Rostock to my father's home."

(to be continued)

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC WIDOW

A young widow writes as follows: "Very young in life I was married to a young English captain of a ship. He was an upright man in all his ways, and I was much attached to him. One great trouble, however, oppressed me. He was a Protestant, and I a Roman Catholic. I longed for his conversion to the 'true faith,' as I then ignorantly considered my religion. But after a few years he was lost at sea, and I was left to mourn his loss. A loss it was indeed, for I not only mourned for my own lonely lot, but was in deep distress because I thought, being a Protestant, he was certainly in hell. No 'heretic' (as we called all who did not go to Mass, and worship the Virgin Mary) could possibly be saved. I wept and prayed (or *thought* I did), and fasted, till one day the question was raised in my mind: 'Are all poor heretics lost beyond all hope?'

"I arose early next morning and went to Confession. In my distress I said to the priest: 'I cannot find it in my head to believe that all poor heretics are lost. Are they?'

"To my astonishment and delight he whispered: 'No; their faith in Christ saves them.' I left the church and hastened home with the words ringing in my ears: 'Their faith in Christ saves them. Their faith in Christ saves them.'

"That night I retired to rest with a faint hope that, after all, my lost one might have had faith in Christ, and would be saved. As I lay on my bed, however, my thoughts travelled from the state of my dead husband's soul to my own. Had I this faith in Christ which saved people? Distressed with a conviction that I had it not, I at length fell asleep, and dreamed I saw Jesus Christ, but so far was He from me that I could not reach Him. He appeared to be on the top of a very high mountain, and though my heart (in my dream) longed to get to Him, my feet seemed fastened to the ground where I stood, and could not move. My distress was dreadful indeed! I felt I must perish, for I could not possibly approach Him where He was. Then I thought He saw my sore distress, and drawing near He looked on me with infinite compassion. I saw His head, His hands, His side, His

feet, and His face once so marred with sorrow. As He drew near, I asked Him to save me. I thought that He next pointed me to a place which I knew well, and had seen people going into on several occasions, and distinctly said: 'Go there, and thou shalt hear words whereby thou shalt be saved.' 'Not so, Lord,' I said, 'they are heretics. I could not go there.' Thereupon He left me, and all was dark, and I was again wretched, and lonely, and miserable in my heart.

"But the words that He had uttered: 'Thou shalt hear words whereby thou shalt be saved,' took possession of my mind's waking thoughts. The idea of going to a small room, up a dingy passage, as He directed, was too hard for my poor, proud, and rebellious heart. Yet had *He* not said it?

"As night came on, I watched for two quiet people whom I had often seen going to that despised place of meeting. A few minutes after they had gone in, with trembling heart and faltering steps, I followed, and listened at the door. Someone was praying, but presently all was silence. Quietly pushing open the partially shut door, I crept inside. At the further end of the room was a tall solemn-looking man at a desk, with a Book before him. As I entered, he raised his eyes, and apparently fixing them upon me, read: 'Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved' (Acts 11. 14).

"I could not then doubt that the Lord Jesus had indeed spoken to my soul. Presently the speaker went on to tell of the utter ruin of man. Whether worldly or religious, he was spiritually lost. Of necessity, if not saved, he must perish. This was all new to me, but in full accord with the sense of sin and helplessness I was then feeling. Then he went on to show how God had provided, by the death of His dear Son, for the perfect salvation of every vile sinner who is taught to feel his need of Him; also, how truly and absolutely, because of what was done, apart from our prayers, or tears, or good deeds, a poor sinner obtains the forgiveness of sins, and is brought home to God by an infallible Guide; and, finally the means by which it is

done – their faith in Christ.

“Never can I forget the sudden joy these words brought to my poor troubled heart. Quietly I left that little room, rejoicing in God my Saviour, and I understood a little of the feelings of the woman in Simon’s house, to whom He said: *‘Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace’* (Luke 7. 50).”

Selected

THE CURE OF MARTIN LUTHER’S DEPRESSION

It is said in the life story of the famous reformer, Martin Luther, that at one time he became terribly depressed. He felt himself a great sinner; Germany was a godless nation, and the church of which he was a member was in great danger from the Roman Catholic Church. He went about with a long face and never smiled, he was so downhearted.

Now Martin had a very wise wife, who thought she knew how to shake Martin out of this sad state. One morning she dressed herself totally in black and closed all the curtains of the house. These were signs of deepest mourning.

Martin was astonished and asked his wife who it was that had died.

“God,” was her simple, but short answer.

“Who did you say?” asked Martin even more astonished.

“God,” she repeated.

“That cannot be true,” replied Martin with great feeling. “It is impossible for God to die.”

“Yet,” said his patient wife, “you go about all day, every day depressed and downcast, behaving as if God had died.”

The force of his wife’s words went right home, and lifted his spirits, above what he saw around him, to the immortal, invisible God, whose control of all events never fails. “Then I observed what a wise woman my wife was,” Martin wrote in his diary.

Adapted

“THE RICH HE HATH SENT EMPTY AWAY”

It is said of Abraham Lincoln that once he was ill, and so he instructed his staff to turn anyone away, whoever they might be, who wished to see him. So congressmen, senators, cabinet members, however distinguished they were, received the same message: “The President is not receiving visitors today.”

However, a poor widow with a desperate need, came a great distance to see the President. When she was told that he was ill, she pleaded so earnestly to be able to see him that his servant went in and told of her pressing entreaty.

“Show her in,” said the President. Although he refused to see the powerful, rich and well-known people, his compassion towards this poor woman overcame all his objections.

So it is in coming to the King of Kings, the Lord Jesus Christ. Although, of course, He is never sick as the President was, yet the principle of access to Him is the same as it was that day. Mary said of Him: *“He bath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He bath sent empty away.”*

May God make us poor enough in ourselves, that we may enjoy the riches of His grace.

Adapted

CHRYSOSTOM’S ARREST

Chrysostom was one of the early Christians who lived in the days of persecution of believers by the Roman Empire. The emperor who wanted him to renounce his faith asked his advisors what fearful thing would make him recant?

Several ideas were mentioned, such as prison, banishment or even death. However, those who knew him said that none of these would bring about the desired effect. “What then will make him afraid?” asked the emperor. The reply was given straight away: “There is only one thing he is afraid of, and that is sin!”

What a wonderful reputation to have!

Adapted

“WHAT WILL THOSE LITTLE EYES SEE?”

Pondering this evening, I was thinking of a little event that took place in the 1700s. Towards the beginning of the 1700s, about three hundred years ago, a baby boy was born. That was a very sad time in the history of the church of God. It seemed that once again there would be dreadful persecution and imprisonment, but also the state of religion was extremely low, dreadfully low. Wickedness abounded. Christianity was mocked at. It was said that the Archbishop of Canterbury was an atheist. When that baby boy was born, his godly grandfather looked at him and could not help weeping. He shed bitter tears. He said: “I wonder what those little eyes will live to see in this evil world.”

Well, as the little boy grew up, he knew what his grandfather had said, and he himself became quite an eminent minister, and before he died, he referred to what his grandfather had said when he was born, those tears: “I wonder what those little eyes will see.” And the little boy, when an old man and a godly minister, said: “These little eyes have lived to see the most blessed days spiritually in the church of God that England has ever known” – the days of Whitefield and the Evangelical Revival when thousands were blessed and the churches and chapels filled.

B. A. Ramsbottom

ROCKING HORSE CHRISTIANS

Rowland Hill, once entered the house of one of his congregation and saw a child on a rocking horse. “Dear me,” exclaimed the aged minister, “how wondrously like some Christians! There is motion but no progress. The rocking horse type of spiritual life is still characteristic of too many church members in the present day. *Grow in grace* is an exhortation but little regarded.”

THE ROOT OF ORIGINAL SIN

I expect our readers have often picked up a seemingly good apple, only to find a little hole in it, where a worm or a grub has eaten its way. I wonder how many have considered the question: "Did the worm eat its way into the apple or eat its way out of it from the centre?"

The answer is very clear. The worm ate its way out of the apple. When the tree was in blossom an egg was laid in the flowers, and when the apple was grown, the egg hatched inside, so the worm made its way out of the apple from within.

This tells us what original sin is. Satan has planted an egg in the being of man ever since Adam sinned, which hatches and brings forth all the evil a person does in their life. So, actual sins are the fruit of original sin.

Editor

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (IV)

There is a very sweet promise in Malachi 4. 2: "*But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.*" Our beloved Lord Jesus is here likened to the sun. Let us just consider this for a moment. The earth receives all its heat and light from the sun. Without it, nothing could live or grow on earth. What a fitting illustration this is of the Lord Jesus Christ: "*I am the Light of the World.*" Again we refer you to that word in John 1: "*In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*" This chapter continues: "*That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of*

God, even to them that believe on His name."

We notice here that to receive Christ is to believe; they are synonymous terms. We are then instructed as to why they believe: *"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* It is a sovereign act of Almighty God that brings a poor dark sinner to be born again, as Jesus said to Nicodemus: *"Ye must be born again."* This is not optional, but absolutely essential and the only way a poor sinner can truly believe or receive Jesus Christ. All our spiritual heat and light comes from the Lord Jesus Christ. *"We love Him because He first loved us."* David said in Psalm 84: *"For the LORD God is a Sun and Shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."*

Let us continue with this line of thought that we first read in Genesis 1: *"And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night."* In 1 Thessalonians 5 we are instructed: *"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."* May we not be left to presume that we are the children of light. The prophet in Isaiah 50 speaks of how sometimes the Lord's people, those who truly fear the Lord, walk in darkness. But then he continues and warns us of those who walk in sparks of their own kindling and their solemn end: *"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire,*

and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of Mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow."

My dear beloved young friends, a religion that begins with us will end in eternal sorrow, but a religion that begins with the Holy Spirit quickening your soul will end in eternal glory. We read in Philippians 1: *"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS and all references below refer to the Book of Daniel. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 74 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. What names did the prince of the eunuchs give to Daniel and his three friends? (1. 7)
2. King Nebuchadnezzar was angry because no one could tell him his dream which he had forgotten. What did Daniel ask his friends to pray for and why? (2. 18)
3. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image, what did the head of gold represent? (2. 38)
4. Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, and commanded it to be worshipped. What did he do to Daniel's friends who refused to worship the image? (3. 20-21)
5. "The king was astonished [astonished]." What did he see? (3. 25)
6. The king had another dream, this time of a great tree being cut down. Daniel showed that the tree represented the king himself. For what sin was Nebuchadnezzar 'cut down'? (4; 5)
7. In Belshazzar's feast the fingers of a man's hand wrote on the wall. One word written was 'TEKEL.' What did it mean? (5)

8. Later Daniel himself was miraculously saved from what seemed would be certain death. What happened to Daniel, and how did God preserve him? (6)
9. Daniel sought in confession before God for the fulfilment of His promise. What had God promised, and by which prophet? (9)
10. In the prophecy of Ezekiel, Daniel is linked with two other godly men who stood firm in the truth. Who were they?

ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS

1. "All nations."
2. "Jesus Christ and Him crucified."
3. "...and it is certain we can carry nothing out."
4. The angel Gabriel.
5. The vine and the branches.
6. Five thousand, four thousand. (Mark 6. 36-44; Mark 8. 1-9)
7. Forty years. (Deuteronomy 2. 7)
8. Laodicea (Revelation 3. 17). "Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."
9. Jeremiah's girdle (Jeremiah 13. 10); Salt which has lost its savour. (Matthew 5. 13)
10. "Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." (Esther 5. 13) – Haman. "There is nothing done for him." (Esther 6. 3) – The king's servants. "Let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken." – King Ahasuerus (Esther 6. 10)

Contributed

THE PERFECT SACRIFICE

He's led as a lamb to the slaughter,
 Messiah, anointed of God,
 His purpose and hope does not falter
 He willingly sheds His own blood.

As dumb is a sheep to its shearer,
 And seeks not his hand to resist,
 So Jesus, the wondrous Sin-bearer,
 Ne'er opened His mouth to protest.

He knew He had quite undertaken
His people's great ransom to pay;
And, though of His Father forsaken, (*Matthew 27. 46*)
He gladly proceeds to obey.

The sins of His people imputed
Were laid on His innocent Head;
Himself He remained unpolluted,
Yet bore the dread curse in their stead.

He knew that God's justice demanded
That full reparation be made;
His love and His pity responded,
And wholly the debt He has paid.

In all God's perfections delighting,
His honour to Him was so dear,
He loved the good Hand that was smiting,
And wished not the suffering to spare.

His Father was pleased thus to bruise Him,
His only, and well-beloved Son,
For justice required thus to use Him,
For He and His people are one.

So Jesus, Himself, gained much pleasure
In those grievous sorrows He bore,
Though anguish and pain without measure,
He yet looked to joys set before.

He longed for His bride to adore Him,
His glory and beauty to see;
In heaven to worship before Him
From all sin and sorrow set free.

Elizabeth Jempson (26 June, 1961)

The Friendly Companion



“If I take the wings of the morning.
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
even there shall Thy hand lead me,
and Thy right hand shall hold me.”
(Psalm 139. 9-10)

May 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

The Word of God is the infallible declaration of His truth to mankind. As such we should be very careful how we quote from the sacred Scriptures, lest we unwittingly misapply or distort His truth in so doing. We have listed three common expressions which are in fact misquotations of Scripture. Sadly some of us who stand in the pulpit can be as guilty as others of careless quoting!

“The truth as it is in Jesus.”

This should be as we read in Ephesians 4. 21: *“If so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus.”* This is a very different thing. The first expression implies that there is also truth apart from Jesus. But the second one rightly tells us that the truth is in Jesus and nowhere else!

“Let him cast the first stone.”

This should be as John 8. 7 reads: *“He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.”*

“How great a fire a little matter kindleth.”

This should be as James 3. 5 reads: *“Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!”*

Perhaps some of you could tell me of similar examples.

Paul tells the Corinthian believers that he had not handled the Word of God deceitfully. He rightly believed that God's Word is like Himself; Holy, inspired by God the Holy Spirit; and that the Son of God is the eternal Word.

So taking Paul's example we should seek grace **not** to:

- Handle it irreverently (Isaiah 66. 2).
- Amend it (Proverbs 30. 6; Revelation 22. 18, 19).
- Mutilate it (Jeremiah 36. 20-32).
- Corrupt it (2 Corinthians 2. 17).
- Forget it (James 1. 22-25).
- Be partial with it (James 3. 17).
- Despise it (Proverbs 13. 13; Isaiah 5. 24).
- Blaspheme it (Titus 2. 5).
- Stumble at it (1 Peter 2. 8).

May the Lord make His Word so precious to us, as Solomon tells us in the Proverbs: that we "*buy the truth and sell it not.*"

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The airplane shown on our front cover this month is called a Bleriot XI, named after the aviator, Bleriot, who was one of the earliest pioneers of air travel. It was in a plane of this model that on July 25th, 1909 he became the first person to successfully cross the English Channel, flying from the French coast in forty minutes, and then crash landing on the English side of the channel! Thankfully he was not hurt.

It is significant that God has given to some people the talent for enterprise. It could be said that Jacob, in his dealings with Laban, showed a similar spirit, as certainly David did when he went out to meet Goliath. Over the many generations of the world's history, men have pushed the boundaries of knowledge and enterprise further and further, as was prophesied by Daniel: "*Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased*" (Daniel 12. 4).

Sadly, most men in their pursuit of knowledge are deficient in their search, in that their searching leaves out God. "*God is not in all their thoughts,*" said the psalmist. Because of this, they give no honour to God for the laws of science they have discovered, but have not created! Not being aware of the truth of God's Word that "*no man by searching can find out God,*" and not finding Him according to their perception, they readily conclude with the fool who says in his heart, "*there is no God.*"

When the atheistic Soviet Union put a man into space for the first time, the astronaut, Uri Gagarin, impiously said: "I do not see God out here." This was very different from the words of the first American astronaut, who quoted readily from Psalm 8 in awe and wonder at what he saw of God's handiwork: "the work of *God's* fingers."

Many of us who have flown many miles in various directions

have often thought, being thankful for, and comforted by the words of the hymn writer:

“In heaven and earth and sky and seas,
He executes His firm decrees.”

The promise of God to Jacob is especially sweet in this respect: *“I will be with thee in all places whither thou goest, and I will not leave thee...”* The ladder that he saw, stretched right up through the realms of the skies to reach heaven itself! The psalmist David sums it all up in Psalm 139. 7- 10: *“Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me.”*

“ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH”

It is not often that a child is expected to give evidence in a court of law, but on one occasion a twelve year old boy was a vital witness in an important law suit. One of the barristers for the other party cross-questioned him very severely, hoping to break down his evidence.

“Your father has been talking to you, and telling you how to testify, has he not?”

“Yes,” said the boy.

“I thought so,” said the lawyer. “Now, just tell us what your father told you to say.”

“Well,” said the young lad, “my father told me the lawyers would try and tangle me in my testimony, but if I would be careful and tell the truth, I could tell the same thing every time.”

To this sincere and noble testimony the barrister had no answer!

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**THE LORD CALLS SAMUEL**

The child Samuel lived by the house of the LORD at Shiloh. He helped Eli the priest, who was an old man. One night after he had laid down to sleep, Samuel heard a voice calling him. He quickly ran to Eli, saying: *"Here am I; for thou calledst me."* But Eli told Samuel to lie down again, for he had not called him.

A second time Samuel heard a voice calling his name. He went to Eli, who said that he had not called him. Then a third time his name was called and Samuel went to Eli. *"And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child."* He told Samuel what to say if his name was called again.

The LORD came and called again: *"Samuel, Samuel."* This time Samuel answered: *"Speak; for Thy servant beareth."* The LORD told Samuel of the great evil that would come upon the house of Eli. His sons were wicked and he did not punish them.

Samuel was afraid to tell Eli what the LORD had spoken. Yet he did not hide the word of the LORD from him. Eli said: *"It is the LORD: let Him do what seemeth Him good."*

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was the old man whom Samuel helped?
2. What did Samuel hear a voice calling? (2 words)
3. What did he answer when the LORD called again? (5 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (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. Because she had no child.
2. Pray.
3. Asked of God.

Contributed

*“And Eli
perceived
that the
LORD had
called
the child.”*

1 Samuel 3. 8.

BIBLE LESSONS**THE ROAD TO EMMAUS - A PERFECT SERMON**

What a flurry of activity had already occurred that first Lord's Day morning when Jesus arose from the grave. Two of His followers decided to return to their home in the village of Emmaus. It was a journey of seven miles. As they walked along, they talked of all that had happened in Jerusalem. They were especially troubled by the report that the grave of Jesus was empty and no one knew where His body was.

They were so busy conversing together, they failed to notice the Stranger who drew near and went with them. Indeed it was Jesus Himself, of whom they had been talking. Like Mary Magdalene at the tomb, *"their eyes were bolden,"* so they did not recognize Him. He asked what they were talking about that made them so sad.

They could hardly believe that anybody was ignorant of what had happened in Jerusalem during the last few days. One of them, whose name was Cleopas, asked Him: *"Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?"* Jesus asked: *"What things?"*

How their hearts were stirred at the question! They answered: *"Concerning Jesus of Nazareth ... a Prophet mighty in deed and word ... And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him."* How the Stranger listened to them! He still listens to the sad complaints of poor troubled souls. Would they tell this Stranger the deepest feelings of their heart? They could not keep it back, as they blurted out: *"But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel."*

They even told the stranger that it was now the third day since these things had happened, and, that morning the women of their company had been to His tomb. They found it empty and had been told by angels that Jesus was alive. They added further that others of their company had gone to the

tomb and found it just as the women had said: "*BUT HIM THEY SAW NOT.*"

Jesus began to reprove them: "*O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.*" Were they not offended when the Stranger called them fools? Our proud hearts by nature can never bow under such a charge. However, the Stranger quickly followed the rebuke with a question that touched their heart. "*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?*"

What a sermon He began to preach unto them! The Perfect Preacher and a congregation of two! He began with the books of Moses, explaining all the sacrifices and how they pointed to Christ. He told them of the LAW and how it was honoured and fulfilled by Christ. He told them of the prophets and how they wrote of Christ. Surely He must have spoken a good deal about the prophecy of Isaiah and the fifty-third chapter. How He opened the SCRIPTURES FOR THEM! He made everything so plain to their hearts. Never before had they seen such a fullness in the Scriptures. They began to see the events of the last three days with wonder and holy awe. What a change had taken place in their countenance! The stranger had turned their sorrow into joy. Their night of weeping was forgotten. The LIGHT of day poured into their souls. What a difference the Stranger had made!

You can read about this in Luke chapter 24 verses 13 to 28.

QUESTIONS:

1. To what village were they journeying?
2. What was the name of one of the travellers?
3. What did they say they trusted Jesus should have done?
(2 words)
4. What did the Stranger call them?
5. What did the Stranger open for them?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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. Return to heaven.
2. Brethren.
3. In Galilee.
4. Peter.
5. A sinful man.

G. L. TenBroeke

GOD'S BIDDING

Our young friends, Tom, Megan and Jessica Aldridge, have spent some time discussing animals and birds which moved at God's bidding. Here are the examples they have thought of in the order they have given them. Well done!

Noah: the animals going into the ark.

Jonah: the big fish swallowing him.

Elijah: the ravens feeding him.

Elisha: bears destroy the children that mocked him.

Daniel: God shut the lions' mouths in the den.

Balam: the ass speaking to him.

The Ark of the Covenant: taken back by the milch-kine. ...*(They are cows with young calves. Ed.)*

Jonah: the worm smiting the gourd so that it withered.

Moses: the quails being sent for food.

Egyptian plagues: frogs, locusts, flies and lice.

Jesus riding on the colt on which never man sat.

Absalom: the mule walking under the tree, which caught his hair.

Legion: the swine running into the sea.

Moses: the serpents sent to bite the Israelites.

Abraham: the ram caught in a thicket by his horns.

Peter: the fishes caught in the net, and the coin in the fish's mouth.

GRANDFATHER'S YOUTH (IV)

Part four of a narrative in which Wm. A Brakel was used as a means in God's hand for the conversion of a young man.

"When I was home again, something happened to me that you will think it a very strange incident. Of course, I told my father and mother what had taken place on the voyage, and they shuddered at the thought that I had but narrowly escaped becoming a slave. I, myself, did not give that so much thought, but I did think often of the scare I had when I saw the seed which I thought was gunpowder on the floor. When I spoke about that, the chills ran up and down my back. That fright became stronger and stronger, so that I not only lost my former desire to go to sea, but I also firmly resolved not to go to sea again. When therefore after two months, Long Lawrence asked me to go with him again, I firmly refused. That surprised him, for he meant well with me, but I remained firm in my decision. My parents discussed the matter seriously, but could not change my decision. At last they said: 'Very well, we will not compel you. Doing something against your will is not a good thing. You may stay here.'

"A month later, my father died suddenly. Mother was left with six children, of whom I was the eldest. What could we do? I had not learned a trade. 'Do you know what, Mother?' I said. 'I do not want to be a burden to you. I will go to Holland. They often told me about that country on the boat. Every year thousands of ships come there; there is much trade and everyone can earn much money. I shall try to find work there, and if I succeed, perhaps I can take care of you, too.'"

"But weren't you afraid to go alone to a strange country?"

"No, John, many of our young people do emigrate. Besides, hunger is a sharp sword. Mother did not like it very well, but could suggest nothing better. The minister and a few other good people gave me money to travel, so on a Monday morning I said goodbye to my mother, and my brothers and sisters and started on the trip. All my possessions, besides what I wore, were a change of clothes and a few dollars.

“Rostock is very far from the Netherlands, so you understand that in order to go there on the money I had, I had to be careful to waste none of it. Happily it was summer and the farmers often gave me a place to sleep for nothing, and sometimes food besides. Thus I went on day after day, from the Baltic Sea to the North Sea, until I reached Arnhem, the first city I reached in the Netherlands. I soon noticed that I could earn nothing there, but must be further in Holland. So I hired myself out to a German captain from Cologne, who was going to Rotterdam. In that city I hoped to earn what I needed.”

“Did you succeed, Grandfather?”

“You shall hear,” said the old man, “but some other time. I must stop now, but I won’t forget to continue.”

Safely Landed

“And now, John,” thus Grandfather spoke two weeks later, when his grandson was with him again, “I shall continue so that you may know how it happened that I stayed in the Netherlands.

“The captain, who had hired me, had to unload at Rotterdam. On a Saturday afternoon, I remember it very well, we were busy unloading. We were on the Meuse, near the coast, and the river was full of ships, yachts, sailboats and rowboats, for it was beautiful weather.

“All at once I heard an awful cry. I turned around and saw a small boat lying upside down. A large vessel, as I noticed later, had run into it. Two men, or rather boys, lay in the water. I noticed immediately that they could swim, but were looking about anxiously. All the people were shouting, for another person was also in the water, but I could not see him, because being unable to swim, he had sunk. Those who had seen him fall said he must have gotten under the ship.

“When I was a young boy I had learned to swim very well, and I could dive like a duck. Without taking much time to think, I took off my shirt, jumped into the Meuse and dived under. At first I could see nothing, but soon I noticed a dark

body that seemed to be struggling. With much effort I grabbed it; it was the missing boy. As you know, it is easy to drag things in water, and so I succeeded in coming out from under the ship and above water with my load. It was high time, for the boy I had rescued was almost dead, and I had almost choked. Drowning is really choking, nothing else.

“In the meantime, five or six boats had come to the place, and soon I, with the rescued boy, had been rowed to the shore. I wanted to return to my boat immediately, but a well-dressed man held me back, and said something that I did not understand. I answered in German, and immediately he spoke in the same language: ‘Just come with me, I will speak to your captain.’

“Half an hour later I was in the most beautiful room I had ever seen. The cabin of Long Lawrence was nothing compared to this. After I had been given clean, dry clothes, and had eaten a more delicious meal than I had ever had, either at home or on board, a gentleman, the same one who had spoken to me, came into the room. With him was a lady somewhat older than he. They were the father and the mother of the boy I had saved. I shall not tell you everything they said. They thanked me a hundred times. Also the doctor who had been called to see the boy had to examine me, even though I was in a good condition, and so on. I had a very pleasant afternoon, but the best was yet to come. When I was ready to go, the gentleman asked me what my trade was. I answered that I had none as yet, and told him my whole story.

‘Can you write a letter in German?’ he asked.

‘Yes,’ I said. ‘Well, then,’ he said, ‘here is a pen and paper. Write in German what has happened this afternoon. Then I want to read it pretty soon.’

“He left and I went to work, while the servant brought me some bread and a drink. How glad I was that I had studied so well that last year! The Lord had guided me and cared for me, although I did not know it.

(To be continued)

CAMELS IN THE BIBLE

There have been many news stories in the past weeks suggesting that an archaeological discovery proves error in Genesis, because domesticated camels were not in the Levant (Canaan/Israel and the surrounding area) until after King David's time. But if we examine the actual Biblical, archaeological, and historical evidence, we get a much better picture, and it is one that supports the historicity of the Bible.

The source of these claims is a 2013 paper entitled "The introduction of domestic camels to the Southern Levant: Evidence from the Aravah valley." The paper presents the following:

Most scholars agree that camels were not used as pack animals before the 12th century BC.

But new evidence suggests that camels were only common as domesticated animals somewhere between 1000-600 BC.

A site in the Aravah valley yielded camel bones only from the 10th and 9th centuries BC, with no evidence of camels earlier or later.

Camel bones dated earlier than this are judged to be wild camels based on a number of factors, and the accuracy of the dating is brought into question.

The conclusion that sceptics and the media draw is that the Bible is anachronistic when it mentions camels in Abraham's day, and so Genesis must have been written long after the events it portrays.

The Biblical Evidence

The first mention of camels in Scripture is in Genesis 12. 16, after Pharaoh took Sarai into his palace: *"And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels."* Job, widely regarded as living around the same time as Abram, had 3,000 camels at the beginning of the Book, and twice as many at the end. He lived in Uz, which was in Arabia.

So the Biblical evidence is that there were camels in Arabia around 2000 BC, and that Pharaoh had some, too. This

matches what we see from the archaeological record. A paper entitled: "The Camel in Ancient Egypt" stated: "The proposed time of camel entry into Egypt after its domestication in Arabia was found between 2500 and 1400 BC." So not only did domesticated camels exist, they were in Egypt when Abraham was there. So this fits the Biblical account perfectly.

Interpreting the evidence

So we know that there *were* domesticated camels in Arabia and Egypt in Abraham's day. And the Bible says that Abraham got his camels from Pharaoh. So why would there be no evidence of camels in Canaan for nearly 1,000 years?

For one thing, perhaps they were not yet common enough in Canaan to leave the sort of evidence that the study was looking for. If they were relegated to a few princes wealthy enough to import exotic pack animals, then we would not expect their bones to be all over the place.

For another, it is common to overestimate the amount of physical evidence available from that far back. The further back in time one tries to investigate, the more evidence has been destroyed. These archaeologists (and the breathless media even more) seem to have forgotten the principle that *absence of evidence is not evidence of absence*.

Archaeologists have not yet learned their lesson

There is a long and glorious history of archaeologists claiming that what they see out at their dig sites contradicts the Bible, only to be proved wrong as later discoveries come to light. However, the evidence to disprove this spurious claim existed long before this latest argument was put forward.

The lesson from this and similar stories is clear: the Bible is reliable and trustworthy, and any evidence that seems to call the Biblical record into question will, when interpreted accurately, fit with the Bible's historical record.

Creation Resources Trust

The verdict of history attests the enduring character of the Word of God.

“OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES AND SUCKLINGS!”

A few years ago when we were on holiday, we intended to go to a local chapel on the Sunday that we had never before attended. We put the post code into the Sat Nav on the Sunday morning and left in plenty of time. The Sat Nav directed us to the town and took us to the postcode and told us we had reached our destination. We could not see the chapel at that point but assumed we must be very close. We drove around for at least 20 minutes looking for it, even asking pedestrians for directions, to no avail.

Eventually we ended up in a retail car park with only a few minutes to go until the service started and quite a way from where we thought the chapel ought to have been, so decided we had better go back to where we were staying and maybe try again in the evening.

While my wife and I were discussing this, our six-year-old son called from the back: “Why don’t we pray to God to show us.” I didn’t know what to say as I thought, “Well I’m sure we won’t find the chapel now, as we’ve looked everywhere, and I don’t want him to be disappointed.” What a lesson we were about to learn! He said again we must ask God to show us as He knew where the chapel was. So I agreed and we prayed a simple prayer together: “Lord, please show us where the chapel is,” while we were stopped at some traffic lights. We drove back up the road and found ourselves driving down a side-road we had previously thought was the wrong way, but there was the chapel right in front of us. We arrived literally seconds before the service started just as a member of the church was closing the front door!

What a humbling lesson! How we painfully have to prove the unbelief of our hearts. We so often limit what God can do even in simple things in our everyday lives. It is so easy to make our plans and assume everything looks so straightforward that we do not think to ask for the Lord’s help and guidance in the little details of our lives. How we need more God-given, simple but real faith. We sadly seem to prove

again and again the unbelief of our hearts and our **complete** dependence on the Holy Spirit's quickening influence in our souls and lives every hour of every day.

Contributed

HOW PRAYER AVERTED A DUEL

In former days, it was a deadly practice amongst soldiers to settle quarrels with a duel. In mediaeval times this would have been with swords, but later on guns were known to have been used. Often this resulted in the death of one or even both of the combatants. It was for obvious reasons outlawed, and became a military offence to engage in a duel.

In the time of our account, swords were still being used. Two young men had had a vicious quarrel, and one challenged the other to a duel to settle the difference, even though this was illegal at that time. But to refuse to accept such a challenge was counted cowardice amongst the soldiers, so often it was at night time these duels took place. So when the rest of the regiment had settled down for the night, these two assailants made their way into a field some way from the camp to settle their differences in a bloodthirsty way!

At the very same time as they were hastening towards the appointed place, another soldier of a very different character was making his way also to the same field. He had been lately called by God's grace, and not finding a quiet place in the camp to pray, had determined to go into the open field and there pour out his soul to God. On his knees he confessed his sins, sought for mercy, not forgetting to add the note of thanksgiving to His God for all His benefits.

How surprised were the two assailants to hear this voice of prayer, although they could not see the praying man! When he had finished, they looked at each other, all their hatred for each other gone. They shook each other by the hand, and went back to their camp, different men.

Selected

REMINISCENCES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

From "Friendly Companion" May 1915

Mr. Badderley, a Leicester schoolmaster, received a letter from a former pupil, a lance-corporal at the front, who writes: "One of our horses is a candidate for the Victoria Cross. It is a true story of animal devotion. The troops were charging at the time, and as one rider fell from his horse, wounded, the animal picked him up by his clothes with his mouth, and carried him away to safety, where other men of the regiment were resting."
– *London Paper*

Also in 1915, the scholars of Lakenheath Baptist Chapel Sunday school gave up their prizes so that the money could be donated "to alleviate suffering caused by the Great War." A card is still in existence, with a Union Jack in the top left hand corner, headed Lakenheath Baptist Chapel Sunday school, and it is dated: "13th Anniversary, January 1915." It reads: "I, Hubert Coleman, a Scholar in the above, do hereby forego my Prize that the cost of same may be given to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales' Fund, to alleviate the suffering caused by the Great War now raging in Europe." Across the bottom is printed: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor." In the May 1915 copy of *The Friendly Companion* it is stated that the sum raised by this was £3, "to which £3.15s (£3.75) was (added) from the Singers' Christmas Gift."

From "The Friendly Companion" May 1916

In the report on Lakenheath Baptist Chapel Sunday School, we find: "The scholars, having gone without their summer treat, the amount of it (£3) helped those in the village to send out parcels to our lads and prisoners of war; also Bibles and Testaments for soldiers and sailors, and at Christmas a parcel of stationery, chocolate, etc., to each of our lads at the front. 5s. (25p) was sent to Mr. Catt for the Bible Fund. The thank-offering taken in school on the last Sabbath of the year, being 16s. 6d. (82.5p), was sent to the Relief of the Children of Serbia."

Contributed

THE FOUR PLANTS

A teacher was once taking his students through a forest showing them the wonders of God's creation. Suddenly he stopped and asked one of his class to stoop down and pull up a little seedling which was just appearing above the ground. The young lad did as he was told. Then the teacher pointed to a seedling which was more established and had grown some centimetres up from the ground. Again the lad was asked to pull this one up, which he did, needing a little more effort than with the first plant. Pointing to a shrub which grew alongside, the teacher then asked the boy to pull this up. This needed all the strength the lad had, but eventually after sweating and tugging, the shrub was loosened from the earth and success followed. "Now," said the teacher, "try your strength against this full grown tree!" The lad's arms could hardly get around the trunk, let alone loosen its deep roots from the earth.

"Now," said the teacher to his boys, "this is just what happens with bad habits. If they are noticed and conquered early, it is much easier to deal with, than with habits which have taken root over many years. Divine power is needed in each case, but the conflict with self is much greater if bad habits are left to mature into fuller grown sins!"

Selected

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **HARRY DADSWELL** and **FREYA ROSIER**.*

A Timely Caution

Our friend, Mr. N. H. Roe, Pastor at Ossett Chapel, has kindly pointed out that Dr. Grattan Guinness, quoted in the March *Friendly Companion* in the article, "As Birds Flying" held extreme views on other points which cannot be supported by Scripture. We are extremely grateful to Mr. Roe for his timely caution in bringing this to our attention.

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (V)**

Let us look further into our original Scripture in Genesis 1. 4 *"And God saw the light, that it was good."* Everything that God does is good because God is essentially good in Himself. The name God in English is derived from a Saxon word which means good. So all that God created was good, as it is recorded here in Genesis 1 again and again: *"And God saw that it was good."* All that God made was as pure as God is pure: it was Satan, the prince of darkness, that introduced sin and darkness into all this pure creation that God had made.

We can never really plumb the depths of the fall of man into sin; he sunk immediately into awful darkness and the terrible bondage of sin and Satan's power. Man is totally incapable of rising from this terrible fall. Before the great flood in the days of Noah, a flood which was the fruit of man's awful sin and apostasy from God, God declared: *"And 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. And it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them."* Genesis 6. 5-7. This Scripture reveals the awful effects of the fall and the total corruption of man; it also reveals the wrath of God against sinful corrupt man. My beloved friends, that wrath remains unto this day: God never changes.

But there is a glorious light that shines in the following verse: *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord"* (Genesis 6. 8). Grace means, the free unmerited favour of Almighty God, and it is only found in one place: the glorious Person of the Son of God manifest in the flesh, Jesus Christ, who said, *"I am the Light of the world."* This wonderful grace reached Noah's heart. If it were not for this grace, that terrible flood

would have been the end of mankind, and there would have been no Jesus Christ, no hope, no mercy, no light, no peace, but for this wonderful manifestation of the grace of God to Noah.

Noah became a preacher of righteousness and built an ark of gopher wood. That ark typifies Jesus Christ: Noah and all his house were saved, and the seed of the woman promised in Genesis 3 would be born according to God's promise, which is why Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. The foundation of grace is Jesus Christ and Him crucified: here and here alone God can be just and the justifier of poor lost sinners. *"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God"* (Romans 3. 20-25). The term *"the forbearance of God"* means, the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Let us continue with this thought, *"And God saw the light, that it was good."* Consider those sacred words of grace: *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"* (2 Corinthians 4. 6).

We read of the Lord Jesus Christ when He was baptized by John the Baptist in the river Jordan: *"Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased"* (Luke 3. 21-22). We have clearly revealed in this Scripture the glorious doctrine of the

Trinity; the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, being baptized; the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove; and the eternal Father speaking from heaven: *"In Thee I am well pleased."* *"And God saw the light, that it was good."* The prophet of the LORD prophesies of Jesus Christ: *"The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable"* (Isaiah 42. 21.) How this reveals to us the divine approbation resting upon Jesus Christ in all that He said and did, regarding this Holy Law of the Ten Commandments which in His holy sinless life He honoured and magnified. Let us just listen to the words of Jesus Christ when He was here on earth: *"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). Jesus Christ is the only Man ever to fulfil this holy righteous law. Jesus Christ is our example; may we follow in His steps, seeking His grace, magnifying and honouring that holy law: *"And God saw the light, that it was good."*

(To be continued)

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about NOAH AND THE FLOOD. Except where stated, references are to the Book of Genesis. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 98 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. "And Noah walked with God" (6. 9). Of whom else do we read that he "walked with God"? (5. 22)

2. How old was Noah when the flood was upon the earth? (7. 6)
3. God commanded Noah to make an ark. What was it made of and how was it made waterproof? (6. 14)
4. Which birds did Noah send out of the ark to see if the flood waters were abated? (8. 7-12)
5. What did God send after the flood as a token that He would never flood the whole world again? (9. 12-17)
6. What else, beside the rain, contributed to the flood? (7, 11)
7. Where did the ark come to rest after the flood? (8)
8. What did God command Noah to take with him into the ark? (6)
9. Jesus likened the days before the flood to those before the time when He will come again to judge the earth. What did He say people would be doing? (Matthew 24)
10. Peter in his Epistles gives two examples of God's preservation of His people in the midst of general destruction. One example was Noah's flood. What was the other example?

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS

1. Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.
2. "Mercies of the God of heaven," that Daniel and his friends might not perish in the destruction of the wise men of Babylon.
3. King Nebuchadnezzar.
4. The king threw Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego into the burning, fiery furnace.
5. Four men loose, walking unharmed in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth was like the Son of God.
6. Pride. (Daniel 4. 30, 37, 5. 20)
7. "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting." (Daniel 5. 27)
8. Daniel was thrown into a den of lions. God shut the lions' mouths. (Daniel 6. 16, 22)
9. God had promised by Jeremiah the prophet to "accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem." (Daniel 9. 2, Jeremiah 25. 11; 29. 10)
10. Noah, Job. (Ezekiel 14. 14, 20)

Contributed

A STRONG AND PERFECT PLEA

This hymn was written by Chartist Bancroft (1841-1923) in 1863. She was the daughter of a Church of Ireland Minister and apparently this was included in Bishop Ryle's hymnbook (Spiritual Songs). It was given the title "The Advocate."

Before the throne of God above
 I have a strong and perfect plea.
A great High Priest whose name is Love
 Who ever lives and pleads for me.
My name is graven on His hands,
 My name is written on His heart.
I know that while in heaven He stands
 No tongue can bid me thence depart.

When Satan tempts me to despair
 And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look and see Him there
 Who made an end of all my sin.
Because the sinless Saviour died
 My sinful soul is counted free.
For God the just is satisfied
 To look on Him and pardon me.

Behold Him there the risen Lamb,
 My perfect spotless righteousness,
The great unchangeable I AM,
 The King of glory and of grace,
One in Himself I cannot die,
 My soul is purchased by His blood,
My life is hid with Christ on high,
 With Christ my Saviour and my God!

The Friendly Companion



The Planet Saturn

“When I consider Thy heavens, the work of
Thy fingers, the moon and the stars,
which Thou hast ordained ...”
(Psalm 8. 3.)

June 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

This month, those of our readers who live in the Northern Hemisphere are approaching the longest day of the year on June 21st, whilst our friends in the Southern Hemisphere are heading towards the shortest day of their year. From that date onwards as the tilt of the earth in relation to the sun returns back again, so days shorten in the North and lengthen in the South of the globe. In this way God, whose creative work this is, ensures a balance of light and warmth over the space of a year in each part of the world. None of this is the product of random events or chance, but rather is the handiwork of an all-wise God; the work of His fingers, as described by David in Psalm 8.

What lessons do this yearly change of light and warmth teach us?

Firstly, they are a reminder to us of the changing times which should be a voice to us to remember that each successive year brings us nearer to eternity. Time, like a one-way street, only moves forward, carrying us along its stream towards an eternal state. May we be asking God to prepare us for that great change which must come upon us all, when we are called to stand before Him. Jesus said: *"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not pass away."*

Secondly, it is an equally powerful reminder of an unchanging God, who faithfully and perfectly repeats this miracle upon the earth each year. Men can explain the laws which determine these continuing movements of the earth, but we must remember that these very physical laws are God's creation, and continue in His providence until time shall be no more.

Thirdly, how kind God is to look after His earth and those who dwell upon it, to balance creation so that each part receives what is needful for its continuance.

Finally, let these repeated lessons be an encouragement to those who fear God, that however dark and cold the winter may

have been (and our friends in North America had an exceptionally cold winter this year), the returning strength of the sun brings with it the spring and summer in due course. So it is with God's children. Sometimes their life seems to be in a winter time, but God has promised that the spring-time of the singing of birds will come, and a time of rejoicing is at hand. As Jesus said to His disciples before His own dark path of suffering and grief: *"And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."*

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Did you know that Saturn, reputed by evolutionists to be 4.5 billion years old, is "much brighter than expected for a planet of its age" and that this is "a question that has puzzled scientists since the late sixties"?

Hardly surprising if you did not know of this, because such confessions of evolutionary-age "puzzles" are not generally publicised until or unless an evolutionist can come up with a plausible-sounding "explanation."

Hence the fanfare heralding a recent paper in *Nature Geoscience* which has attempted to explain the mystery, *yet doggedly keeping to the long-age paradigm*. That is, evolutionists are steadfastly avoiding any inference that the reason Saturn *looks* young, is that it *is*! (Just as the Bible says.)

Here is the University of Exeter's Professor Gilles Chabrier's summary of the "explanation":

"Scientists have been wondering for years if Saturn was using an additional source of energy to look so bright, but instead our calculations show that Saturn appears young because it cannot cool down. Instead of heat being transported throughout the planet by large scale (convective) motions, as previously thought, it must be partly transferred by diffusion across different layers of gas inside Saturn. These separate layers

effectively insulate the planet and prevent heat from radiating out efficiently. This keeps Saturn warm and bright.”

Really? But why should Saturn be so different from the other gas giants?

Such a *foolish bias* (Psalm 14. 1; 53. 1, cf. Psalm 19. 1) in the face of Saturn’s brightness and many more pointers to its youthfulness, seems absurd – but the Bible explains *that*, too (2 Thessalonians 2. 10-11).

Creation

A COVENANT OF SALT

The Scriptures tell us that when God spoke to Hagar about the birth of her son, Ishmael, He told her in Genesis 16. 12, that he and his descendents would be wild by nature ‘their hand against every man, and every man’s hand against them.’ While it would undoubtedly be wrong to stereotype every descendent of Ishmael in this way, as the Lord has had, and still has His people among those nations, yet their history bears out the prophecy given to Hagar, even to this day. The conflicts in the Middle East are a sad witness to this truth.

The Bedouin people, especially, can be very hospitable and are noted for their kindness to strangers whilst under the roof of their tents. One thing which is still in existence today is the way in which they will honour a covenant of salt. Whereas in common with all fallen mankind there are those who deal deceitfully, but, in Bible days, if ever a covenant of salt was made with a Bedouin, the oath was sacred to them and they would not break it under any circumstances. It was made by eating salt with the chief of the tribe, on the blade of his knife!

This reminds us of the greater faithfulness of God in His covenant promises, which He will never break nor permit them to be broken.

“Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David” (Isaiah 55. 3).

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**THE ARK IS TAKEN**

There was a battle between Israel and the Philistines, and many men of Israel were killed. The elders of Israel said: *“Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh...”* They thought the presence of the ark would save them from their enemies. God had helped in many other battles, and He was able to help now. Yet, it seems they did not ask God for help.

The ark was taken out of the tabernacle by Hophni and Phinehas, the two wicked sons of Eli. As it came into the camp, the men of Israel shouted for joy, causing the Philistines to fear. But God was not with Israel in the battle. Thousands were slain, and the ark of God was taken by the Philistines. The two sons of Eli were killed also. What a sad day it was for Israel!

Eli was a very old man and *“his heart trembled for the ark of God.”* He sat by the wayside, waiting for news of the battle. When he heard that the ark of God was taken by the enemy, he fell back off his seat and died. The same day a son was born to the wife of Phinehas. She named him Ichabod, saying: *“The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband.”*

QUESTIONS:

1. Where was the ark taken out of? (2 words)
2. By whom was the ark of God taken in the battle?
3. What was the name of the son that was born?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (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. Eli.
2. His name.
3. *“Speak; for Thy servant beareth.”*
Contributed

*“The glory
is departed
from Israel:
for the
ark of God
is taken.”*

*1 Samuel
4. 22.*

BIBLE LESSONS

ABIDE WITH US

The road to Emmaus had never seemed such a short distance. The words of the Stranger in opening the Scriptures had carried them along. Before they were aware of it, they had arrived at the village.

The Stranger seemed intent on going further, but Cleopas and his friend constrained Him saying: *"Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent."* They had enjoyed the company and conversation of the Stranger and hoped to hear more. They wanted Him to spend the night with them. As last He was prevailed upon and entered the house with them.

After their journey and all the events of the day, they would have a quick meal and retire for the evening. Soon the meal was ready, and they sat down to eat. Once again their attention was fixed upon the Stranger as He took the bread and blessed it. How different was His way from ours! We can only ask for a blessing upon our food. He pronounced a blessing upon it. No doubt that filled the two disciples with wonder.

Having blessed the bread, the Stranger brake it and gave it to them. This too, must have filled them with wonder. Was this the usual way of a guest? As in our day, the head of the house would divide the meal and give it to the other guests. But the Stranger acted as the host rather than a guest. We wonder if they had seen Him do this when He fed the multitudes.

As He broke the bread, suddenly their eyes were opened and they knew Him. It was the Lord Jesus Himself. Perhaps they may have seen the scars in His hands. They knew it was their Master. Oh the things they desired to ask Him! But before they could say anything more, He vanished out of their sight. What a long visit it had been compared to what the women had! But it was so soon ended.

For a few moments they sat remembering all that Jesus had spoken. They said one to another: *"Did not our heart burn*

within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" No doubt they felt ashamed of all their unbelief.

Their hearts were so full that they could hardly contain it. They had to tell their friends the wonderful news. They now experienced what David wrote in the Psalms: *"I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart."* They could not wait until morning. That same hour they started back to Jerusalem. Although they must have walked in the dark, they hastened along. Even the return trip went quickly as they rehearsed all the lessons Jesus had given them.

Moreover, they must have chided themselves many times because they did not know Him while He walked with them. How wonderful it was to see Him in all those Scriptures which He had opened to them! They would perhaps remember how Jesus had told them and the other disciples: *"Search the Scriptures; for ... they are they which testify of Me."* Most of all, for a brief moment their faith was turned to sight.

Arriving in Jerusalem, they found the disciples and others gathered together. As soon as they entered the room, the disciples excitedly told them: *"The Lord is risen indeed."* They added further that He had appeared unto Simon (Peter).

When Cleopas and his friend finally had opportunity, they told of their journey and how Jesus had opened the Scriptures to them. How the others must have listened as they told what Jesus had done on the way to Emmaus and especially how He was revealed to them in the breaking of the bread.

You can read about this in Luke chapter 24 verses 28 to 35.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the Stranger seem intent on doing?
2. What did they say to constrain Him to stay? (14 words)
3. What did He first do as He took the bread?
4. What happened suddenly as He broke the bread? (8 words)
5. What did He make their heart do while He talked by the way?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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. Emmaus. | 2. Cleopas. |
| 3. Redeemed Israel. | 4. Fools. |
| 5. The Scriptures. | |

G. L. TenBroeke

GRANDFATHER'S YOUTH (V)

Part five of a narrative in which Wm. A Brakel was used as a means in God's hand for the conversion of a young man.

"A few hours later the gentleman returned; I was finished. He took the paper and read it slowly and attentively a few times and then said: 'That was well done, my friend. I had not expected that you could write so well. You have saved my son, and that is more than I can ever repay you. If you want to stay with me, then with God's help I will do my best for you so that you will have no regrets, and you will find what you are seeking in this country.'

"I did not know what to say, and agreed in silence. But when he wanted to add a gift of money, I refused. I had to accept, however, a new suit that the woman had hastily bought for me. When, dressed as a gentleman, I was again walking the streets of the strange city, which, however, I had begun to love, tears of happiness and thankfulness came to my eyes. But I forgot to thank Him who for the second time had spared and saved me. It seemed as if in this new, free life I was enjoying in this strange land, I began to forget the Lord entirely, although He had cared for me so faithfully! But He did not forget me.

"The very next morning I left the service of the captain and entered that of Mr. Maetsens, that being the name of my new master. I was placed in his office, and for the first few days I only did errands, received letters, copied this or that, etc. Although I was unaccustomed to such work, especially sitting for so long, I soon became used to it. Since no one could

write and understand German as well as I, I was soon given the responsibility of a part of the work dealing with the German trade. After a month or so I felt perfectly at ease in my work, and so the former cabin boy became an office worker. It was not a bad change, especially since I was very well paid, I think more out of gratitude than because of my work. But, however that may be, after only six months I was able to send my mother in Rostock twenty crowns (about \$7.00) and I still remember how for half an hour I cried and sobbed as I read the letter she wrote after receiving the money.

“It was good that I received that letter. You must know that although everyone called me a well-behaved young man, and my employer was very well satisfied with me, I had roamed farther and farther away from the Lord. My only thought was to earn money and become a rich man. I did not consider that Scripture says that they who would be such, fall into temptation and a snare. My employer was a God-fearing man; he never worked on Sunday. I, however, often quietly took some office work with me to finish in my room on Sunday, or I used the Lord’s Day to count my money, and to figure out how much more I could earn. I never went to church ...”

“But you could not understand the minister either,” said John.

“That was not the reason,” spoke Grandfather, “because there also was a German church, and besides, I had begun to speak the Dutch language quite well. No, I just did not care about going.

“On the fifth of August was my employer’s birthday. There was to be a large party to which all the employees were invited, so I too. There were also several guests, and among them was one I and many others shall never forget. It was the Rev. W.A. Brakel, a man highly respected by all people in Rotterdam.”

“Is that the same minister who wrote those two thick books that you often read in, Grandfather? With that picture in it?”

“Yes, John. I see you have seen the picture of Brakel in this book, and so you know how he looked. That respected

minister was also there. We heard the prayer he raised for our employer and his wife and children, and all those in his home. A little later when I was sitting on the garden bench for a moment, Father Brakel, as we called him, came also, and sat right beside me. I was not happy about this, for since I did not love the Lord, I did not love His servants, either.

“Soon we were busily conversing with each other, and to my surprise I noticed that he was not a strict, tiresome person as I had expected him to be, but one with whom it was a pleasure to talk. He was kind enough to speak German when he noticed my difficulties with the Dutch language.”

“What did he ask you, Grandfather?”

“Oh, all kinds of questions, John. I have forgotten many of them, but I have not forgotten one of his last questions. That was about how I spent my Sundays. ‘You have no work, then,’ he said, ‘and come to church faithfully. Can you understand a Dutch sermon?’

“I became embarrassed, and wanted to lie about it. Happily I did not do that, however, but only told him that I was often too tired on Sundays to go to church in the morning, and in the afternoon I loved to take a walk.

“Dear friend,” replied the minister, ‘you do as so many do. You sleep too long to attend the morning service, you eat too long to attend the afternoon service, and you walk too long to attend the evening service. But consider well, there will come a time in which you shall need something else and something more than sleeping or eating or walking. Three times as you told me the Lord has shown you His favour in a special manner. But if you forget Him, He shall finally also leave you.’

“Then he arose and went into the house; I followed him. I did not enjoy the rest of the evening, for I could not forget his words. I had to admit that he was right, but my corrupt heart was still so full of the things of the world, that I tried to forget Father Brakel and to pay no heed to what he had said.”

(To be concluded)

THE KAISER WILHELM'S VISIT TO JERUSALEM IN 1898

General Allenby's humble entrance into Jerusalem on foot when he dismounted from his horse and walked through the Jaffa Gate with his officers and men, was referred to in the *March Friendly Companion*.

How different was the Kaiser Wilhelm II whose pride and self-importance would not let him do this when he visited Jerusalem in 1898. Before his visit all the gates of Jerusalem had actual gates. However, the Kaiser was a tall man who rode on a tall horse with an enormous spiked helmet on his head called a "piklehaube." This made it impossible for him to ride under the Jaffa Gate into the city without bending his proud head: "*Woe to the crown of pride*" (Isaiah 28. 1). He prevailed upon his city hosts to take the gate down, a gate that was built by Suleiman the Magnificent in the 16th century: a great piece of architecture. They complied. All the gates of the city have actual gates except for the Jaffa Gate. Sadly, the First World War hinged on the ego of a man who made the Muslims take down an ancient Jaffa Gate in the city of Jerusalem so it could fit his pompous head: "... *those that walk in pride He is able to abase*" (Daniel 4. 37).

Following a visit in 1889 to Turkey, the Kaiser developed an unhealthy enthusiasm for Islam. After his visit to Jerusalem in 1898 he wrote to his cousin Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, saying: "My personal feeling in leaving the holy city was that I felt profoundly ashamed before the Muslims and that if I had come there without any religion at all I certainly would have turned to Islam!" Strangely in the *Friendly Companion* for July 1910, the Kaiser is commended for saying: "The Bible is to me the source from which I draw strength and light." Oh that men would acknowledge God and fear Him! However, judgment is God's role, not ours. "*Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart*" (Jeremiah 49. 16). "*They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him*" (Titus 1. 16).

A. G. Randalls

“THEM THAT HONOUR ME, I WILL HONOUR”

Griffith John of Ynysyanddy, Merionethshire in Wales was a zealous Methodist, who kept his house open for religious services, and occasionally preached himself. But the meetings at Griffith's house were frequently disturbed by the clergyman of the parish, who came in, making a great uproar, scolding by name those of his parishioners whom he found present, and occasionally making havoc among the plates and dishes on the kitchen shelves. On one occasion he entered during a prayer meeting. A young man was at that moment engaged in prayer, and the parson, recognising his voice, shouted aloud: “Is it you, Jack?” and forcing his way to the worshipper, roughly grasped his arm.

Griffith John was a man of great physical strength, but remarkable for his good temper. This, however, was more than he could bear. He laid hold of the clergyman's arm with a mighty grip, dragged him out of the house, and flung him on the dunghill opposite the door. The clergyman did not care to encounter that sort of thing any more, and accordingly changed his tactics. He drew up a complaint in which Griffith John was represented as disturbing the peace of the parish and opposing the church and the laws of the land. To this document he procured the signatures of some of his parishioners, and it was sent to the poor Methodist's landlord, Mr. Price of Rhiwlas, near Bala, where it promised to produce the desired result, for Griffith John immediately received notice to quit his farm.

Griffith John, understanding full well from whence the storm came, had a reference in his favour drawn up and signed by a number of his neighbours, and with this he resolved to go to Rhiwlas to see Mr. Price for himself. He earnestly begged to be allowed to retain his little farm, but his master replied: “You shall not, Griffith, for I find that you disturb the neighbourhood and prevent people from going to church.”

“In truth, Master,” said Griffith, “I am not doing any such thing.”

“It is useless you denying,” said the master, “and you shall not on any account live on my estate, for do you not hold the

dark prayer, and bring men and women together to do mischief?"

"We are doing nothing of the kind, sir," was Griffith's reply.

"What then? You are in the habit of meeting in the evenings?"

"Yes, sir; we do sometimes meet after the work of the day is over."

"And what is that you do in those meetings?"

"I will tell you, sir," said Griffith. "We read the Bible and sing psalms. We exhort one another to be honest and truthful, and to pay all rents and taxes. We pray for the Church, the King, and our country. This is indeed, sir, what we do, besides exhorting each other to cease from sin and to seek the favour of God and everlasting life; and since we do no injury to any man, I hope, sir, you will allow me to remain in my farm."

"Well, Griffith," said the master, "if you will promise me that you will give up those meetings you shall remain."

"Master," said Griffith, in a determined tone, "I cannot do that. If you were to give me the half of your estate I could not make that promise. No never."

Mr. Price, who had been for some time melting, was now completely vanquished, and, bursting into tears, said: "Go home, Griffith, go home. You shall keep your farm; and when you come to Bala to attend your Association, remember to bring your horse to Rhiwlas."

From that day, Griffith John was a great favourite with his master. On one occasion when he wanted to see him on business, Mr. Price was attending a magistrates' meeting at Bala, but finding his tenant was waiting outside, he went out to speak with him. On his return he was asked by one of his brother magistrates who his visitor was, and he answered that he was a preacher. "Is he a great preacher?" one of the bench asked. "I do not know about that," replied Mr. Price, "but I know one thing about him – he is a godly man."

Selected

PEER PRESSURE AND HOW TO RESIST IT

The Book of Proverbs in the Bible has a lot of advice, particularly directed at young people. Written by the wise man, Solomon, it is full of instruction for all of us, but a lot of it is directed particularly at young folk – like you!

In the very first chapter he deals with the problem of peer pressure, and temptations to follow others into sin. What does he say? *“My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, Come with us ... walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path.”* Is that not wise advice for each of you?

This was illustrated recently by a very sad event in Scotland. A young lad in high school, sixteen years old, from a church-going family, attending a church school, a top-grade student with a nice circle of friends – he was enticed, or tempted, by some other boys from another school who were not his usual companions. “Come with us,” they said – come to a big party, a “rave.” He knew his parents would not approve of this, so he did not tell them the truth about where he was going. What happened?

At that party were some wicked men who tried to push drugs on these young people. This lad gave in to the temptation and the pressure – just this once, he probably thought. He tried one illegal drug, and his body took a very bad reaction to it. He collapsed and was rushed to hospital, unconscious. His parents received a visit from the police at 5 a.m. to tell them this bad news. In spite of all the efforts of medical staff he went into organ failure and died two days later. It was unspeakably sad.

The Bible is so relevant for each of us today, just as much as it was when Solomon wrote, all those years ago. There are three short pieces of advice for you in these verses from Proverbs 1. This is how to deal with peer pressure and other temptations to do what is wrong:

1. *“Consent thou not.”* Say, “No!” Do not even discuss it. Just say, “No!”

2. *"Walk not thou in the way with them."* Do not go with them; do not go near any situation that may be sinful!
3. *"Refrain thy foot from their path."* Keep right away from their company and their ways. 1 Corinthians 15. 33 tells us: *"Evil communications corrupt good manners"*; in other words, bad company will have a bad influence on you. That is true, however good your intentions may be. There is no doubt about it.

You should pray to the Lord to keep you. Pray too that you would have the same love to the Bible and to the standards of God's law as the Psalmist who wrote: *"O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me."* (Psalm 119. 97-98). Then, with the Lord's blessing and keeping, you would be able to continue with these further words from Psalm 119. 101-102: *"I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep Thy Word. I have not departed from Thy judgments: for Thou hast taught me."*

The Young People's Magazine

"FINDING MR SELF"

In a former day, a man who lived in Ross-shire, travelled some distance to Kilmuir in order to sit down at the Lord's Table which was to be observed that weekend. It is the custom of Presbyterian Scottish churches that those who wish to partake of the Lord's Table, should obtain a token from the elders on the Saturday preceding the Lord's Day on which the communion takes place. Accordingly, this man presented himself to the elders, who asked him if he was a communicant in his home district, to which he replied that he was not. The elders withdrew for a few moments to discuss his case privately, and then asked the man if he knew a Mr. Self who lived in his area? The man replied that, "No, he did not know such a man." One of the elders then kindly said that they could not give him a token until he had found out where Mr. Self lived... When he had found him, he could then return to the elders who would

be willing to give him the token he desired.

The poor man in his simplicity did not understand what the elder meant. He went off and scoured the country, knocking on many doors to find this Mr. Self. But no-one had heard of this man. Some thought the poor man was mentally deficient, others laughed at him. Eventually, no doubt very discouraged at his "labour in vain," he knocked at the door of a godly tailor and asked him his oft-repeated question: "Did he know where Mr. Self lived?" He explained to this godly man the reason for his enquiry, who invited him into his home, to stay with him a few days. The tailor said that perhaps together they might find out where Mr. Self lived. This tailor was a patient and prudent man and had a gracious desire to help this seeking soul. He began to explain the Scriptures to him, and also his state as a guilty, ruined, lost and hell-deserving sinner in the sight of a Holy God. Also he showed him the way of salvation, appointed by God whereby sinners are saved in the provision of His own Son, Jesus Christ.

The Lord blessed the instruction to the man and by the Holy Spirit's guidance he came to know himself as a guilty sinner. He now understood that Mr. Self was in his own heart on the one hand, but on the other hand there was the glorious Redeemer, Jesus Christ, the sinners' Friend. He went on his way rejoicing and with a sincere sense of gratitude to the kind tailor, used by the Lord for the saving of his soul in unlocking the mystery of Mr. Self.

Next year he went back to Kilmuir at the time of the communion season. He decided not to sit at the Lord's Table as he did not deem himself a worthy person. The elders noticed him and one of them brought a token to him. The poor man wept as this kindness was shown to him. The elder said: "I can now see that you have found Mr. Self, and you must accept the token. That was what we had agreed to before you went to look for Mr. Self."

Contributed

THE PRAYING SOLDIER

About the beginning of the nineteenth century the Marquis of Cornwallis was engaged in putting down a rebellion in Ireland, when it was noticed that a certain soldier in his army was every day absent for a time from his quarters and from the company of his comrades. He began to be suspected of withdrawing himself for the purpose of having dealings with the rebels, and on this accusation he was arrested, tried by a court-martial, and condemned to die.

The Marquis hearing of this, wished to examine the minutes of the trial, and not being satisfied, sent for the man to question him. The soldier solemnly denied any treasonable action or intention, and declared his sincere attachment to his sovereign, and his readiness to live or die in his service.

He affirmed that the real cause for his daily absence was that he might retire to a quiet place for private prayer, for which he had no opportunity among his ungodly comrades. He said he had made this defence upon his trial, but the officers thought it so improbable, that they paid no attention to it.

The Marquis, in order to test the truth of his statement, said that if this were really the case, he must have acquired some considerable aptness in prayer, and insisted that the soldier should kneel down and pray aloud before him. The poor man, after disclaiming any ability to boast of, knelt down and poured forth from his soul before God in such a manner that the Marquis took him by the hand, and said he was satisfied that no man could pray like that, who did not live in the habit of communion with God. He not only revoked the sentence, but appointed the man to be one of his own personal attendants.

Thus did God in His providence intervene to deliver, and to honour, His praying servant.

Selected

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from ISOBEL RICHE.

A LIFE RENT

In Scotland, during the early 19th Century, the landlords decided to evict many tenants from their homes and lands, in a scheme which was called "The Highland Clearances." Their object was to provide grazing land for sheep, which they thought would be a more profitable proposition than the crofts which up until that time were scattered across Northern and Western Scotland. During the Sutherland clearances, the factor (the man who managed the land for his owner) called on one of the tenants, a godly woman, saying to her: "You will have to remove," to which she replied: "No, I have a life rent of the place."

"Indeed, woman; who could give you that?" asked the factor.

"I have a promise of it from my Heavenly Father which neither you nor I will be able to break." The factor turned to one bystander who was listening to this conversation and said: "Surely she is speaking nonsense!"

To which the reply came: "No, she would not speak in this way without good grounds, and you will do well to let her alone."

"Oh well, we will not trouble her," said the factor, so she stayed where she was and saw her promise from her Heavenly Father fulfilled as all His promises surely will be.

Contributed

In East London, there is a place called Wapping. On one occasion Rowland Hill, one of the great preachers of the Evangelical Revival, was preaching at St. John's Church in Wapping. His ministry was often noted for its quaintness. He noticed that he had a large church to preach in and a full congregation. Then he remarked: "I am come to preach to great sinners, notorious sinners, profane sinners;" and with peculiar emphasis exclaimed, "yea, and to Wapping sinners!"

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (VI)**

In the first verse of Isaiah 42 we read: *"Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."* This is again the eternal Father speaking of His only begotten Son manifest in the flesh, Jesus Christ *"in whom My soul delighteth."* His delight and favour was upon Him. He is well pleased in all that He did to redeem and save His people from their sins. The apostle teaches us that, in and through the Person of Jesus Christ, the Father accepts and receives the living church of God. Every individual believer is received and accepted in Him. *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence"* (Ephesians 1. 5-8). *"And God saw the light, that it was good."* *"My Servant," "Mine Elect," "accepted in the Beloved," "in whom My soul delighteth":* these sacred statements by God the Father show us the loving heart of our heavenly Father in Jesus Christ. The same blessed Spirit that alighted on Jesus Christ at His baptism dwells in the heart of every true believer: *"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God"* (Romans 8. 15-16).

Let us continue with this line of thought. *"And God saw the light, that it was good."* It is recorded in the gospels: Matthew 17, Mark 9 and Luke 9, that Jesus on one occasion took Peter, James and John up into a high mountain to pray. This is an example for us to follow to retire to a quiet place where we

will not be seen nor heard, for prayer. In that mountain these three favoured disciples saw Jesus transfigured before them and conversing with Elijah and Moses. *“And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, He took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem”* (Luke 9. 28-31).

My dear beloved friends, this was no idle conversation. It was concerning the awful sufferings and sorrows that the Man of Sorrows would pass through in Gethsemane; the judgment hall; with Herod's men of war; the uncouth Roman soldiers and on the cross of Calvary. As He was transfigured we read: *“they saw His glory.”* John records in his gospel: *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”* Peter records in his epistle: *“For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount”* (2 Peter 1. 16-18). This last statement brings us to the point we desire to highlight: the voice of the eternal Father: *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* *“And God saw the light, that it was good.”*

(To be continued)

J.R. Rutt

A prayer-less soul is a Christ-less soul, and a Christ-less soul is a hopeless soul.

Rowland Hill

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about FRIENDS. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 122 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Who spoke to God *"face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend"*? (Exodus 33. 11)
 2. Solomon said, *"A friend loveth..."* When? (Proverbs 17. 17)
 3. King David had a faithful friend in Jonathan and a deceitful one in Ahithophel, but who does the Bible call *"David's friend"*? (2 Samuel 15. 37)
 4. How does James describe one who is *"a friend of the world"*? (James 4. 4)
 5. Job had three friends, who misunderstood him and added to his sorrow. What were their names? (Job 2. 11)
 6. What does Solomon contrast with the deceitful kisses of an enemy? (Proverbs 27)
 7. Jesus said, *"Ye are my friends, if..."* (Finish the sentence, John 15)
 8. The Lord Jesus was given the title of *"a friend of ...,"* in scorn. A friend of what? (Luke 7)
 9. Which godly man likened himself to *"the friend of the bridegroom"*? (John 3)
 10. There are three Scriptures which refer to Abraham as God's friend. Write down the reference for each one you find.
- Extra: Which two people were made friends together, who previously were at enmity between themselves?

ANSWERS TO MAY QUESTIONS

1. Enoch.
2. Six hundred years old.
3. Gopher wood. It was pitched within and without with pitch.
4. Raven, dove.
5. The rainbow.
6. The fountains of the great deep. (Genesis 7. 11; 8. 2)
7. The mountains of Ararat. (Genesis 8. 4)
8. His wife, sons and daughters-in-law; two of every living thing,

- male and female; food for all. (Genesis 6. 18-21)
9. Eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage.
(Matthew 24. 38)
10. Lot being taken out of Sodom before it was destroyed by fire.
(2 Peter 2. 6-8)

Contributed

“SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME”

There's a Friend for little children above the bright blue sky;
A Friend who never changeth, whose love can never die.
Unlike our friends by nature who change with changing years,
This Friend is always worthy, the precious name He bears.

There's a rest for little children above the bright blue sky;
For those who love the Saviour, and “Abba, Father,” cry
A rest from every trouble, from sin and danger free,
Where every little pilgrim shall rest eternally.

There's a home for little children above the bright blue sky,
Where Jesus reigns in glory – a home of peace and joy;
No home on earth is like it, nor can with it compare,
For everyone is happy, nor can be happier there.

There's a crown for little children above the bright blue sky,
And all who look to Jesus shall wear it by-and-by:
A crown of brightest glory, which He will then bestow
On those who knew His favour, and loved Him here below.

There's a song for little children above the bright blue sky,
A song that will not weary though sung continually;
A song which even angels can never, never sing,
They know not Christ as Saviour, but worship Him as King.

There's a robe for little children above the bright blue sky,
A harp of sweetest music, a palm of victory.
All, all in Christ is treasured, and found in Him alone,
His grace and power can give them, and make them all our own.

Albert Midlaine

The Friendly Companion



“For every beast of the forest is Mine,
and the cattle upon a thousand hills.
I know all the fowls of the mountains:
and the wild beasts of the field are Mine.”
(Psalm 50. 10-11)

July 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

You will all be familiar with the account of young Samuel in the temple, lent by his mother, Hannah, to the Lord all the days of his life, in gratitude for his birth. In chapter 3 of 1 Samuel we read of Samuel's first prophecy! Perhaps he was the youngest prophet in the Bible!

This sermon was not an easy one because it brought bad tidings to old Eli that his sons would be slain in one day, because of their wickedness.

Naturally Eli could have been very resentful that such a message should come to him through a young boy, many years younger than he. But he had the grace to realise that this was the voice of the Lord through Samuel, and that however unpleasant the sermon, he must submit to its tidings.

There are three lessons for us all in this:

Firstly, God is a sovereign and uses whatever means He sees fit to speak to mankind. We should never disregard the message because we do not approve of the messenger. How cross Balaam was with his ass when it reproved him for his unkindness.

Secondly, if God should call us to a difficult task, as He did Samuel on this occasion, we must not shirk the command, but seek grace and help from God to obey what He has commanded us. Samuel told Eli every part of what God had told him. He did not withhold anything. He was a faithful messenger to Eli. Many years later, God told Samuel to go and anoint David as the future king over Israel. *"How can I go,"* said Samuel, *"If Saul bear it, he will kill me."* God did go with him, and Saul did not kill him!

Thirdly, when matters come into our lives which are humbling and threatening, may we seek to be as Eli, who said: *"It is the LORD: let Him do what seemeth Him good."* By humbling ourselves under God's hand, we will prove as even Eli did: *"He careth for you."*

There is a lesson for us on every page of Scripture: *"He that*

batb ears to bear, let him bear.”

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The following article appeared in The Daily Telegraph on March 27th 2014. The Bible speaks much about goats; their place in the sacrifices of the Old Testament and also their distinction from the sheep as a picture of the separation between believers and unbelievers in the Day of Judgment. It is evident from the facts given below that God has given them great versatility and intelligence which serve them well in the harsh mountain environments in which they often flourish.

(Editor)

Goats aren't such silly billies after all

Goats are much smarter than they might appear, a study has shown.

The animals quickly learn how to solve complex tasks and have “excellent” long-term memories, say scientists.

Researchers trained a group of goats to retrieve food from a box by pulling on a lever and then lifting it.

The goats figured out the multi-step solution within an average of twelve attempts. Ten months later, it took them less than two minutes to remember how to do it. They also proved they preferred to learn rather than copy each other.

Dr Alan McElligott, from Queen Mary University of London, said: “Our results challenge the common misconception that goats are not intelligent animals – they have the ability to learn complex tasks and remember them for a long time. This could explain why they are so successful in colonising new environments.”

Goats are unusually adaptable to harsh environments and good at finding food sources in the wild, both traits that might be linked to their intelligence, the researchers believe.

The findings are reported in the latest edition of the journal *Frontiers in Zoology*.

400-YEAR-OLD BIBLE RETURNS “HOME”

One of the first Bibles to be published in Welsh has been returned to the house where its translator was born.

Bishop William Morgan began translating the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Welsh in around 1579 on the instructions of Queen Elizabeth I. It is credited with being the single most important act in keeping the Welsh language alive.

Tour guide Gerwyn Edwards said: “Before we had this Bible, we all spoke different dialects of Welsh. This created one Welsh language for all.”

The Bible has returned to a house near the village of Penmachno, in Snowdonia, with the assistance of the National Trust. The charity helped to buy the Bible after it came up for sale at the library which had previously held it.

Bishop Morgan was born in the house in the 1540s. He took nine years to translate the Old and New Testaments from their original languages. Edwards added that he was proud the Bible was “coming home.”

“Eight hundred of the original Bibles were distributed to churches around Wales. To think of its age, it is in very good condition,” he said. The 400-year-old leather bound Bible will be kept in a glass case and be protected from strong light. It will join numerous other Bibles in the building as visitors have brought copies in their own languages over the years.

Rhys Evans, the National Trust’s Snowdonia operations manager, said: “We are delighted and very proud to be able to have an original copy on show at the birthplace of the man responsible for translating it. We believe it is vital we commemorate this invaluable legacy.”

There’s an odd little voice ever speaking within,
That prompts us to duty, and warns us from sin;
And, what is most strange, it will make itself heard,
Though it gives not a sound, and says never a word.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**THE ARK RETURNED**

The Philistines put the ark of the God of Israel in the house of their idol Dagon. The next morning they found Dagon had fallen on his face before the ark of God. They set it back in place, but in the morning Dagon was again on his face before the ark. This time his head and hands were broken off. The people in that city also became ill and many died.

Then the Philistines carried the ark of God to another city. But *“the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction.”* For seven months the ark was taken from one city to another. Disease and death came to each place it went.

The Philistines decided to send the ark of God back to Israel. They made a new cart and set the ark on it, along with an offering of gold. They took two cows away from their young calves, and tied them to the cart. The cows did not turn aside or try to go back to their calves. They went straight along the way to Israel, lowing as they went. How the people of Israel rejoiced to see the ark return!

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Dagon fall on his face before? (4 words)
2. What came to each place it went? (3 words)
3. Where did they send it back to?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (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. The tabernacle.
2. The Philistines. (or the enemy)
3. Ichabod.

Contributed

“... and they
 lifted up their
 eyes, and
 saw the ark,
 and rejoiced
 to see it.”
 1 Samuel 6. 13.

BIBLE LESSONS**JESUS APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES**

What a blessed day it was! What an eventful day – the day of the RESURRECTION! So much had happened through the day that the events at the tomb in the early morning hours must have seemed long past.

As the darkness of night descended, the disciples were still gathered together. No one was ready to leave. Hearing of the visits of Jesus, and especially of all that He said on the road to Emmaus, filled their hearts with wonder, joy, and expectation.

The doors of the house where the disciples were gathered had been shut and barred for fear of the Jews. Apart from the women, Peter, and the two who returned from Emmaus, the rest had not seen the Lord. Still, they could not deny that what the others said about His resurrection must be the TRUTH. Yet, there seemed to be so much confusion and so many questions unanswered.

While they were talking together, Jesus appeared in their midst. Although they were all longing to see Him, now when He stood in their midst, they were terrified. They thought He was a spirit, perhaps because no one had opened the door for Him to enter. Yet there He was.

Jesus, knowing their thoughts and fears, was quick to speak: *“PEACE BE UNTO YOU.”* Perhaps you remember that the angels sang of this at His birth: *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth PEACE, good will toward men.”* Many years before, the prophet Micah wrote of Jesus, saying: *“And this Man shall be the PEACE, when the Assyrian shall come into our land.”* Isaiah prophesied that one of the names He would be called was: *“The Prince of Peace.”*

Jesus asked them further: *“Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?”* They had just been speaking and hearing of His appearances. Yet, when He appeared now, they were full of doubts about Him. How tenderly the Lord dealt with them in their weakness! He said again: *“Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself:*

handle Me, and see; for a spirit bath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." He showed them His hands and His feet.

How their eyes must have fastened upon the wounds the nails had made! John tells us in his gospel that Jesus also showed them His side. He was not ashamed of these wounds. Although His disciples could look with their bodily eyes, they would need the eyes of their understanding opened to see the beauty and glory of the wounds in their Master.

The whole scene overwhelmed them, and they could not believe for great wonder and joy. To help them, Jesus asked for something to eat. They gave Him a piece of broiled fish and a piece of honeycomb. As they steadfastly watched Him, He ate before them. Although His resurrected body no longer needed food, yet He showed them that He could take food and eat it. A spirit could not do that. How the Lord, little by little, removed their doubts and unbelief!

Just as He had done for the two on the road to Emmaus, Jesus reminded them of the words He had spoken before His death: *"... that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning ME."*

"Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures...."

You can read about this in Luke chapter 24 verses 36 to 45 and John chapter 20 verses 19 to 21.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Isaiah say He would be called?
2. What did Jesus show them? (5 words)
3. What did John say He showed them?
4. What did they give Him to eat? (10 words)
5. What did the Lord open? (2 words) What was the effect? (5 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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. Going further.
2. *"Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent."*
3. Blessed it.
4. Their eyes were opened and they knew Him.
5. Burn within them.

G. L. TenBroeke

SCRIPTURES TO BE MEDITATED ON CONCERNING THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH – THE LORD'S DAY

1. ***Sabbath commanded*** – Exodus 16. 22-30; 20. 8-11; 35. 1-3. Leviticus 19. 3, 30. Deuteronomy 5. 12-15. Nehemiah 9. 14.
2. ***A sign of God's people*** – Exodus 31. 12-17. 2 Kings 4. 23. Ezekiel 20. 12. Lamentations 1. 7. Hebrews 4. 9.
3. ***Sabbath-breaking punished*** – Numbers 15. 32-36. Leviticus 26. 33-35. 2 Chronicles 36. 21. Jeremiah 19-27. Lamentations 2. 6. Ezekiel 20. 12-26. Amos 8. 4-14.
4. ***Day of blessing*** – Genesis 2. 2, 3. Exodus 16. 23. Leviticus 24. 8. Numbers 28. 9, 10. Isaiah 56. 1-8; 58. 13, 14. John 20. 1, 19, 26. Acts 2. 1, with Leviticus 23. 15. Revelation 1. 10.
5. ***Rulers should guard the Sabbath*** – Exodus 20. 10. Nehemiah 13. 15-22.
6. ***The Lord's Day in gospel times*** – Psalm 118. 24. Isaiah 66. 23. Ezekiel 46. 1. Mark 2. 27, 28. Acts 2. 1; 20. 6, 7. 1 Corinthians 16. 2. Revelation 1. 10.

A RIDDLE

In the water, in the air, in the busy brain,
Once to hate, but not to hate again,
One of five in deadly dead united
And yet delivering those in whom
The Lord of Hosts delighted.

(Answer next month)

GOD'S THOUGHTS NOT AS MAN'S THOUGHTS EXEMPLIFIED IN CALVIN'S EARLY CAREER

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

The joy of meeting was mutual, and Calvin, who had come to Geneva without a plan, and even against his will, learned from his friend, Du Tillet, that Popery had been driven out of Geneva shortly before; that the zeal, struggles, trials, and evangelical labours of William Farel were incessant; and that Farel was contending almost alone for the triumph of the Gospel. Calvin had long respected Farel as a most zealous evangelist, and Du Tillet could not keep the news of his friend's arrival from Farel.

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

The appeal was fruitless. To undertake so great a task

seemed to Calvin an impossibility. But Farel would not be discouraged. He pointed out that, as the Reformation had been miraculously established in Geneva, it ought not to be abandoned in a cowardly manner – that, if he did not take the post offered to him in this task, the work might possibly perish.

Calvin could not make up his mind. He did not want to bind himself to a particular church. He preferred travelling in search of knowledge, and making himself useful in the places where he chanced to halt. “Look first at the place where you are now,” answered Farel. “Popery has been driven out, and traditions abolished; and now the doctrine of the Scriptures must be taught here.”

“I cannot teach,” exclaimed Calvin. “On the contrary, I have need to learn. There are special labours for which I wish to reserve myself. This city cannot afford me the leisure I require.”

“Study! Leisure! Knowledge!” answered Farel. “What! Must we never *practise*? I am sinking under my task. Pray help me!”

The young doctor had still other reasons. His constitution was weak. “The frail state of my health needs rest,” he said.

“Rest!” exclaimed Farel. “Death alone permits the soldiers of Christ to rest from their labours.”

The Reformer had not expressed his whole thought. He shrank from appearing before the assemblies of Geneva. The tumults, the indomitable temper of the Genevese, intimidated him.

To this Farel replied: “The severer the disease, the stronger the measures to be employed to cure it. I entreat you to take your share. These matters are harder than death.” The burden was too heavy for his shoulders; he wanted a younger man to help him.

But the young Calvin still could not yield. “I am timid,” he said. “How can I withstand such roaring waves?” At this Farel could not restrain a feeling of anger. “Ought the servants of Jesus Christ to be so delicate,” he said, “as to be frightened at warfare?” These words touched the young Reformer to the heart. His conscience was troubled, but his great humility still held him back. “I beg of

you, in God's name," he said, "to have pity on me! Leave me to serve Him in another way than what you desire."

Farel, seeing that neither prayers nor exhortations could avail with Calvin, reminded him of a frightful example of disobedience similar to his own. "Jonah, also," he said, "wanted to flee from performing the Lord's work, but the Lord cast him into the sea." The struggle in the young doctor's heart became more keen. He was violently shaken. He bent before the blast, and rose up again; but a last gust, more impetuous than all the others was shortly about to uproot him.

Farel's heart was hot within him. At that supreme moment, feeling as if inspired by the Spirit of God, he raised his hand towards heaven and exclaimed: "You are thinking only of your tranquillity. You care for nothing but your studies. Be it so. In the name of Almighty God I declare that, if you do not answer to His summons, He will not bless your plans." Then, perceiving that the critical moment had come, he added an alarming adjuration to this declaration – he even ventured on an imprecation. Fixing his eyes on fire on the young man, he exclaimed: "May God curse your repose! May God curse your studies if, in such a great necessity as ours, you withdraw, and refuse to give us help and support!"

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

The call of Calvin in Geneva is perhaps, after that of the Apostle Paul, the most remarkable to be found in the history of the church. It was not miraculous, like that of the Apostle on the road to Damascus; and yet, in the chamber of that inn, there was the flash of light and the voice which the Lord made to sound in Calvin's heart, and which broke down his obstinacy

and prostrated him as if a thunder-bolt from heaven had struck him. At the same time, confidence in God filled his soul. He desired no longer to run counter to the call, but to permit himself to be guided by the hand of his Master.

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

Calvin, coming after Luther and Farel, was called to complete the work of both. Possessed of an organising genius, he undertook to form a church, placed under the direction of the Word of God and the discipline of the Holy Ghost. Spiritual powers must act in the midst of the flock of Jesus Christ. "In the kingdom of Christ," he said, "all that we need to care for is the life – the *new man*."

The Sower

DIVINE INTERVENTION IN WORLD WAR I

April 15, 1915 – On this date the Germans first used poison gas. From their standpoint it was necessary, if it was to be effective for the Germans, to be fairly certain that the wind should be steadily blowing away from them and towards the allied forces. The objective was, by means of the unexpected use of poison gas, to be able to break through and capture the Channel ports.

The German Meteorological Department stated that the wind was fixed in the right direction for thirty-six hours. The gas was let loose with terrible results, but suddenly the wind changed and the deadly gas was wafted away from the allied forces and towards the Germans, causing thousands of casualties and completely frustrating the German's carefully prepared plan.

Dr. Schmaus in his official report stated: "In fifty years of meteorological records of the German Government the wind never acted so peculiarly before."

Napoleon Bonaparte declared that God was on the side of

the biggest battalions. He was quite right, for the greatest and best equipped battalions are encamped in the heavens. So Napoleon found it in 1812 when God's snowflakes and His frost defeated the mighty Emperor. His retreat from Moscow is one of the great tragedies of history.

Napoleon scouted the battalions of the heavens, and Hitler and his fellow-criminals have done so today.

November 17, 1917

According to Lord Fisher's *War Memorials*, Germany's submarine strength was at its highest. Night and day for ten months Germany had been accumulating them. They reckoned they could now sweep the seas. About the same period, according to Mr. Lloyd George, we were within a few weeks of starvation. The German Navy started their great venture, but a persistent storm so raged that they could not return to their bases. They were forced to the surface, and one hundred and ninety-nine of them, with their crews of about three thousand, were lost or captured.

God's wind saved us from starvation in 1917. "*The LORD bath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm*" (Nahum 1. 3).

Springtime in Germany in 1917

Never before had there been such prospects for a potato crop as heavy as anticipated in 1917. Science, system and industry combined to produce this important staple food of the country. In due course uncounted acres were in full bloom, and then suddenly an unprecedented blight fell upon the whole crop, and that autumn the shrivelled and blasted crop reminded Germany of the truth of Napoleon's saying that "an army marches on its stomach and will not march when it is empty." The food shortage caused mutiny in the German Navy; Berlin was in a state of chaos; the Emperor abdicated and fled; and General Ludendorff, in his history of the War, says: "It was the failure of the potato crop of 1917 that lost Germany the War."

Contributed

GRANDFATHER'S YOUTH (VI)

The conclusion of a narrative in which Wm. A Brakel was used as a means in God's hand for the conversion of a young man.

"About a week later as I returned from the office on a Monday evening, some distance away I saw the minister coming. I thought, 'I will dodge him, otherwise he will surely ask me what I did yesterday, and I will get another scolding.'

"But Father Brakel, or rather the Lord knew how to find me. I was just about to turn into a side street when a freight wagon came out of that street, pulled by two horses. One of the horses fell, and in a moment there was such a throng of people that I could not pass. Before I thought of it, the minister stood beside me and tapped me on the shoulder.

"Sure enough, his first question was, 'Well, how did you spend the last Lord's Day?'

"I became a bit cross and answered, 'I was home, sir, and spent my time looking over accounts.'

"Father Brakel looked at me seriously and spoke slowly and solemnly: 'The Day of Judgment will be spent doing that same thing. Remember that. Farewell, my friend.'

"But what did he mean by that, Grandpa?" asked the young listener.

"Well, my boy, that the Lord God shall in that great day ask us to give an account of our deeds, as the lord who gave his servants some pounds to gain more. Just as I on Sunday figured up all that was lost or gained in the whole week, so the Lord would judge what I had done in my whole life. That is what Father Brakel meant, and I understood it so well that it frightened me terribly and I reached my home much distressed.

"I did try again to forget the troublesome words the minister had spoken, but I could not, for it was the arrow the Lord had given him to aim at me, and now I thank God for it. I began to see how terrible it would be if that day of reckoning should come soon, and especially because at home and in school I had heard the Word of God, and knew the will of the Lord very

well, but had not done it. At last I felt the best thing for me to do was to go to Father Brakel although I feared he would be angry. But he received me cordially."

"And what did he say, Grandpa?"

'My friend,' he said, 'it is good that you have come now, before the big reckoning begins. For now your sins can still be blotted out. For that purpose the Lord Jesus gave Himself over unto death on the cross.' After that he spoke for a long time about these things which I had heard about formerly, when, however, they reached only my head. But now his words entered deep into my heart.

"However, Father Brakel was only human, and as the minister himself told me, only the Lord God could take away my unrest, and give me peace and joy. And the Lord has done so, although not in a moment, not until after the death of Father Brakel, who now became my friend, and often said to me: 'Continue in prayer until the Lord removes all doubts and unbelief. He shall not let you go.' Many years later when I knew that my sins were forgiven, and that the Lord Jesus was my Saviour, these words were fulfilled.

"As soon as it was at all possible I went to visit my family in Rostock. Of my brothers and sisters only two were still at home with Mother. The others had married or had found work elsewhere. The Lord had so blessed me that if I lived frugally, I could easily support my mother, and as long as necessary also the young children. Because I did not wish to stay in Germany, because I was satisfied here, and because I was earning my living here, we returned to Rotterdam with the four of us. Your grandmother died there, as you know, and soon I shall follow her."

"I hope not, Grandfather," John spoke sadly.

"My dear boy," replied the old man, "the Lord has made all things well with me. Nevertheless the best of our days are beset with grief and sorrow. Now you know how I happened to come to this country, and I have learned to love this good

land. But there above the clouds is my true fatherland, for which I long. God shall bring me there, and you, too, my boy, if you walk in His ways."

THE KING OF KINGS IS HERE

Hugh Latimer, one of the great preachers and leaders of the English Reformation in the sixteenth century (and later martyred for his faith), was once preaching in Westminster Abbey. King Henry VIII was present, and as Latimer stood up in the pulpit he spoke audibly, but as if to himself (in a reverie): "Latimer! Latimer! Latimer! Be careful what you say. The King of England is here!"

But then after further thought, he said: "Latimer! Latimer! Latimer! Be careful what you say. The King of kings is here!"

When reading this story from many years ago, I was struck by the truth of these words with regard to two particular aspects of our worship when we are in the Lord's house.

Firstly, the vital need for sincerity in our worship. The Lord always sees and hears all that we do and say at all times, but when we come into His house of prayer, His earthly courts, how especially careful we should be in all we do, think or say. We may not be the preacher, but He hears the inaudible prayers from our hearts; He hears the praises sung in His name; He knows our thoughts and desires; He knows the sincerity of all that we do in His name when we worship Him.

Secondly, the vital need for reverence in our worship. We are coming to the King of kings. We are coming to the Divine Creator of all things and the Judge of the whole earth. How sober we should be as we come before Him; how reverent we should be in our worship as we sing praises in adoration of all His wondrous works and call upon Him in prayer, in acknowledgment of His majesty and glory, in confession of our sins, in thanksgiving for all His mercies and in supplication to Him for all that we need, both for time and for a never-ending eternity. *"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the*

saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him” (Psalm 89. 7).

“In Thy name O Lord, assembling,
We Thy people now draw near,
Teach us to rejoice with trembling,
Speak, and let Thy servants hear;
Hear with meekness;
Hear Thy Word with godly fear.”

Contributed

SAYING GRACE

Many years ago a man wishing to worship with the Lord's people, travelled some distance, having to cross by ferry one of the many firths (river estuaries) which are so common in Scotland. Having enjoyed worship, he then returned and called at a friend's house to have a meal before re-crossing the firth. He suddenly realised that the tide would soon have retreated too far for him to catch a boat at this hour, so there was only time for a very quick meal.

They did not forget, however, to ask the Lord's blessing by saying grace in the following words: “Dear Lord, we thank Thee that the debt was paid, and the receipt is in my bosom. Amen.” Even in the course of natural events the mind of these godly forefathers was always on better things!

How good it is if, in thanking the Lord for our natural blessings, we can also join in the verse so often sung at Special Services in our chapels:

“We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food,
But more because of Jesus' blood;
Let manna to our souls be given,
The Bread of Life sent down from heaven.”

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from NAOMI WOODHAMS.

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (VII)***(Please have your Bible ready to look up Scripture references)***The dividing of the light from the darkness**

As we look at this in a spiritual way how fundamental and important this truth is: what the Lord, by His Spirit, does in a poor sinner's life! Let us consider the words of Jesus in John 3: *"Ye must be born again."* My dear beloved friends, this is not optional, it is essential: *"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."* When Paul writes to the Ephesians he makes the same point. *"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)"* (Ephesians 2. 1-5). *"And God divided the light from the darkness."*

With the new birth comes the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a poor hell deserving sinner. With the indwelling of the Holy Spirit comes light and life to that poor sinner's heart. We all walked according to the course of this world. By nature we are sinful, fallen, unclean and unrighteous. The Apostle Paul in Galatians 1. 15 tells us of his conversion from the Jews' religion to Christianity: *"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace..."* How we see here, on the Apostle's own confession of faith, the sacred truth of this word: *"And God divided the light from the darkness."*

Please read Acts 26. 12 -18 where we see the apostle confessing before King Agrippa his conversion to Jesus Christ as he was on

the road to Damascus to persecute the Christian church. Again we have a spiritual illustration of these words: *"And God divided the light from the darkness."* Notice the clear linkage here, darkness to light, Satan to God, this clearly expounds our subject. *"And God divided the light from the darkness."*

We are given another illustration of this when the children of Israel were set free from Egyptian bondage on the night of the Passover. That night beautifully typifies the glorious sacrifice of Jesus Christ: the lamb was taken; sacrificed; its blood was painted on the lintel and doorposts, and the children of Israel feasted in the house on the paschal lamb. So the Christian believer feasts on the Lamb of God slain from before the foundation of the world and as it was with Israel so it is with every Christian believer: *"When I see the blood, I will pass over you...."* That precious blood of Jesus, typified in the paschal lamb, cleanses from all sin.

Now when the children of Israel came to the Red sea with Pharaoh pursuing them at Pihahiroth, they were, naturally speaking, in an impossible situation: the sea in front, mountains on each side, the Egyptians behind. The solemn truth is that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart to destroy him and his army. One of the godly puritans (Thomas Goodwin DD), makes the point that, so great was the damage done to the mighty Egyptians at this time that we read no more of them for the following three hundred years. What interests us is the manner of the deliverance of the children of Israel. We read in Exodus 14 why the Lord did these things: *"that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD."* How fearful that must have been for the Israelites; how impossible, but Moses, by the Spirit of God, stills their fears in verse 13 and 14: *"Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."* The LORD miraculously divided the Red sea and the children of Israel passed over on dry land. The fiery cloudy pillar, which went before the children of Israel

all the way through the wilderness, went to the back and was a barrier between the Israelites and the Egyptians. *"And God divided the light from the darkness."* Now it was a light to Israel but it was darkness to the Egyptians.

Look how our word is illustrated in this Scripture: *"And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night"* (Exodus 14. 19-20). *"And God divided the light from the darkness."*

Please read Exodus 14. 24-30 where this is continued. How solemnly this word is illustrated here. *"And God divided the light from the darkness."* J.R. Rutt

THE BIBLE

This Book reveals the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practise it to be holy.

It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.

It is the traveller's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword and the Christian's charter.

Here heaven is opened, and the gates of hell are disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end.

It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgment, and be remembered for ever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labour and condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.

Selected

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about WISDOM. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 146 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Of whom was it said: "There is none so discreet and wise as thou art"? (Genesis 41. 39)
2. What did God give to Solomon in answer to his prayer? (1 Kings 3. 12)
3. "A wise son maketh..." Write out the whole proverb. (Proverbs 10. 1)
4. What did Solomon say is "the beginning of wisdom"? (Proverbs 9. 10)
5. What advice does James give to those who feel to "lack wisdom"? (James 1. 5)
6. Where did Solomon say the heart of the wise is? And where is the heart of fools? (Ecclesiastes 7)
7. Moses said: "O that they were wise" What would be the effect of that wisdom? (Deuteronomy 32)
8. Write down the seven characteristics of "the wisdom that is from above" which James gives. (James 3)
9. What did the Apostle Paul say "are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"? (2 Timothy 3)
10. How can a man who "seemeth to be wise in this world" become truly wise? (1 Corinthians)

ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS

1. Moses.
2. At all times.
3. Hushai the Archite.
4. The enemy of God.
5. Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, Zophar the Naamathite.
6. The faithful wounds of a friend. (Proverbs 27. 6)
7. "Ye do whatsoever I command you." (John 15. 14)

8. Publicans and sinners. (Luke 7. 34)
9. John the Baptist. (John 3. 29)
10. 2 Chronicles 20. 7; Isaiah 41. 8; James 2. 23.

Extra: Herod and Pontius Pilate. (Luke 23. 12)

Contributed

“FEAR NOT!”

We are of value to Him

“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God.” Luke 12. 6.

I’m only a little sparrow – a bird of low degree;
My life is of little value, but the dear Lord cares for me.
He gave me a coat of feathers – it’s very plain I know;
With never a speck of crimson, for it was not made for show.

But it keeps me warm in winter, and shields me from the rain;
Were it bordered with gold and purple, perhaps it would make me vain.
And now that the springtime cometh, I will build me a little nest,
With many a chirp of pleasure, in the spot I love the best.

I have no barn or storehouse, I neither sow nor reap;
God gives me a sparrow’s portion, but never a seed to keep.
If my meat is sometimes scanty, close picking makes it sweet;
I have always enough to feed me, and ‘Life is more than meat.’

I know there are many sparrows – all over the world they’re found;
But our heavenly Father knoweth, when one of us falls to the ground.
Though small we are never forgotten; though weak, we are never afraid;
For we know that the dear Lord keepeth the life of the creatures He made.

I fly through the thickest forest, I light on many a spray;
I have no chart or compass, but I never lose my way.
I just fold my wings at nightfall, wherever I happen to be;
For the Father is always watching: no harm can happen to me.”

The Friendly Companion



"I rejoice at Thy Word,
as one that findeth great spoil."
(Psalm 119. 162)

August 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

Sooner or later all of you will expect to have to go out and earn your living, and almost certainly at one time or another, work for someone else. If it is known that we profess to be Christians, then we will be watched by others very closely to see whether our words are matched by our ways. It has been rightly said that 'our feet talk louder than our lips.'

One man, of whom we read very little in the Bible, is Cush. But the little we read of him shows what a good example he was in his own generation.

Cush was the man chosen by Joab to bear the sad and uncomfortable news to David that, although God had granted victory over his enemies, his own son Absalom had been slain. The news of Absalom's death broke David's heart, as he knew he died a rebel against God and that there was no hope for him in eternity. So we read of that doleful cry: "*O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!*" (2 Samuel 18. 33). We read in 2 Samuel 18. 21: "*Then said Joab to Cush, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.*"

You will notice three commendable things about Cush.

Firstly, he was obedient. It was not an easy task that lay before him, and perhaps he wished that someone else could go in his place. Ahimaaz wanted to do just that! However Cush heard and obeyed the command.

Secondly, he was a humble man. He bowed himself unto Joab. He gave respect to his master, even though Joab was on other occasions a ruthless and cruel man. We are exhorted to be subject to our employers, not just those easy to get on with, but also with those of a more difficult disposition. This is also how children from Christian homes ought to behave at school with their teachers, not forgetting at home also! Peter tells us: "*Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward*" (1 Peter 2. 18).

Thirdly, Cushi was diligent. As soon as the command was given, he ran. He did not loiter. He was about the king's business and thus it required haste. Paul tells us: "*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men*" (Colossians 3. 23). It was not easy work, as Cushi had to run by the way of the hills, and doing the Lord's will is not easy. It requires grace from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Leader and the Commander of His people. This He has to give as He "*is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work*" (2 Corinthians 9. 8). John Newton said on one occasion 'that if an angel had been sent to sweep a room, and another angel sent to rule a kingdom, they would both do their work with equal diligence.'

May we seek the same grace from God which Cushi had, that we also may be a true witness and 'show the world how Christians live.'

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

How many of our readers will recognise the picture this month? It is of a £2 coin issued in 2011 to mark the 400th anniversary of the publishing of the King James Bible. Relatively few were issued (975,000 or about one coin for every sixty-five people in the country), so it is not often that you will come across them in circulation. As collectors' items, they are being sold for £4 upwards, with mint condition examples fetching over £15. The coin has the first six words of the Gospel of John in both normal and mirror writing, so that if you press the coin into a soft material such as modelling clay, the image of the words will be the same as on the coin.

The words chosen to put on the coin are some of the most profound in all Scripture, and refer to the Lord Jesus as the Word of God: "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" These words clearly

declare the eternity of the Lord Jesus, His personality as distinct from that of His Father, and His Godhead. Two verses later we have the words: *"All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."* This shows that the Lord Jesus is our Creator. Almost every serious heresy will deny one or other of these points. It does not say: 'In the beginning was the Big Bang.' It does not say: 'In the beginning there was a "chemical soup" out of which man evolved.' The words are very similar to the first verse of the Bible: *"In the beginning God"*

God has greatly blessed the Authorized, or King James, version of the Bible. Its face value may be what we paid to buy a copy, but just as with the £2 coin, its real value is much greater. May our readers prove it to be so, and be able to say: *"I rejoice at Thy Word, as one that findeth great spoil" (Psalm 119. 162).*

J. Kingham

"UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY"

During the Second World War a group of sailors from the Highlands of Scotland were conscripted together to serve on a ship which was to pass through dangerous waters during active service. Many of these sailors were God-fearing men and were brought up to worship the Lord on His Day, the Lord's Day, the Christian Sabbath, and also to have worship in their homes. One of these young men went to the Petty Officer, who had the control of the use of the facilities on the ship, to ask him if he would be prepared to allocate a place on the ship where they could meet for worship. This was readily granted and as many as could attend at the stated times of worship, gathered together when they were not engaged in other necessary duties.

All the while they were on this ship, they continued this practice, and through the goodness of God no harm came to the ship all the while they were part of the crew. Eventually, the order was given that they were to leave this ship and join

another one. When the final day came, one of these sailors met the Petty Officer who had kindly made the arrangement to accommodate their desire to worship together. The Petty Officer asked that a message be passed to each of these sailors to the effect that it was neither good luck, nor good fortune that had kept them in safety during the voyage, but the Almighty, hearing and answering the prayers of the Christian sailors.

Contributed

“JUST FOR A MOMENT”

As a child I read what follows, in a booklet printed in 1965, and I would like to share it with you:

Everything had been made ready in the operating room. The doctors, clothed in white, and the nurses were standing in readiness for the operation. All of them had sterile masks covering their mouths. The lamp in the middle of the room delivered a bright and unyielding light. It is no wonder that young William was somewhat frightened when he was wheeled into the room. He looked with anxious eyes toward all of that light and all of the white images. He was only seven years old, and so very alone, for his father and mother could not come with him, and this he had already realised. He was an outspoken little lad, and he asked Dr. Anderson: “What are you going to do with me?”

“We are going to take away the pain from your tummy,” replied Dr. Anderson.

“But I no longer have any pain.”

“No, but if we do not do anything about it, the pain will return tomorrow, and you will become very sick again.”

That answer seemed to make him think. His little face was tense, and his eyes strained to look at the man towering above him.

“How are you going to remove the pain, doctor?”

“You will go to sleep, William, and when you wake up, it will all be finished, and you will soon be well again.”

“I don’t feel sleepy at all yet.”

"That will come: I will put you to sleep, and you will not even feel it."

In the meantime it had become unusually quiet in the operating room. Everything was ready, and everyone stood waiting.

"Am I really going to sleep, doctor?"

"Yes, William, you really are."

"But, then, I must first pray," said William.

Before anyone realised it, he had slid down to the floor where he kneeled and then folded his hands upon the stretcher. It became deathly silent in the room. Neither the doctor, his assistants, nor the nursing personnel made a move. They all looked at that little figure in the middle. Then a clear and sincere child's voice was heard:

"I am tired, I'm going to sleep;
Closing both my little eyes.
Lord, in this long night please keep
Over me a faithful watch.
Bad things that I did this day,
Lord, please take them all away;
Wash me from my many sins;
Cleanse me, Lord, for Jesus' sake."

The doctor later confessed: "I could not get this out of my mind, for this child was right, and I was wrong."

For many years he had no longer kneeled at his bedside. That evening he again did kneel for the first time. He asked for exactly the same thing as that young boy: "Although my sins are great and many, for Jesus' sake wilt Thou cleanse me fully." It became the means to bring the surgeon back to church again after many years.

What are those words again? "...except ye become as a little child...."

The Banner of Truth (G. J. Van Aalst)

Answer to the riddle on Page 154 (July *Friendly Companion*) is the stone that David slung against Goliath.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**SAMUEL PRAYS FOR ISRAEL**

For twenty years, Israel had turned away from God, and the Philistines ruled over them. Now they remembered what God had done in the past and came to Samuel the prophet. He told them to put away their idol gods and ‘serve the LORD only.’ Then He would deliver them from the Philistines. *“And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.”* The people came and fasted and confessed their sins.

When the Philistines heard that all Israel had come to Mizpeh, they came to fight against them. The people of Israel were full of fear. They said to Samuel: *“Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that He will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.”* As Samuel made an offering unto the LORD for Israel, the Philistines drew near to battle. Then the LORD thundered with a great thunder upon them, and they were smitten before Israel.

Samuel set up a stone and called it *“Ebenezer,”* saying: *“Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.”* So the Philistines were subdued, and the hand of the LORD was against them all the days of Samuel.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Samuel say he would do for Israel? (1 word)
2. What was the name of the stone Samuel set up? (1 word)
3. What does it mean? (6 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (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. The ark of God.
 2. Disease and death.
 3. Israel.
- Contributed*

“... and
 Samuel cried
 unto the
 LORD for
 Israel; and
 the LORD
 heard him.”
 1 Samuel 7. 9.

BIBLE LESSONS

JESUS APPEARS TO THOMAS

When Jesus appeared to the disciples on the night of His resurrection, one of the disciples was missing. It was Thomas. We wonder if he had been with them earlier in the day, when the women told them they had seen the Lord?

Thomas was sinking in the deep mire of unbelief. No report of the women or anyone else could lift him out of it. At an earlier time he seemed to be strong in faith. When Jesus went to raise Lazarus, Thomas said to the other disciples: *"Let us also go, that we may die with Him."*

Things were so different now! Perhaps he felt to be so deceived that he dare not believe. Even when the disciples told him that Jesus had appeared and showed them His hands and His side, Thomas could not believe them.

Thomas answered them with a spirit of defiance: *"Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe."*

How miserable Thomas must have felt through the week! To see the other disciples full of joy, while he sat in darkness, would have made him feel even more his wretchedness. Although he could not see Jesus, the eyes of Jesus were upon Him.

On the following Sunday the disciples gathered together again for worship. What a good thing that Thomas was present with them this time! Still, he must have been full of apprehension, wondering if the Lord would really come into their midst. Suddenly, without opening the doors, Jesus came and appeared unto them. He again spoke the same words: *"Peace be unto you."* How beautiful the words sounded! It was the voice of their Master. All eyes were fastened upon Him. Thomas, too, looked with wonder and joy upon Jesus.

Jesus looked with love and sympathy upon His sinking disciple. Thomas was like a broken reed that could not stand upright. Isaiah had prophesied that Jesus would never break such broken reeds. Just as He had stretched out His hand

before and saved Peter from sinking in the waves, He would now raise up a sinking Thomas. With the very words that Thomas had spoken to the others, He invited him to come near: *“Reach hither thy finger, and behold My bands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.”*

Had any of the disciples told Jesus what Thomas had said? Oh, indeed not! But He knows every word that we speak. Yes, He even knows every thought we have. The words of Jesus were a sharp rebuke to Thomas, yet they were also words of great encouragement.

Did Thomas put his finger into the print of the nails? The Bible does not say that he did, nor does it say that he did lay his hand in Jesus’ side. Probably as he just looked on the Master and heard His voice, the heavy stone of unbelief was taken out of his heart. With holy wonder and joy, he cried out: *“My Lord and my God.”* What Thomas could not believe before, he now believed with all his heart, soul, and mind. How quickly the Lord had raised him up. His heart was full of love and praise unto Jesus.

Yet Jesus had more teaching for Thomas. He said: *“Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”* This was a loving rebuke to Thomas for his unbelief. The Lord was telling Thomas that while many would not see Him with their natural eyes, they would see Him with the eye of faith, through which they would believe on Him.

You can read about this in John chapter 20 verses 24 to 29.

QUESTIONS:

1. When Jesus went to raise Lazarus, what did Thomas say to the other disciples? (10 words)
2. Where did Thomas say he must put “his finger” in order to believe? (6 words)
3. What must he do with his hand? (5 words)
4. What did Thomas say to Jesus when He showed him His hands? (5 words)

5. Who did Jesus say were blessed? (9 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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. The Prince of Peace.
2. His hands and His feet.
3. His side.
4. A piece of broiled fish and a piece of honeycomb.
5. Their understanding. They might understand the Scriptures.

G. L. TenBroeke

JOHN WELSH PREACHED HIS LAST SERMON AT AYR

“John Welsh, you are to report to the King’s Council in Edinburgh.”

When John Welsh stepped out of his pulpit in Ayr, Scotland, on this day, July 23rd, 1605, the King’s men came to him with that order. The Scottish pastor had preached that morning on the heart-warming promise that there is no condemnation to God’s elect, concluding with the words: “Now let the Lord give His blessing to His Word, and let the Spirit of Jesus, who is the Author of this verity [truth], come in and seal up the truth of it in your hearts and souls, for Christ’s sake.”

John had expected this arrest. Earlier that year, King James VI of Scotland forbade any pastor from attending a convention in Aberdeen. Like many Scottish pastors, Welsh believed no king had the right to stop preachers from conducting God’s business. He had never been one to buckle in face of danger. Needless to say, he had gone to the meeting. Now it was ‘pay day.’

Welsh said good-bye to his crying family and weeping church folk. “God send you back soon,” they prayed. But it was not to be.

John was given a mock trial and jailed. At first he was held in the prison known as the tollbooth where many Scottish

preachers served time. Later he was taken to brutal Blackness Castle. According to tradition, he was lowered into a dungeon pit that could be reached only through a hole in the floor. Its rough floor was uneven and slanted. There was no flat place on which to lie and no smooth spot on which to get comfortable. One could not sit, stand or lie down without misery. John spent ten months at Blackness. Well-known for his prayer-life (he averaged seven hours a day in prayer), John, no doubt, continued his earnest pleas for Scotland. Like his father-in-law John Knox, he pleaded: "O God, will you not give me Scotland!"

Perhaps he also remembered his hard years of service for Christ. At his first pastorate in Selkirk the local folk rejected the gospel completely, even cruelly cutting his horse so that he could not ride to nearby villages to preach. His next position was in a Roman Catholic region. The previous minister was killed for preaching the Reformation doctrines. At neither place did he have much success. But in his third pulpit, at Ayr, many people came to know Christ.

Ayr was a rough town. Duels and fights were so common, people feared to step onto the streets. Whenever John heard that a fight was brewing, he rushed to the spot and urged the rowdies to sit down to a peace meal together. He did this so often that the town became quieter and safer. James did not have the best interests of Ayr in mind when he arrested John. He felt that if he allowed Scotland to abolish bishops, they would want to abolish the king too!

D. Graves, MSL

AN INSCRIPTION FOR A CLOCK

"Master, behold me, here I stand,
To tell the hours at thy command.
What is thy will? 'Tis my delight
To serve thee both by day and night.
Master, be wise, and learn from me
To serve thy God as I serve thee."

JOHN NEWTON'S DREAM

"The scene presented to my imagination, was the harbour of Venice, where we had lately been. I thought it was night, and my watch upon the deck; and that, as I was walking to and fro by myself, a person came to me (I do not remember from whence), and brought me a ring, with an express charge to keep it carefully; assuring me that, while I preserved that ring, I should be happy and successful: but if I lost or parted with it, I must expect nothing but trouble and misery. I accepted the present and the terms willingly, not in the least doubting my own care to preserve it, and highly satisfied to have my happiness in my own keeping.

"I was engaged in these thoughts, when a second person came to me, and, observing the ring on my finger, took occasion to ask me some questions concerning it. I readily told him its virtues, and his answer expressed a surprise at my weakness in expecting such effects from a ring. I think he reasoned with me some time upon the impossibility of the thing; and at length urged me, in direct terms, to throw it away.

"At first I was shocked at the proposal, but his insinuations prevailed. I began to reason and doubt, and at last plucked it off my finger, and dropped it over the ship's side into the water, which it had no sooner touched, than I saw, at the same instant, a terrible fire burst out from a range of mountains (a part of the Alps), which appeared at some distance behind the city of Venice. I saw the hills as distinct as if awake, and that they were all in flames.

"I perceived too late, my folly; and my tempter, with an air of insult, informed me that all the mercy God had in reserve for me was comprised in that ring, which I had wilfully thrown away. I understood that I must now go with him to the burning mountains, and that all the flames I saw were kindled on my account. I trembled, and was in a great agony; so that it was surprising I did not then awake: but my dream continued; and, when I thought myself upon the point of a constrained

departure, and stood self-condemned, without plea or hope, suddenly, either a third person, or the same who brought the ring at first (I am not certain which) came to me, and demanded the cause of my grief. I told him the plain case, confessing that I had ruined myself wilfully, and deserved no pity. He blamed my rashness, and asked if I should be wiser, supposing I had my ring again. I could hardly answer this, for I thought it was gone beyond recall. I believe, indeed, I had not time to answer, before I saw this unexpected friend go down under the water, just in the spot where I had dropped it, and he soon returned, bringing the ring with him. The moment he came on board, the flames in the mountains were extinguished, and my seducer left me.

“Then was ‘the prey taken from the hand of the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered.’ My fears were at an end, and with joy and gratitude I approached my kind deliverer to receive the ring again; but he refused to return it and spoke to this effect: ‘If you should be entrusted with this ring again, you would very soon bring yourself into the same distress: you are not able to keep it, but I will preserve it for you, and, whenever it is needful, will produce it on your behalf.’

“Upon this I awoke, in a state of mind not to be described: I could hardly eat, or sleep, or transact my necessary business for two or three days: but the impression soon wore off, and in a little time I totally forgot it; and I think it hardly occurred to my mind again till several years afterwards.”

The Life of John Newton

“As I have purposed, so shall it stand,
I’m still in control, things aren’t out of hand;
The days may look dark and mysterious to thee,
But all is most perfectly clear unto Me.”

A HIDING PLACE IN TIME OF DANGER

In the distance a resounding explosion is heard. A woman collapses on the pavement from fright. She is terrified as she hears more and more reports. Rotterdam is no longer her good old reliable city now that war has broken out. A few days since, that which few churchmen could believe, became fact: Germany is at war with the Netherlands. On May 10th flying boats landed on the broad Maas River. She shudders – what will it all come to? The fire service is extremely busy trying to put out the fires. A bomb has destroyed houses over there, and further on an office block. In another street are heaps of rubble. The little streets in the centre are so narrow that the fire engines cannot do their work properly.

Deaf C'nelia lives in Blackhorse Street. Everyone calls her Deaf C'nelia, but her real name is Cornelia de Vries. If any should ask what her real name is, hardly a soul knows the answer. They would shrug their shoulders. For them she is Deaf C'nelia, with no surname. She has lived for years in Rotterdam and at one time had a little shop, but now she has a weak heart and can no longer keep a shop. People who never go to church consider her a little peculiar, for she is an out and out Christian. She is different from others – but they have deep respect for her. Why? They find that difficult to explain.

And now the whole city is in turmoil. She is very deaf, but C'nelia does not miss much. Her neighbours explain: "C'nelia, it is all very tense. It is highly doubtful whether the Netherlands will hold out, for the German army is so strong – and what then?" Yes, what then? Above all, Deaf C'nelia loves the Lord. He directs all things, even this fearful war. She spreads her cares before Him. Though she is deaf, the Lord always hears.

At New Year 1940 the Rev Lamain preached from the text in James 5. 9: "*Behold, the Judge standeth before the door.*" This sermon made a deep impression upon many, and among the little group with whom she regularly met, so C'nelia, too, had heard about this sermon.

It appeared that that time had now come.

In spite of everything, Deaf C'nelia remains very calm. She has much to occupy her mind, for the Lord has promised her that her little home will be spared, and she firmly believes this to be true. She feels that God is near. Bombs have already fallen on the city and the rumours are not without foundation; if Rotterdam does not capitulate there will be a huge bombardment. Many citizens move to other parts of the city where they think they will be safer if such a serious raid takes place.

C'nelia has lots of friends – people with whom she can talk concerning the Lord and His service. She loves to do this. Sometimes the friends write this or that on a slate to make their meaning clear to her. She is stone deaf

One of these friends happened to be with her when hostilities began. He heard that people were leaving; were seeking a safe refuge. Those bombs ... he dared not think about them. This man is a boatman and he has no fear of water, but he does dread the fire that could come.

“Let us go too, C'nelia, to a place where there is more protection,” he begins to say anxiously. Under her pure white bonnet she shakes her head decisively and her eyes look at him kindly but resolutely. “I am staying here, for the Lord has promised me that nothing shall happen to my little house. He has said: *‘There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling’*” (Psalm 91. 10 – though the word came to her from the Dutch rhymed version of the psalm: “Thy tent shall be secure” – “Uw tent zal veilig wezen”).

Secure? That is a strange word in context with the words “tension” and “anxiety.” He hesitates. Could it really be true? After some thought he believes that she is right. C'nelia lives close to God and he knows himself that she has laid all their cares before the Lord. He says: “Then I shall stay, too,” and at once he feels more calm.

Some acquaintances come by and ask: “C'nelia, wouldn't it

be better to leave?" The boatman tells what Deaf C'nelia so strongly believes. The friends tell it to others and the little house of C'nelia gets more and more crowded. All sorts of people come there – children of God and people who make no profession at all. It must be safe here, if things go wrong....

It is twenty past one on Tuesday afternoon. The air throbs and reverberates. Now is coming to pass what everyone feared. Ninety Heinkels, large German aeroplanes, open their bomb doors over the great city. Incendiary and high explosive bombs find their way below. Like great birds of prey those bombers circle above Rotterdam.

Deaf C'nelia sees it, too. It gets dark as though night has fallen. People run out into the streets but they are not safe there either. The fire races through the streets and it seems as though this bit of land is changed into a great oven. None can breathe normally, all of which gives them a great thirst. Two streets close by Blackhorse Street are quite ablaze and Deaf C'nelia sits there in her little house with all kinds of friends and acquaintances. The house is completely full; fathers, mothers and children are sitting on the stairs.

Everyone is now really frightened. One direct hit will mean the end for them. Deaf C'nelia has said with complete confidence that nothing will happen to her house – but what if she has been mistaken? You can no longer see properly through the windows; they are covered with soot and if you touch them, they are glowing hot!

Deaf C'nelia's faith also undergoes a test of fire. Each of those people in her house has a never dying soul. This greatly concerns her and weighs her down heavily. If ... if ... it could for all those present be eternity in a moment. Her trust in God was stronger when there were no bombs falling here. "Let us all kneel," she cries.

They do so, and the boatman, who is still there, begins to pray. He tells of their great fears and pleads with the Lord to spare them. Will He look down upon them? They seem to be

forsaken by all. Outside there is a deafening noise, but because God is almighty, He can hear a feeble human cry.

And then – the bombardment ceases. The wind, which was increasing the spread of flames, drops. It is almost four o'clock and the ravaged city capitulates; there are hundreds of dead and countless houses lie in ruin. The fire went round the street where C'nelia lived. God drew an invisible boundary: hitherto, and no further. Those in the house are amazed indeed. The Lord always speaks the truth and He certainly fulfilled His promise to C'nelia. Later her friends often recalled these incidents and there is still that deep sense of wonderment that the Lord held His protective hand over C'nelia's little house.

For Him indeed nothing is impossible.

Nelleke Wander

“THE MESSAGE FROM THE ‘CHEEKI RAFIKI’ FOR ME”

Soon after it was recently reported in the national news that four yachtsmen were missing on their way home across the Atlantic, one commentator said: “It is thought they could have moved to a life raft after capsizing.” There was then a lot of interest in these life rafts.

Firstly, regarding what size they are; what they are made of; what design features they have; and what they contain.

Then there are extraordinary tales of survival in life rafts. The record-holder is Poon Lim, who survived one hundred and thirty-three days on a raft after his ship was torpedoed by a U-boat in 1942. Another well-known case is that of the family of Dougal Robertson who spent thirty-eight days in a raft after their yacht sank.

So when the capsized yacht was discovered, the first thing that people wanted to know was where the life raft was. Sadly this was what they had to report: “A capsized yacht belonging to four missing British sailors still contains the life raft it was hoped they had escaped on, the US Coast Guard has confirmed.”

What lessons there are here concerning Christ the “Eternal Life Raft.” We may know a lot about Christ, and it all be true and interesting to discuss. So, too, we may be fascinated in the life and work of various Christians who have found safety by faith in Christ upon the stormy seas of life and death.

And as the answer to the life or death question focused upon finding the life raft, so when we pass from time into eternity, we will have to come before the “*Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead...*” (2 Timothy 4. 1).

But the one thing needful is not what facts we know in our head, though these truths like the design of a life raft, are the foundation of salvation; nor what we have heard about others, though their stories may be for our encouragement; but whether we are *in* Christ Jesus when the last great danger shall come upon us. “*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus....*” (Romans 8. 1).

R. Woodbams

“*There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*” (Proverbs 16. 25)

Some have suggested that the great pyramid was constructed at the angle of light's refraction and that the ancient Egyptians expected their monarch's soul to rise to heaven on a ray of sunlight. Pharaoh knew he had a soul, and he believed there was a heaven, but he missed it, for no ray of sunlight will ever convey a soul to glory. Paul had “*a desire to depart, and to be with Christ*” (Philippians 1. 23), but his assurance lay in the fact that the Lord Jesus had died for him on the cross, and through Christ's death his sins had been put away.

R. Surgenor

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **DANIEL CROWTER**.

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (VIII)**

In Isaiah 42. 16 the Lord by His servant speaks of *"the blind."* Have you ever thought that a blind person lives in constant darkness? Some can just see shadows and perhaps a bright light but cannot discern anything in that light, but a totally blind person lives in perpetual darkness. May the thought of this make you thankful for your sight and for what you can see: God's beautiful creation; the sun, the moon and stars. For those of us with sight we take it for granted, but a blind person I have no doubt sometimes thinks: 'if only I could see.' When the Lord Jesus Christ, being the Almighty Son of God was here on earth, He caused many blind people to see. How wonderful that must have been to suddenly be able to see.

In the Word of God we are often reminded of spiritual blindness, or darkness as it is sometimes referred to. The Lord Jesus, as recorded in John 9, healed a man that was born blind and the Pharisees tried to say that this could not be so. The poor man answered them: *"One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."* Can you say with regard to spiritual darkness: "I was blind, now I see"? Do you understand in some little measure what is in Isaiah 42. 16: *"I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known"*? When a poor sinner is born again by the Spirit of God they begin to see things they never saw before: their sinfulness, a holy law broken, a solemn curse attached to it: *"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them"* (Galatians 3. 10). They begin to seek for salvation from the curse, and the Holy Spirit leads them by faith to Jesus Christ, who said: *"I am the Light of the world."* The lesser light of the law reveals their sinful lost condition, the greater light of the gospel of Jesus Christ reveals Him as *"the Way, the Truth and the Life."*

My dear friends, do we know these things by a living experience of it in our heart? In this verse in Isaiah it continues: *"I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."* When we are brought to see how bent and crooked we are by nature and what a solemn curse we are under, and then the blessed Spirit of God reveals Jesus to our souls; what light, life, peace and liberty are then found, and those crooked things made straight. This promise still stands: *"These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."* Perhaps you feel to be so blind and your pathway so crooked: well, remember God's Word: *"These things will I do unto them."* Consider the words of Jesus Christ: *"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."*

God's word of grace is sure and certain: no "ifs" or "buts," but **"SHALL."** *"And God said let there be light: and there was light."*

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about GOD'S MERCY. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 170 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Who said, "Thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life"? (Genesis 19. 19)
2. When God gave the Ten Commandments, He gave a proclamation of mercy, too. To whom was it given? (Exodus 20. 6)
3. Paul speaks of prayer as coming "boldly unto the throne of grace." But what does he say we should pray for? (Hebrews 4. 16)

4. Jesus spoke of a publican who came up to the temple to pray. What was his prayer? (Luke 18. 13)
5. David wrote Psalm 51 after he had sinned deeply. What was the first thing for which he asked God? (Psalm 51. 1)
6. In one of the parables of the Lord Jesus a man asked for mercy, but it was too late. Which parable? (Luke 16)
7. Write down a verse from Romans 9 which shows God's sovereignty in those on whom He has mercy.
8. In Psalm 103, David speaks of God's mercy being "from everlasting to everlasting." Upon whom is that mercy shown?
9. In which Psalm does every verse end: "for His mercy endureth for ever"?
10. Many of those who came to the Lord Jesus with impossible cases simply asked for mercy. Write down the references for at least three, none of whom went away disappointed.

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. Joseph.
2. "A wise and an understanding heart."
3. "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."
4. "The fear of the LORD."
5. "Let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."
6. "The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth." (Ecclesiastes 7. 4)
7. "They would consider their latter end." (Deuteronomy 32. 29)
8. The wisdom that is from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. (James 3. 17)
9. "The Holy Scriptures." (2 Timothy 3. 15)
10. "Let him become a fool." (1 Corinthians 3. 18-19)

Contributed

When our Lord says we must be converted and become as little children, I suppose He means also, that we must be sensible of our weakness, comparatively speaking, as a little child.

George Whitefield

“SEALED”

One by one the offerings came
 To the Temple, in the sinner's name;
One by one did the thoughtful priest
 Keenly examine each offered beast.

Here is a heifer with cast of eye;
 Not accepted; he puts it by;
One has a tuft of matted hair;
 Not accepted; a blemish *there*.

Little our congregations know
 Of the wearisome services long ago;
Back to the herd, and back to the fold,
 For a *perfect* victim, went those of old.

Glad at heart when the priest's keen eye
 Nor blot nor blemish could descry;
The long anxiety was healed;
 And the victim, doomed for death, was sealed.

Sinner, waiting at mercy's gate;
 Empty handed and desolate;
Born in sin and deserving hell,
 Wherefore should thy sorrows swell?

Art thou looking with eager eye
 To the spotless Lamb of Mount Calvary?
Take *Him* with you and *you* are healed;
 “Him hath God the Father sealed.”

Sin on the sinless One was laid;
 Once and for ever the price He paid;
And Jehovah sets, with a Father's care,
 His seal on the sinner hiding there.

M.A. Chaplin

The Friendly Companion



Royal Mail Stamp issued in 2012 showing
Thomas Newcomen's Steam Engine

“Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us,
but unto Thy name give glory,
for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake.”
(Psalm 115. 1)

September 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

I wonder how many who read the *Friendly Companion* are seven years old? What would you think if I told you that one lad, seven years of age, became king over Judah. His name was Joash, sometimes also spelt Jehoash. The history of this young king is very instructive. There are five things, all beginning with the letter 'h' which tell us his history.

Firstly, for the first six years of his life, he was **hidden**. His grandmother, Athaliah, had done a very wicked thing when her son Ahaziah died. So that she could be the queen, she had all of the heirs to the throne slain, except for this young prince, who was snatched up by a kind aunt who hid him from the cruelty of Athaliah. God had a work for him to do.

Secondly, Joash was hidden in the **house of the Lord**. This was the temple that Solomon had built where no doubt there were plenty of rooms where he could be hidden away. We think of others who were hidden. Moses in his own home and then in the ark of bulrushes; the prophet Elijah at Cherith; and most of all the Lord Jesus Christ who was hidden in Egypt from the sword of Herod. It must have been rather lonely for Joash, as he would not have been allowed to go out of the temple, nor would he have had any other children to play with. He would have known no doubt about Samuel, who also as a young lad, lived in the temple of his day with Eli the high priest.

Thirdly, when he was crowned king, at only seven years of age, he was not wise enough to rule on his own so he needed a wise **helper**. God gave him a faithful man, named Jehoiada who gave him guidance and encouragement to do what was right in God's sight. How thankful we should be for friends like this, and how ready we should be to listen to the advice of those who are more experienced than we are.

Fourthly, God gave him **honest** men to work for him in the renovation of the temple. These good men took the collections of money that were taken when people came to worship, and

they used the money to buy materials and hire labour for this noble work. Jehoiada and Joash trusted them so much that they never asked any questions about how much was collected. They knew that they would use it all wisely for God's house. Honesty is a very important virtue and all who fear God should be so in every part of their life. We knew of a godly man who was changing his job. His former employer wrote, "You can trust this man with your life."

Fifthly, and very sadly, as soon as Jehoiada died Joash was **hindered** in his reign. His hindrance was that he relied on his own judgment and that of ungodly men, and did not seek God's help. Jehoiada's years of advice were quickly forgotten with tragic consequences. How many seem to follow God's ways while they are surrounded by strong believers, but when these are no longer at hand they can stand no longer in God's ways, sadly showing that they were not truly rooted and grounded in God's Word and ways.

Soon many of our teenage readers will be leaving home. I do hope they may seek for grace to keep them faithful to God's ways, when there is no Christian environment and they are beyond the eyes of their parents who have sought to bring them up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Three hundred and fifty years ago this year, a son was born to a man called Elias Newcomen. Elias and his wife, Sarah, lived in the beautiful Devon port of Dartmouth.

Elias was a staunch Baptist, which classed him among the dissenters, who often were treated less favourably than those who continued with the national Church of England. For example, they were not permitted to take part in civic duties. Elias was friendly with the Puritans, John Flavel and John Owen. Elias's second son, named Thomas, was born on February 24th 1664. Being brought up as a Baptist it was not

surprising that when the Lord called young Thomas by His grace, he also became a staunch Baptist and was eventually to become the pastor of the Baptist Church in Dartmouth.

However, young Thomas's claim to fame in his generation was to be not so much for his strong Baptist leanings, but for the fact that he invented the first working steam engine. James Watt who is often spoken of as the father of this invention actually made improvements to the engine that Thomas Newcomen had first invented. The steam engine was to become a vital part of the tin mines in Devon and Cornwall, and later in the coal mines of the Black Country, in pumping the water out of the mines to prevent flooding.

Sadly his dissenting views meant that his own generation was reluctant to acknowledge his contribution to the Industrial Revolution. However, later generations have acknowledged his work in the museums at Dartmouth and the Black Country.

Our picture is of a postage stamp showing one of the steam pumps that Thomas invented, which invention added greatly to the safety of the mines over many generations. Thomas, however, was quick to acknowledge the hand of God upon him in his secular work, and did not forget that the one thing needful is to be reconciled to God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

A RIDDLE

Can you answer all seven of the following questions with the same word?

1. The word has seven letters.
2. Preceded God.
3. Greater than God.
4. More evil than the devil.
5. All poor people have it.
6. Wealthy people need it.
7. If you eat it, you will die.

Next month the answer will be given. Ed.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**ISRAEL ASKS FOR A KING**

When Samuel was old, he made his sons judges in Israel. But they were not good and honest judges. The people said to Samuel: *"Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."* God was the King of Israel, and they did not need another ruler like the other nations.

Samuel was sad at the words of the people and prayed to the LORD. He was told to do as they asked but first to solemnly warn them. A king would take their sons and daughters to work for himself. He would take the best fields and vineyards and also part of their animals. They would be servants to the king. The people refused the warning of Samuel and said: *"Nay; but we will have a king over us."*

God sent a man from the land of Benjamin to Samuel. His name was Saul. He was very tall and good looking. The LORD said to Samuel: *"Thou shalt anoint him to be captain over My people Israel."*

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the people want Samuel to make? (2 words)
 2. Who was the King of Israel? (1 word)
 3. What was the name of the man God sent to Samuel?
- Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (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. Pray.
2. Ebenezer.
3. "Hitherto hath the LORD helped us."

Contributed

*“...and,
behold, the
LORD hath
set a king
over you.”*
1 Samuel
12. 13.

BIBLE LESSONS**JESUS APPEARS BY THE SEA OF GALILEE**

The appearances of Jesus to the disciples (when they were all together), were very needful to them. In later years, if one might be tempted to doubt the reality of Jesus' resurrection, the rest could assure him that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead as they had all seen Him.

Following the second appearance (when Thomas was with them), the disciples departed from Jerusalem and returned to their homes in Galilee. Before His death Jesus told them that He would go before them into Galilee, and there they would see Him. Also, the angel at the sepulchre commanded the women to go and tell the disciples: "... *behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; ... lo, I have told you.*"

When someone (like grandpa or grandma), has said they will come to see you, I expect you find it very hard to wait. Well, the disciples must have felt the same way while waiting for the Lord Jesus. Days came and went. Still Jesus did not appear. No one knew where He was, so they could not send a message to Him. **THEY MUST WAIT!**

One evening a number of them were together. It was Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, James and John (who were brothers), and two other disciples – seven in all. Perhaps they were getting anxious while waiting for Jesus to come. Peter, especially, was restless and spoke up: "*I go a fishing.*" The rest quickly agreed to go with him. You remember this was their occupation when Jesus called them to follow Him.

They all climbed into the boat and launched out into the Sea of Galilee, just as they had done so many times before. They cast out the net and after a while they drew it up. It was empty! Again and again they let it out and drew it up. John tells us in his Gospel: "*and that night they caught nothing.*" We wonder if they thought at all of the words Jesus had recently spoken to them: "*Without Me ye can do nothing.*" What a disappointing night! All their labour was in vain.

As the day began to dawn, a lone figure stood on the shore and called out to the disciples: "*Children, have ye any meat?*" Surely they, who had been earnestly waiting for their Lord to appear, would recognize the Stranger by His voice, or at least by that endearing term: "*children.*" But no, the disciples were so preoccupied with their circumstances that they did not recognize their Master. They answered the Stranger: "*NO.*"

Again the Stranger called out to them: "*Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find.*" Surely this word would awaken their understanding. Would it not bring back to their memory another time? Some three years before, after toiling all night, the Lord told them to launch out into the deep and let down the nets for a great catch of fishes.

Still, the disciples did not think of their Lord. The Lord's people are often so slow to perceive His presence. We wonder if, with hesitation and misgiving, they reluctantly let down the net once more.

No sooner did they let the net down, than it began to fill up. As the net filled with fishes, it caused a great drag on their boat. What a miracle! We wonder how long the disciple John stared at the net full of fishes and back at the Stranger on the shore before he said to Peter: "*IT IS THE LORD.*"

You can read about this in John chapter 21 verses 1 to 7.

QUESTIONS:

1. Where had Jesus told the disciples they would see Him?
2. How many disciples were together?
3. What had they caught through the night?
4. What term did the Stranger use when He called them?
5. Which disciple was the first to recognize the Stranger?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (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. "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."
2. Into the print of the nails.
3. Thrust it into His side.
4. "Be not faithless, but believing."
5. "They that have not seen, and yet have believed."

G. L. TenBroeke

TELEVISION

Some time ago, the Evangelische Hogeschool (Evangelical High School) in the Dutch city Amersfoort, organised a study into the influence of television on society, and the formation of a Christian stance on this issue. A Dutch Reformed Christian magazine, the Gezinsgids, published an article on the results of this study. Below are some excerpts of the article.

1. Covert Fellow Educator

A professor by the name of Dr. Heinrich (in Germany) and his students watched only movies and television shows for the entire week. At the end of the week, the number of violent acts committed was tallied – 103 deaths, 27 shootings, and countless torturing incidents and armed robberies. About 300,000 children had watched all this! When these staggering numbers were published, many people derisively dismissed them as exaggeration. Germany's chancellor, however, remarked that "television has become a covert fellow educator for our children."

2. Desensitizing

Who chooses which stories make news broadcasts? Sadly, the stream of information is decidedly not neutral. The biggest problem with this is that news has become amusement, and thus desensitizes us. The suffering of others is far away, and by continually being subjected to the same shocking images and footage from areas hit by disasters, we slowly harden ourselves against being deeply disturbed by the suffering of others.

3. The Lazy Viewer

It has become apparent that there is no such thing as responsible viewing. The viewer does not choose, because he would rather not think. He would rather be lazy, and let everything wash over him. Belief in responsible discretionary viewing rests on the liberal and humanistic ideal that man needs no curatorship; he will decide what is good and what is evil. After all, man is a reasonable creature, and will automatically choose for the good! However, our society is slowly discovering that for the individual distinguishing between good and evil is actually more difficult than we believed. We have been too idealistic in our view of man.

4. In Control of the Knob

I am also convinced that it is arrogant and hypocritical to think that we are in control of what we watch. A young man, planning to buy a television, once told his father: "But, Dad, I am in control of the knob!" His wise father answered: "Yes, son, that is exactly why you should not buy a television. *You* are in control of the knob." This answer stopped the young man from buying the television. We pray: "*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*" Should we then take temptation into our homes?

5. Raise the Dykes

The waters of evil are rising in this slowly sinking world. What should we do? Learn to swim by trying to use the television responsibly? No, let us rather raise the dykes. We will not be able to see so "far" but it is definitely a lot safer!

6. Television the key

The television has been likened to a key that the devil invented to be able to enter every household. The interviewee emphasised that we have to gain more respect for Biblical principles. We need to stop with the "But I think ..." and "What is wrong with that ..." discussions, and let the Bible have the last word. The interviewee also cited the words of the Apostle John: "*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.*" Television is a window to worldly things, and

brings the world into your household. So much of the precious time of grace is wasted by watching television. When do we spend the time praying and reading the Bible?

7. The Ten Commandments

We have to warn against the bad influences from watching television. Even the apparently “good” programmes are not innocent. Daily, matters such as murder, adultery, fornication, robbery and looting are, as it were, propagandised on television. Those who say they are in control of the knob may not know themselves. The best course of action is to *not* bring the television into the home. Your children will want more and more of this stream of seemingly harmless information.

8. Food for Thought

It is deeply saddening that carcinogenic (cancer-causing) substances and foods are removed from our houses, but the television is not. Is the soul not more than the body? We eschew poison for our bodies, but we do not eschew the evil for our eyes and ears. Our souls are diseased. In Proverbs 27. 20, Solomon speaks: *“Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.”* This text gives much food for thought. The way we spend our time must also bow to God’s command. The words of the Saviour are still applicable today: *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness....”* That is a good use of your time.

9. Idol

The television is like the modern day altar. Day after day our children sit at the foot of the great fellow educator. The values and norms brought to them by this window into the world will have lasting effects on the thinking and behaviour of the upcoming generations.

In conclusion, we want to emphasise one argument against television: We pray: *“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”* Should we then take temptation into our homes?

DO WE HAVE A PLACE IN CHRIST'S SCHOOL?

We were happy and satisfied with our plans: our four-year-old would join his sisters at the nearby school when the new school year started. Other parents began to discuss with anticipation whether their children would receive a place, as the day approached to receive the news. It was then that we discovered with dismay and embarrassment that our application was neither completed nor sent. Hurriedly with apologies, explanations and as much supporting evidence as we could muster, a late application was delivered, but when the day came there was no place for him in the nearby school, but in the least popular school some distance away instead.

However, we thought we would appeal as we had previously in different circumstances with success. We had plenty of supporting evidence and reasons, and it was only an oversight on our part, but when we read through the long letter informing us of his school place, there did not appear to be any information regarding how to appeal. We thought this might be because of changes regarding the forming of academies, but when we made an enquiry at the office we were told we had no right of appeal as we had not applied according to the regulations set down.

What lessons to learn concerning our souls and eternity: what a dangerous thing it is to presume, being brought up with a form of religion that we will just follow others that have gone or are going before us, and will enter into heaven with them. There is the need to "*give diligence to make your calling and election sure*" (2 Peter 1. 10).

Secondly, there is no right of appeal if we have not acted according to the regulations set down. There is no way into heaven by appealing with reasons, excuses or apologies; if we have not kept all the law: "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die*" (Ezekiel 18. 4). God's commandments are good, holy and eternal, and He will not bend them, ignore them or change them.

The story has a happy ending (not a presumed or imagined

happiness as at the beginning). Though we were helpless to do anything, but watch and pray with humility, we trust God is the helper of the helpless, is gracious to the undeserving, and made a way where there is no way. Another child, who no longer wanted a place, had been offered one, and that was given to our son. It reminds us of Romans 11. 17 and 33: *"...some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; ... 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!"*

Contributed

MORE ON JOHN CALVIN

"Keep courage and strengthen yourselves, for God shall make use of this church, and keep her standing, and also assures you that He will protect it." John Calvin spoke these words while on his deathbed, to his fellow office bearers in Geneva. On May 27th it was 450 years since the Reformer passed away.

With an immense thrust, the fountain in Lake Geneva pushes its plume of water more than four hundred feet into the air. There, it dissipates before the coast of the city, and the wind blows it away, first in one direction, and then the other direction.

It illustrates the power and influence which emanated from Geneva in the days of the Reformation and the days following; the fruits of the Reformation flowed out, first in the one direction, and then the other. In this city the great Reformer gave theological instruction; there, he thoroughly and carefully considered the Reformed doctrine, and he sent out innumerable letters. His writings exuded authority, and they had a worldwide effect.

Calvin lived in Geneva for about one half of his life. A monument calls to remembrance the place where his house

stood on the Rue de Chanoines, a street which is now named after him (Rue Jean-Calvin). He who climbs higher will come to the St. Pierre, the church where Calvin frequently preached. The interior, where all evidences of the Roman Catholic image worship were removed, has remained very plain. Standing there is a chair which allegedly belonged to Calvin, but that is questionable.

The museum next to the church building relates the history of the reformation of the church. On this spot once stood a cloister where many church gatherings took place; also the meeting, where the citizens of Geneva on May 21, 1536 chose in favour of the Reformation, was held there. In the auditorium on the other side of the church can be heard fragments from Calvin's works. It was in this building that Calvin gave his lectures. In a nearby park there is a monument to the Reformation which is one hundred metres long and ten metres high and was built in 1909, four centuries after his birth. It contains statues of Calvin, Farel, Beza and Knox, all of whom worked in Geneva.

Farel's appeal

Calvin originally settled in Geneva against his will, the city where he ultimately had so much influence. In July 1536, while travelling on to Strassburg, Guillaume Farel asked him to remain in Geneva. Calvin, the author of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, who was barely twenty-seven years old, could impart great influence there. He had many objections, but after Farel with great persuasion spoke to him of his responsibility, Calvin knew that the Lord had used these comments to point him to his field of labour. He later expressed it in these words: "It was as if God from heaven laid His hand upon me with power." Together with Farel, he assumed the leadership of the Reformation. The Roman Catholic elements were removed from the church services, and the proclamation of the Word was established as central to the service. The population of the city was urgently admonished to tread a Biblical walk of life.

Calvin laboured in Geneva for twenty-five years. He spent the years 1538-1542 in Strassburg after a conflict with the Genevan city fathers regarding church discipline. During this time of exile, he married Idelette de Bure.

Returning in submission

The Reformer returned to Geneva when Cardinal Sadolet tried to win over the city to return it to the Roman Catholic Church. Calvin looked up against his return, but he knew that he had again been called to Geneva. He wrote to Farel: "I offer my heart to the Lord. I have given my bound spirit in obedience to God." Some people thought that he would level considerable reproach upon the city fathers for driving him from the city, but he did nothing of the sort. He picked up the pieces and continued on from where he had left three years earlier.

Calvin, who had become a widower at the age of thirty-nine, expended his strength in the service of the Lord. He completely applied himself day after day in both preaching and instruction. He wrote Bible commentaries and defended the Reformed doctrine against heresy. During a period of illness he worked while in bed on a revision of the *Institutes*.

The strife for the exercise of Biblical discipline and over-involvement by the authorities in church matters continued. The authorities were not always supportive. They did close the taverns but later on allowed them to again open their doors. Calvin wrote: "Godlessness has reached such a level that I can barely hope that the church will be kept in good order. Believe me, I am a broken man if God does not reach out His hand to me."

The Lord gave a turnaround. After the elections of 1555, the city government was behind him, and they fully supported him in his efforts. The population of Geneva more than doubled, especially with the coming of Protestant refugees from France.

The theological instruction of future ministers, which Calvin instituted in 1559, drew students from large areas of Europe. The street where the academy was established was later named

Rue Theodore Beza after the first headmaster. When Calvin died in 1564, there were approximately fifteen hundred students. This school was very influential in the dissemination of the Reformed doctrine throughout all of Europe.

Testament

The Reformer lived to be only fifty-four years old. In spite of bodily weakness, he had accomplished an exceptional amount of work. In the last lesson which he gave on Wednesday, February 2nd, 1564, he expounded on Ezekiel 20. Four days later, he delivered his last sermon with a great deal of difficulty.

Five weeks before his death he documented in his testament: "First, I thank God that He has had mercy upon me, and has drawn me out of the abyss of idol worship, to bring me to the light of the gospel, and to give to me a portion of the doctrine that leads to salvation, of which I was not worthy. He has borne with all of my faults and weaknesses, whereby I have earned a thousand times to be cast away by Him. There is much more in that. He has extended His grace to such an extent that He has used me and my labour to the advancement and proclamation of the truth of His gospel. Therefore, I declare, and I desire, to both live and die in this faith, and that I have no hope or expectation other than this, that God has accepted me in grace."

L. Vogelaar

'BUG EYE' BROADENS FIELD OF VIEW

Wanting to reduce the weight and size of night vision goggles worn by frontline troops, and also hoping to widen the field of view, engineers at BAE Systems looked to the eyes of the tiny parasitic fly *Xenos peckii* for inspiration.

Executive scientist Leslie Laycock explained that existing equipment only provides a 30-40° field of vision, severely limiting 'situational awareness' during night-time military operations.

"Most of the size and weight of a conventional lens is due to the glass – the actual optics," he said. "So, when we were

thinking of ways to miniaturise the equipment, we looked at insects because they have tiny optics in their eyes, which provide high quality images. The compound eyes of insects can often contain up to hundreds of thousands of tiny lenses. We did not want to go to that level of complexity, but found the *Xenos peckii* with fifty larger lenses, which provided the high resolution and sensitivity that we required.”

Each of the fifty separate lenses in each eye produces an individual image, which the insect’s brain meshes together to form a single large panoramic image. The researchers say they have managed to recreate this effect in a new imaging device, dubbed ‘Bug Eye,’ which has nine lenses. Each lens is about the size of a mobile phone camera lens, arranged on a curved surface.

The new technology provides troops with a 60° field of view, almost doubling that of previous helmet-mounted devices, and is both more compact and lightweight.

The Bug Eye system is also being applied in other areas: e.g. providing missile tracking systems with 120° field of vision (a dramatic improvement on the previous 20°), and doing away with the ‘black spots’ of current CCTV camera systems.

While it is nice that insect eye design has inspired a broadening of the field of view of soldiers on night missions, would it not be even better if it inspires a broadening of people’s worldview generally? i.e. that they might come to a right view that eyes in nature are of *Designer* origin, rather than (as is sadly taught currently in schools, universities and elsewhere) of an evolutionary origin.

Nobody in their right mind would defraud the inventors of the night vision technology by denying them credit for their handiwork, or even their existence. How much more credit then is due to the One who designed the eyes that inspired them in the first place.

Creation: (David Catchpole, B.Ag.Sc.(Hons.), Ph.D.)

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (IX)**

In the Old Testament the church of God is called Zion. Zion was a hill in one corner of the city of Jerusalem. In the prophecies, the New Testament church of Jesus Christ is called Zion. This is the spiritual Zion, not of course confined to a geographical location but a spiritual people born again by the Holy Ghost and gathered together in a congregation of believers, united in church fellowship, baptized and keeping the Lord's supper. In the Old Testament this is referred to as Zion or a hill of Zion. In Ezekiel 34 we have a wonderful prophecy of the prosperity of the New Testament church which will be gathered from every nation, kindred, tongue and people. In verse 23 we have a prophecy of the glorious Shepherd of Israel, Jesus Christ, who will be a Prince among them. In verse 25 we have the glorious covenant of peace that has been sealed by the blood of Jesus, called in Hebrews 13 *"the blood of the everlasting covenant."* In verse 26 there is a reference to these little hills of Zion: *"And I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing."* These showers are the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit upon them, making them thrive and grow.

What drew me to this subject are the sacred promises in Isaiah 60 to Zion, the church of the living God. *"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee."* Jesus Christ is the Light of the world and when He came the Sun of righteousness arose and the gospel day dawned upon this world and those who receive not the Gospel of Jesus Christ are in gross darkness. In verse 4 this glorious light will shine forth through the preaching of the Person and work of Jesus Christ; then we shall see the fulfilling of the promise from Ezekiel above, that the Lord will make them

and the places round about the little hills of Zion a blessing. We have this precious word in Isaiah: *"Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side."*

Just as it was a wonderful thing when God said: *"Let there be light..."* in the natural world, it is an even greater glory and light when the eternal Father sent His only begotten Son into this world. As we read in 2 Corinthians 4. 6: *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* This glorious light shines into the heart; it does us no good if it only illuminates our intellect and leaves our heart in gross darkness. Such people who only have a head knowledge of truth are walking in sparks of their own kindling and come under that solemn word that was spoken by Jesus Christ to the church at Sardis, Revelation 3. 1: *"...thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead."* My dear young friends, I write these things to warn you that: *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."*

J. R. Rutt

"Whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Hebrews 6. 20).

In the olden days, when ships arrived at port at low tide and they were unable to dock, the crew would lower the anchor into a small boat called a "forerunner." It would then carry the anchor to the shore where it would be securely fastened. What comfort to know that although our ship has not yet docked, the anchor is secured, and when the tide is right, we too shall enter the harbour.

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the month questions have been received from HARRY PLAYFOOT.

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about THE LIFE OF JOSEPH. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 194 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Why did Jacob love Joseph more than his other children, and what did he give to him? (Genesis 37. 3)
2. Joseph dreamed two dreams and told his father and brothers. How did his brothers react to what he said? (Genesis 37. 8, 11)
3. Joseph's brothers sold him to the Midianite merchants, but how did they seek to deceive their father Jacob as to what had happened? (Genesis 37. 31-33)
4. What did Joseph say to Potiphar's wife to show his revulsion at her sinful suggestions? (Genesis 39. 9)
5. After Joseph was put in prison, two men with him had dreams, which Joseph interpreted. Who were they? (Genesis 40)
6. In Pharaoh's dreams two years later, what did the seven good kine, and the seven good ears represent? (Genesis 41)
7. When the famine came, Joseph's brothers came to buy corn in Egypt from Joseph. What did they do which was a fulfilment of Joseph's dreams? (Genesis 42)
8. Twice in Genesis 39 we read, "The Lord was with Joseph." In what ways was God's blessing seen?
9. Write out one of the verses from Genesis 45 which shows that Joseph saw God's overruling hand in all the sad circumstances which had brought him down into Egypt.
10. When Joseph's brothers came to Egypt the second time, what did Joseph do to see whether they bore the same jealous ill-will to Benjamin that they had showed toward himself?

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

1. Lot.
2. "Thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments."

3. "That we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."
4. "God be merciful to me a sinner."
5. Mercy and forgiveness.
6. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16. 24)
7. "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." (Romans 9. 18) (or verses 15 & 16)
8. "Them that fear Him." (Psalm 103. 17)
9. Psalm 136.
10. Matthew 9. 27; 15. 22; 17. 15; 20. 30; Mark 10. 47; Luke 17. 13; 18. 38.

Contributed

LIST OF NAMES

The following young people have answered questions during the months January – June 2014. The total number is 264, for which we would thank God.

Harry and Maia Aldridge; Daryl and Jared Aldridge; Jessica, Megan and Tom Aldridge.

Ellie Baker; Katie and Tommy Baker; Anna and Jethro Baldwin-Jones; Daisy, Josiah, Lily and Noah Barker; Kate Barnett; Abigail, Daniel and Samuel Broome; Jemima, Josiah, Kezia and Phebe Burden; Caleb, Kezia and Olivia Burgess; Jonathan and Nicolas Burton; Emily Buss; Jennifer and Sophie Buss.

Bethany, Daniel, Elizabeth and Victoria Chapman; Anna-Louise, Isaac and Sophie Clark; Samuel Cooper; Alice, Beth, Charlotte, Katy and William Cottingham; Annie and Lucy Cottingham; Freddie, Isobel and Oliver Cottingham; Owen Cottingham; Alicia, Emma and Jessica Cottingham; Abigail, James, Rebecca and Thomas Crowter; Annabel, Elsie, Esther, Daniel, Kate and Penny Crowter.

Edward and Harry Dadswell; Louise Dadswell; Jonathan, Nicholas and Peter De Vogel.

Ruby Field.

Ella Green.

Eleanor, George and Jonathan Hare; Abigail, Cornelia, Luke and Nathanael Hayden; Ben, Kezia, Suzie and Tom Hayden; George and Leah Hickman; Marcus and Susanna Hickman; Rosaline Hickman; Katharine Hills; Caleb and Joseph Hydon.

Joshua Izzard.

Emily Janes; Edward, Eleanor and Thomas Jarman; David and George Jempson; Joshua and Rosie Jempson.

Helen Kerley; Joshua Kerley; Annabel Kinderman.

Joel and Megan Lucas.

Alex, Benjamin and Harry Main; Harriet and Lewis Macpherson; David, Henry, John and Sarah Munns.

Amy, Emily and Jethro Northern; Freya and Jessica Northern.

Rebecca Outten.

Anna, Jonathan, Rebekah and Simeon Pack; Caleb, Nathan, Rachel and Susanna Pack; Elysia, Harvey and Sophia Parish; Josephine Parish; Priscilla Parish; Oliver Pearce; Heidi, James, Joseph, Katie and Oliver Playfoot; Millie and Thomas Playfoot.

Ella and Lily Ramsbottom; Eddie, Jessica and Oliver Raymond; Alexander Rayner; James Rice; Isobel, Samuel and Tom Riche; Susanna Risbridger; Andrew, Daniel and Joseph Rosier; Freya Rosier; Isabella and John Rosier.

Grace, John and Karen Sadler; Rosanna and Timothy Salkeld; Abigail and Isaac Saunders; Emily, George and Harry Saunders; Ethan and Samuel Saunders; Joseph and Stephanie Saunders; Clementine, Maria and Nicholas Sayers; Matthew and Rachel Scott; Chloe and Jessica Seymour; James and Rosie Shaw; Ethan and Eloise Starkey; Kate and Matthew Stearn; Jessica Stevens.

Harry, James, Jemima and Phebe Tarbin; Elisabeth, James and Paul Topping.

Alec, Emma and Joshua Wigley; Chloe, Jonny and Lydia Wilkins; Bethany, Caleb, Cordelia, Francesca, Jemima and Nathanael Wiltshire; Abigail, Edwin, Joseph, Kate, Lucy, Matthias and Polly Woodhams; Benjamin, Ellen, George, Jessica, Naomi, Thomas and Timothy Woodhams; Rosanna Woodhams; Chloe and Lucy Woods.

Overseas Names:

Sophie Bruere Heneqpowerhof, Calvin and Dennis Glass; Jarrod Greyn; Kilee and Montanalee Greyn; Cayley, Olivia and Quinton Knibbe; Isaac Knol; Luke Linna; Rachel and Shelley Mol; Jacob, Joseph, Savannah and Thomas Mol; Heidi and Mariah Muis; Paul Nowlan; Emily Quist; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Caleb, Natalie and Zachary Sporte; Abigail, Bethany, Kaitlyn and Michaela Teunissen; Fred Van Gemert; Danielle Van Vugt; Jonathan and Laura Wesdyk; Cody, Dylan and Tyler White; Carissa, Carolyn, Janna and Leah Ymker.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

Another harvest's gathered in
And we would sing God's praise,
His mercy's been upon our land
And shamed our wrongful ways.
Our barns are filled, our hearts are glad
For all the produce given:
Oh may our hearts rejoice in Thee,
And praise the God of heaven.

For gentle showers and ripening sun
Upon our fruitful land,
For labourer's skill and help to toil
And strength of feet and hand,
We praise Thy name for Thou art kind
To give us so much good:
Oh may we still remember Thee,
And thank Thee for our food.

We hear of drought in other lands,
Of turbulence and grief,
And while our larders here are full
We pray for them relief;
And may we so remember Thee
That should grief come to us,
We may be still resigned and say:
The LORD hath sent it thus.

So LORD once more our thanks we bring
For all Thy love and care,
For mercies past and present too
Which we Thy creatures share.
Then when the seasons are no more
And all our lives shall cease,
May we through Christ know sins forgiven
In heaven with joy and peace.

R. Chaplin

The Friendly Companion



*“I will preserve thee.”
(Isaiah 49. 8)*

October 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

I wonder how many of our readers could say how many words appear in our Bible! (King James Authorised of course!) The answer is 783,137. Although there are forty different people whom God used to write the Holy Scriptures, yet all of these words, as we read in 2 Timothy 3. 16 are 'God-breathed-inspired.' *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...."*

I wonder if any of you have heard of a book, of three pages only, without one word on any of the pages. This book was carried about in his pocket by a man, and he would get it out from time to time and show it to his friends and sometimes to complete strangers.

The first leaf of the book was jet black; the second was scarlet red; the third was pure white. If anyone asked him why he carried it with him and what the three pages said to him, he would answer as follows:

"The black leaf represents my sin; the red leaf represents the precious blood of Christ; the white leaf represents my soul as washed in the precious blood of Christ and made as white as snow." While not a word was written in the three-leaved book, yet it teaches us a very important lesson which the largest book ever written, besides the Holy Bible, could ever teach us.

Firstly, that by nature we are in God's sight as black sinners; secondly, that if we are to be as white as snow in our souls we need the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us and come between us and a holy God; thirdly, that we need to be taught both sides of truth, sin and salvation.

"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1. 18).

May we each know and experience this simple, yet vital lesson for ourselves.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Bible That Stopped Western Front Bullet

A First World War soldier who dodged a bullet on the front line found it had lodged in his Bible and stopped at the verse: *"I will preserve thee."*



George Vinall was so convinced that God had saved his life that he became a Bible translator after the war. His story is included in a new book published by the Bible Society to mark the centenary of the outbreak of war.

Vinall, a 25-year-old from Eastbourne, wrote a letter home from France on July 17, 1915 which began: "Dear Mother and Father, I am sending in a parcel, my pocket Bible and three shrapnel bullets, of which the following is the story."

Vinall was about to lie down in his tent when he saw a friend approaching and stepped towards the door to speak to him. That action saved his life. German shells began raining down and he dived for cover in a nearby trench.

"When I returned, we discovered that about a dozen men had been wounded, two of whom subsequently died," he wrote. "As far as we could trace, four bullets came in, one being embedded in my kit where my head would have been, but for the arrival of my friend.

"Another was on the floor where I would have been lying. The third was in the pocket of my tunic, having been stopped by my Bible. The fourth went through Gibson's mackintosh (raincoat) which was hung up in the compartment next to mine.

"The eighth verse of Isaiah 49, where the bullet stopped, contains these words which caught my eye directly I saw it: *"I will preserve thee."* May this be true of future days until I see

you all again is my heartfelt prayer. Your loving son, George.”

The story is featured in “*Hear My Cry*,” published by the Bible Society.

Daily Telegraph – July 2012.

BIBLE STATISTICS – (King James Authorised)

Number of books in the Bible – 66

Chapters – 1,189

Verses – 31,102

Words – 783,137

Letters – 3,116,480

Number of promises given in the Bible – 1,260

Commands – 6,468

Predictions – over 8,000

Fulfilled prophecy – 3,268 verses

Unfulfilled prophecy – 3,140

Number of questions – 3,294

Longest name – Mahershalalhashbaz (Isaiah 8. 1)

Longest verse – Esther 8. 9 (78 words)

Shortest verse – John 11. 35 – (2 words – “*Jesus wept.*”)

Middle books – Micah and Nahum

Middle verse – Psalm 103. 2-3

Middle chapter – Psalm 117

Shortest chapter (by number of words) – Psalm 117

Longest chapter – Psalm 119 (176 verses)

Shortest book (by number of words) 3 John

Longest book – Psalms (150 chapters)

Number of times the word “God” appears – 4,094

Number of times the word “Lord” appears – 6,781

Number of different authors – 40

Number of languages the Bible has been translated into –
over 1,200

The verse that contains every letter of the alphabet
(apart from the letter ‘J’) – Ezra 7. 21

Selected

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**SAUL MADE KING**

When they were alone, Samuel poured a special oil upon the head of Saul to anoint him as king. Then Samuel called the people of Israel to Mizpeh. He said: *"See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?"* Even though Israel had sinned in asking for a king, God provided them with a man such as they wanted. Samuel told the people the laws of the kingdom and wrote them in a book.

Soon a cruel king came against Israel to hurt them: *"And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings."* He led Israel against the enemy and God gave them the victory. How the people rejoiced! They sacrificed to the LORD and again proclaimed Saul to be king over Israel.

Samuel reminded the people that God was still their King. He had fought for them and helped them. *"If ye will fear the LORD, and serve Him, and obey His voice ... then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God."* If they turned aside, God would forsake them.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Samuel pour upon Saul to anoint him?
2. Where did Samuel write the laws of the kingdom?
3. What came upon Saul before he led Israel against the enemy? (4 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (See page 218 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

Contributed

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. A king.
2. God.
3. Saul.

*“And
turn
ye not
aside:”*

1 Samuel

12. 21.

BIBLE LESSONS

“LOVEST THOU ME?”

The appearances of Jesus to His people are always surprising and exceeding precious to them. The miraculous catch of fishes after a long night of taking nothing, impressed upon the disciples the power and glory of their Lord. The long night of toiling and taking nothing was forgotten when the net was so heavy that they could not pull it into the ship.

When Peter knew from John that the Stranger on the shore was the Lord, he put his outer garment on, jumped into the sea, and waded to the shore. The Bible tells us they were not far from the shore, so Peter might easily do this. Do you remember a former night when the sea was stormy and Jesus came to them? On that occasion Peter called out: *“Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.”*

There was likely a time when nothing could have drawn Peter away from a net full of fishes. Now his love to Jesus was far stronger than to a net of fishes. Like the woman who left her water pot at the well, he would gladly leave the net of fishes to get near to Jesus.

The other disciples followed in the ship, dragging the net of fishes. When they came ashore, they saw burning coals with fish laid on them and bread. Where did the Lord get them? There is nothing too hard for the Lord. What a humbling lesson! The Lord did not need the fish they had caught, yet He did not despise the net full of fishes. He tells them to: *“Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.”* How important was the word *“now”*! Now: at His command and with His blessing the fish had been taken. Peter waded out and drew the net to shore with one hundred and fifty-three large fish in it. What a wonder that the net did not break!

When all was ready, Jesus said unto them: *“Come and dine.”* What a sight it must have been to see the disciples sitting on the seashore, while Jesus took the fish and bread and gave to each of them! Although a simple meal, it would be one they would never forget.

After the meal was over, Jesus spoke to Simon Peter, saying: "*Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?*" How startled Peter must have been! What a searching question! Why would the Lord ask such a question? Perhaps you remember how Peter boasted that although all the other disciples might forsake Jesus, he never would. Did he think his love to Jesus was better, stronger and greater than the others?

Peter answered quickly: "*Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee.*" Jesus replied: "*Feed My lambs.*" Jesus meant that, as an apostle and minister, Peter must teach and strengthen the Lord's little ones.

How quiet it must have been while Peter and the others thought about the question Jesus had asked! The silence was broken when Jesus asked the second time: "*Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?*" No doubt Peter felt uneasy, wondering if the Lord did not believe that he loved Him. Peter answered as before: "*Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee.*" Again Jesus answered: "*Feed My sheep.*" The Lord would make Peter know that his work was no longer to be one of fishing but of preaching the Word of the Lord.

The Lord asked the third time: "*Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?*" Peter was grieved that Jesus asked this question for the third time. His heart was filled with sorrow. His three denials of Jesus were brought fresh to his memory. How bitter his sin became again! He appealed to the perfect knowledge of Jesus of his innermost heart: "*Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love thee.*" Jesus answered: "*Feed My sheep.*" Peter's experiences with repentance and forgiveness would be lessons to draw from as he preached the gospel to others.

You can read about this in John chapter 21 verses 7 to 17.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did the disciples see laid on coals of fire?
2. How many fish had been caught in the net?
3. What did Jesus ask Peter three times? (3 words)
4. What did Peter answer? (8 words)
5. Whom was Peter told to feed?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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. In Galilee. 2. Seven. 3. Nothing. 4. Children. 5. John.

G.L. TenBroeke

GECKOS INSPIRE NEW STICKY TAPE

A new adhesive tape inspired by the feet of geckos can clean itself and stay sticky even on dusty surfaces.

Scientists copied a gecko's toe pads to make the dry material, which is covered in clinging microscopic hairs.

The hairs rid themselves of large dust particles using friction, while small grains fall into grooves between the hairs.

The tape could be used instead of Velcro, or for bandages that can be opened and closed several times, say the researchers.

It took scientists many years to work out how geckos can hang upside down from ceilings. They have millions of tiny hairs on each toe that grip even on polished glass – by using an electrical quantum effect.

When molecules get very close to each other, a weak force pulls them together. The millions of hairs on a gecko's toe, in contact with the ceiling, multiply this effect until the force sticking them to the ceiling is stronger than gravity pulling them down.

Selected

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **TABITHA BURDEN**; **OLIVER JARMAN**; **TABITHA SAYERS** and **REBEKAH WESDYK**.*

The Editor is sorry that the answer given in the September issue for Question 4 of the August Bible Lessons is wrongly given. The answer should be: "My Lord and my God."

ON OBSERVING THE LORD'S DAY

One of our readers has kindly sent in the following article, originally published by the Lord's Day Observance Society (now called "Day One"). It was circulated by the Society in 1935 and was done so to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the reign of George V. Sadly we now begin to see the solemn answer to the question put at the end of the article. Ed

If we think the matter over quietly we shall see the advantages which accrue from observing the Divine Law of one day's rest in seven. "***Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy***" (Exodus 20. 8) is the eternal commandment of our Heavenly Father which comes ringing through the ages, bestowing blessing upon blessing on the sons of men. The wheels of industry on this day should cease to revolve; the Nation should pause in the rush of life; the wearied toilers should have an opportunity of seeking the things which are above. I submit:

- A *restful* Sunday is a physical necessity for all.
- A *quiet* Sunday is one of the greatest moral forces in the universe.
- A *family* Sunday is a preserver of the home.
- A *civic* Sunday is a charter of the people's freedom.
- A *worship* Sunday is a bulwark of the righteousness which exalteth a nation.

Without Sabbath observance the nation is in danger of losing its soul. The history of ancient Babylon and Ninevah, of Greece and Rome, not to speak of the more recent unsettlement of continental nations, shows that the moral and spiritual cannot be ignored either by nations or governments, or individuals, without disastrous consequences.

A question: *What would life in this land be like today if there were no Bible, no Sunday, no Sanctuary, no Preacher?*

H. H. Martin (1935)

“THE LORD WILL TAKE ME UP”**(Psalm 27. 10)**

A short account of the call by grace of a fatherless and motherless boy.

Some years ago my wife and I, in the providence of God, were in charge of a cottage-home for poor, homeless boys. One day a little boy was brought to us – a poor little fellow who had been found on a doorstep in one of the squares in the West End of London. He never knew either his father or mother. I need not tell you that our hearts beat fast in sympathy to the poor little outcast, and we gladly took him into our “family.” As Harry grew up we found he was a weakly one, and feared that his early neglect would result in tuberculosis, which it ultimately did. We often noticed that, instead of running about with the other boys, he would get into a corner of the playroom, apparently liking to be alone and seeming to have nothing in common with others.

One day, addressing my wife, he said: “I wish you would let me call you, ‘Mother’; will you?” She answered: “Of course I will, Harry.” “And do you think Mr. Popham will let me call him, ‘Father’?” “I am sure he will,” was the reply; and from that time till his death there was, I believe, a deep under-current of affection between Harry and us. He would often sit and read to his “mother,” and many a word was spoken on those occasions which bore fruit very early.

Now it came to pass – and you children think about it – that one day Harry said to me: “Father, I am such a sinner – I feel I am such a sinner!” Being particularly concerned about him on account of the serious nature of his disease, and desirous of knowing how he came to a knowledge of sin, I said: “Why, Harry, what do you know about sin? You have never played roughly with the boys; you have not cheated at their games; you have not bullied other boys; you have done nothing of that kind.” He quietly and soberly replied: “I know I have not done the things you mention. I have not been able to do them. But I have sometimes felt very angry in my heart against God

because I could not do as others do.” And as Harry went on to tell me of his shame and sorrow on account of *heart sins*, I felt and said to myself: “This is the secret but powerful teaching of the Holy Ghost in the lad’s heart.”

We had for a long time looked after Harry’s temporal wants, but now my wife and I were all anxiety and concern about his soul. We knew he could not be long with us, so we listened carefully to every word he spoke and watched his every movement. He would often say: “Oh, how great a sinner I am! Do you think God can have mercy upon a wicked boy like me?” His heart-sins were made known to him by a gracious inward teaching, and on account of them he wept and sorrowed deeply before the Lord. I have ever felt Harry’s deep repentance to be one of the most genuine marks of his call by grace.

At times, when the Bible was read to him, he would make comments: “Jesus Christ *did* take great interest in children. He did bless *them*. And will He not bless *me* – a sinner like me?” In all that he read and saw of Jesus Christ’s pity, mercy, and grace to the poor and the lost, he sought for a *personal* knowledge of the same. He wanted to know Jesus Christ in His power to forgive sins.

He told me that one day his sins felt so heavy he could bear the weight no longer. He went upstairs to his room and there cried to the Lord for mercy; and with great simplicity and sincerity he explained how Jesus Christ has taken all his sins away and cast them behind His back. He heart seemed full of joy and peace, and he quietly repeated:

“When mothers of Salem their children brought to Jesus,
The stern disciples drove them back and bade them depart;
But Jesus saw them ere they fled,
And sweetly smiled and kindly said,
‘Suffer the children to come unto Me.’”

... and that is what He has said to me.” Once he said to my wife: “Jesus Christ came to His own, and they received Him

not. My own father and mother cared nothing for me, but Jesus cares for me and takes me for His own." More than once he said his heart was full of gratitude to the Lord for giving him another "father" and "mother." "He has given me a home with you, but only for a *very little while*," he said. As strength permitted, he read and spoke with remarkable soberness for one so young. He said how hateful his sins were to him; but for the most part there was a simple, child-like believing and resting in the Lord Jesus Christ. He showed much kindness to those about him, and with great earnestness and tenderness would speak to them about death.

The dreadful disease was making most rapid progress, and it was clear to us that the end was not far off. Harry showed great patience, and several times expressed himself as quietly resting on Jesus Christ. "Yes," he said one day, in reply to a pointed question: "I believe my sins are all forgiven. I am washed in Jesus' blood." His favourite hymn was:

"O Paradise, O Paradise, I greatly long to see
Thy special home my dearest Lord is fitting up for me,
Where loyal hearts and true stand ever in the light,
All rapture through and through in God's most holy sight."

The last Sunday he spent on earth will not be forgotten while memory remains. He spoke most sweetly of his hope through Jesus Christ's sufferings and death, and, with many expressions of his love to us, said he had a greater longing to be with Jesus for ever. He asked us to sing the hymn, the first verse of which is quoted above, and with sweet resignation he joined in singing the following verse:

"O Paradise, O Paradise, I feel 'twill not be long
Patience! I almost think I hear faint echoes of their song.
Where loyal hearts and true stand ever in the light,
All rapture through and through in God's most holy sight."

The last night of his life I sat with him. He slept peacefully for some time, his life fast ebbing away. Once he awoke and,

turning to me, said: "Father, don't you see them? They are the angels, waiting to take me home." After this he fell asleep, and for a time it seemed as though he would pass away and awake in heaven. But once more he awoke and said: "Father, there is the King – the King! Jesus Christ has come! Do let me go, Father; do let me go." And with these words on his lips, his hands outstretched, and a look of intense longing in his eyes, Harry sank back on his pillow and fell asleep in Jesus in the fourteenth year of his age.

Oh, my dear children, think of this dear little fellow – fatherless, motherless, and homeless; how the Lord undertook and managed all things for him in this life and, through Jesus Christ, had special regard for him in a way of grace.

How great a mercy it is to know what sin is by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, and then to know what Jesus Christ is in His power to save! "Blessed Jesus Christ! O how free and sovereign is that grace of Thine that comes even to children – the poorest, the lost, and the outcast!"

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

What brought them to that world above?
That heaven so bright and fair?
Where all is peace and joy and love,
How came those children there?

Because the Saviour shed His blood
To wash away their sins;
Bathed in that pure and precious blood,
Behold them white and clean."

Selected

Can we say with Richard Dore: "There is a Man in heaven whom I love, and who loves me"?

J. H. Gosden

BEES' GUIDANCE STRATEGY FOR AVOIDING CRASH LANDINGS

Landing safely is a difficult aspect of flight, because the rate of approach must be reduced to near zero at touchdown.

This is hard enough on horizontal surfaces, but even more challenging as inclination increases, i.e. when landing on surfaces of different orientation. Yet honey bees achieve this easily, hundreds of times a day.

To the amazement of engineers who had unsuccessfully tried lasers, radars, sonars and GPS technology in striving to design autonomous landing systems for flying robots, the bees' guidance strategy is "surprisingly simple." Experiments show that bees land safely by simply ensuring that the surface they are approaching expands at a constant rate within their field of vision. This is a form of *optic flow* monitoring.

Mandyam Srinivasan, professor of visual neuroscience at the University of Queensland, Australia, explained: "If you come in [to land] at a constant speed, the image [of the landing strip] appears to expand faster as you get closer. But if you keep the rate of expansion of the image constant, you automatically slow down and by the time you make contact you are moving at almost zero speed."

Mathematical modelling showed that the bees' simple visual 'autopilot' technique worked on almost any type of surface – including walls and flowers – and did not need any information about airspeed or distance from destination.

"Why did we not think of this before?" lamented Professor Srinivasan. He said that robotic aircraft could soon be equipped to mimic the bee's landing strategy using a simple, lightweight video camera. The image-only landing technique could also be applied to stealth military planes (no radar or sonar for an enemy to detect) and spacecraft (landing on other planets without GPS to guide them). However, it is most doubtful that the computer required for this programming would be as tiny as a bee's brain!

It is surely self-evident that no 'guidance strategy' came

about by itself. And the One who designed that of the bee has also given us the ultimate 'guidance strategy' to avoid the ultimate 'crash landing' (Colossians 1. 16-20, Romans 10. 9, Revelation 20. 15).

Creation Magazine

THE LIFE OF JOHN NEWTON

Mr Manesty, who had long been a faithful and generous friend of John Newton, procured him the place of tide-surveyor in the port of Liverpool. John gives the following account of it: "I entered upon business yesterday. I find my duty is to attend the tides one week, and visit the ships that arrive, and such as are in the river; and the other week to inspect the vessels in the docks; and thus, alternately, the year round. The latter is little more than a sinecure; but the former requires pretty constant attendance, both by day and night. I have a good office, with fire and candle, and fifty or sixty people under my direction; with a handsome six-oared boat and coxswain, to row me about in form."

We cannot wonder that John Newton latterly retained a strong impression of a particular providence, superintending and conducting the steps of man; since he was so often reminded of it in his own history. The following occurrence is one of many instances. After his conversion, John was remarkable for his punctuality: I remember his often sitting with his watch in his hand, lest he should fail in keeping his next engagement. This exactness with respect to time, it seems, was his habit whilst occupying his post at Liverpool. One day, however, some business had so detained him that he came to his boat much later than usual, to the surprise of those who had observed his former punctuality. He went out in the boat, as heretofore, to inspect the ship; but the ship blew up just before he reached her. It appears that, if he had left the shore a few minutes sooner, he must have perished with the rest on board.

The life of John Newton: R. Cecil

**“MAY A CHRISTIAN CONSCIENTIOUSLY WATCH
EVENTS SUCH AS THE WORLD CUP?”**

The following article, kindly forwarded by a friend in Canada, addresses a very important question, which should give us each food for thought after all the idolatry and worldly excitement that surrounded the recent World Cup in Brazil.

Is this not a very pertinent question that needs to be asked as the world's attention has been focused on this event in Brazil? How are we to answer that question? How would a Christian, in the real essence of the word, answer that question by asking with David: *“Teach me, O LORD, the way of Thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end”*? It is without doubt that the world cup soccer was one of the major idols of our time, as are all forms of professional sport. Many in the world are obsessed with them, but we need to look within ourselves and ask ourselves to what extent we are influenced by them.

It is the desire of this article to warn against idols of our time and to plead with all to have the same resolution of Daniel when he *“purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat.”* Let us make a firm choice not to defile ourselves with the portion of the idols of our time. Young people, how much time do you spend using the media? O, how much of the time of grace that the Lord has given you do you squander away? Examine for yourself what kinds of addictions there are in your life. The Lord must be able to sit next to you behind the computer and approve of what He sees on your screen. After all, it takes only a few clicks of the mouse and you are deeply immersed in sin.

In relation to the issue of the world cup and the other idols of our time, let our guide be texts such as: *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind”* (Romans 12. 2); *“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof”* (Romans 13. 14); *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him”* (1 John 2. 15).

Victims of the world cup

In January, Martin Poels' research documented that in the preparation for the world cup, almost 4,000 street children have disappeared! Also about 200,000 people have been evicted from their homes to make place for this event; about 21% of Brazilians are still illiterate; thirteen million Brazilians suffer hunger; many Brazilians die as they wait for medical treatments. I do not think that this nation needs stadiums and think that the money can be better spent.

Furthermore, in the last months the Brazilian army were washing the poor neighbourhoods in Rio de Janeiro. Thousands of soldiers, tanks, helicopters and other armoured vehicles have been put to work. This has led to many deaths already. The powerless are paying the price for this spectacle of idolatry and are sacrificed on the altars of pleasing the strong.

In such a land it is unacceptable and completely irresponsible to spend an inordinate amount of money on stadiums and other world cup matters. Have we become insensitive to this injustice? Are we like the Romans, enjoying games and bread while the poor are exploited for our fun? It does not touch us any more. We close our eyes. We keep rejoicing and are excited about the things that bring misery to untold multitudes. Unless I make the right choice

Translated and adapted from the article by Leenard Kanselaar, the Netherlands, and printed in the June newsletter of the Reformed Congregation of New Zealand.

The answer to the Riddle on page 197 of the September *Friendly Companion* is: NOTHING!

NOTHING has seven letters.

NOTHING preceded God.

NOTHING is greater than God.

NOTHING is more evil than the devil.

All poor people have NOTHING.

Wealthy people need NOTHING.

If you eat NOTHING, you will die.

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (X)**

In Psalm 84 we read in verse 11: *"For the LORD God is a sun and shield...."* It is particularly the word 'sun' that we desire to look at. The Holy Spirit is comparing the LORD to the sun. This, of course, refers to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Now this glorious light shines on poor lost man in the face of Jesus Christ, the one glorious Mediator between God and man. In Malachi 4. 2 we read: *"But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings."* This is Jesus Christ, the Son of God manifest in the flesh: He is the Sun of righteousness.

What does the natural sun do? It gives light to the world. All the light and heat in this world comes from the sun. Without this light and heat, life – any life could not exist. What an apt illustration of Jesus Christ: *"I am the light of the world."* Until this glorious Sun of righteousness arises in the heart, life and experience of a poor sinner, all is darkness. As we have noted before, this light is life – John 1. 4. When the Holy Spirit comes to a poor sinner, or a church, we see then the fulfilling of that precious word in Isaiah 60. 1 - 3: *"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."* This Scripture prophesies of the glory of the New Testament church, the fullness of the revelation of the Messiah. In that holy Person of Jesus Christ the true light now shineth, the complete revelation of the love of our heavenly Father is revealed in the Person of His only begotten Son in the flesh. I believe that Job saw this when he declared in Job 19. 25-27: *"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:*

whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another...." Job here sees the second coming of Christ and that he would be there. But I believe also in this he saw the first coming of Christ: *"Yet in my flesh shall I see God."* He had a glimpse by faith by the spirit of prophecy of the incarnation of the Son of God and in the midst of all his afflictions and darkness the glorious Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings, so he could say from a sacred experience of it: *"For I know that my Redeemer liveth."*

Now let us look at this word in its context: *"For the LORD God is a sun and shield."* This Psalm 84 is a sacred meditation upon the LORD's earthly courts, the house of God or mount Zion. David says in one place: *"LORD, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth."* In another place he says: *"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple."* When a poor sinner is called by divine grace and brought into union and communion with Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit will bring them into union with His church and people on earth. As we read in another Psalm: *"He setteth the solitary in families."* This is a work of divine grace and a Christian believer desires to be with the Lord's people, to keep the sacred ordinances of the gospel. In believers' baptism they see the grave and sufferings of their precious Redeemer; as they come up out of the waters of baptism they see the resurrection of their glorious Saviour and they arise in newness of life (Romans 6. 3-5).

The other sacred ordinance in the New Testament church is the Lord's supper. We believe, according to New Testament church order, that only persons who upon the confession of their personal faith in Jesus Christ, and have been baptized by immersion, can then sit at the Lord's table and partake of this sacred supper. This is why we are called "Strict Baptists." The word "strict" is derived from the word restricted: over the centuries it has been shortened to "strict." We restrict

communion to baptized believers only. There is no evidence in the New Testament that an unbaptized person was admitted to church membership.

When we are joined in union and communion with the Lord's people we can then say with the Psalmist at the beginning of this Psalm: *"How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!"* The word amiable means lovely or pleasant. Then in verses 4-5: *"Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be still praising Thee. Selah. Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; in whose heart are the ways of them."* The Lord lays the ways or ordinances of His house in their hearts and constrains them to run in the way of His holy commandments.

In verse 9: *"Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of Thine Anointed."* The Lord's Anointed is Jesus Christ. It is as much as to say: 'Lord do not look on me: I am a poor lost undone sinner, but look upon Christ my only Saviour, my only hope of salvation and redemption.'

Verse 11: *"For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory."* Not only is He our light, our life, but a shield, our defence. In David's confession of faith we read: *"I will love Thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower"* (Psalm 18. 1-2). But he continues: *"He will give grace and glory."* Some have said: 'Grace is glory in the bud.' How true: as sure as He has given grace, He will most certainly give eternal glory. Jesus said: *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"* (John 14. 1-3). *"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"* – grace and glory.

"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle,

neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 22. 5).

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month we are thinking about QUESTIONS ASKED IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES from which all references are given. Younger children need only do five questions. Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 218 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

In each case, write out who asked the question and to whom the question was addressed. For 6 to 10, give the answer to the question as well (reference only is sufficient).

1. “Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?” (1. 11)
2. “Why persecutest thou Me?” (9. 4)
3. “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?” (19. 15)
4. “I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?” (10. 29)
5. “How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?” (5. 9)
6. “What must I do to be saved?” (16)
7. “By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?” (4)
8. “What doth hinder me to be baptised?” (8)
9. “What wilt Thou have me to do?” (9)
10. “What is it that thou hast to tell me?”

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Jacob loved Joseph because he was “the son of his old age,” and he gave him a coat of many colours.
2. Joseph’s brothers were angry and envied him because they resented the suggestion that he should have authority over them.
3. Joseph’s brothers took his coat of many colours, dipped in the blood of a goat and brought it to their father, saying they had found it.
4. “How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?”
5. The chief butler and the chief baker of the king of Egypt.

6. Seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt. (Genesis 41. 29)
7. Joseph's brothers bowed themselves before him with their faces to the earth. (Genesis 42. 6)
8. The Lord made all that Joseph did to prosper. (Genesis 39. 3, 23)
9. Genesis 45. 5, 7 or 8.
10. Joseph gave Benjamin five times as much as all his other brothers to see whether they would be jealous of him, as they had been previously of Joseph himself when his father had given him a coat of many colours.

Contributed

GOD'S UNCHANGING WORD

"Feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving;
My warrant is the Word of God –
Naught else is worth believing.

"Though all my heart should feel condemned
For want of some sweet token,
There is One greater than my heart
Whose Word cannot be broken.

"I'll trust in God's unchanging Word
Till soul and body sever,
For, though all things shall pass away,
HIS WORD SHALL STAND FOREVER!"

Martin Luther

"Had I been the servant of men, I should have received but poor wages. But happy for me it is that I am the servant of Him who never fails to give His servants that which He hath promised them."

John Calvin

The Friendly Companion



“And these are they which are sown among thorns;
such as hear the Word, and the cares of this world,
and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other
things entering in, choke the Word, and it
becometh unfruitful.” (Mark 4. 18-19)

November 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

During August, we spent some time on the beautiful (though windswept!) Isle of Harris in the Western Isles of Scotland. This is an island along with its sister island, Lewis, which has known many who *“feared the LORD greatly.”*

In the midst of the beautiful scenery, we often came across a notice which was very unusual to us, seen near a loch or river. It was this:

“CAST WITH CARE”

Not being familiar with island life it took a little while to realise what it meant. It was a message to would-be anglers that they should take precautions when casting their carbon fishing rods, not to come into contact with the overhead power lines. To do so would have meant a powerful electric shock to the angler, if not instant death. So it was a very important notice. No doubt in the past, careless casting with rods had caused injury, if not loss of life to anglers.

As we saw this notice so many times it gave rise to some important lessons.

Firstly, it reminds us of the well-known text in 1 Peter 5. 7: *“Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.”* It is comparatively easy for those who know how, to cast a fishing line, but for us to truly cast all our care upon the Lord needs His grace so to do. Paul tells us in Romans 8. 26 that *“...the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought....”* This, however young or old we may be, may be asked for of God.

Secondly, it is a solemn warning about the wrong casting of our lines in our lives. When we are in difficulties where do we take our troubles? David said to his soul: *“Wait thou only upon God”* (Psalm 62. 5). When he did this he prospered but when he neglected this path he brought great troubles upon himself, especially, for example, when he went down to Gath to escape Saul’s cruelty.

Thirdly, it is a special word to those of our young friends

just setting out into life. Are you going to cast your line towards what the world calls good and great, or will you be like Moses who chose *“rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season”*? How many have been careless in their casting in their early days only to prove later the folly of so doing. The words of Solomon in Ecclesiastes 11. 9 are very apposite: *“Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.”*

May God teach us all, whatever our age to, “Cast with care.”

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture on the cover of this month's magazine is unmistakeable! It is a picture of a weed, (actually a dandelion). One of our readers, who pulled out of her garden a similar weed whilst gardening a few weeks ago sent us the following thoughts. When first looking at the weed, it appeared only a small plant and the thought was that with one slight tug it would be released from the soil where it was so unwelcome! However, it was not to be! This seeming innocuous weed had a very deep root. It needed a great deal of effort and sweat to release it from the soil. Eventually, like the one you see in the picture, a very long root had to be removed to prevent it from giving further trouble in the future.

The thought immediately came to our reader's mind: “Deep rooted sin.” We may foolishly think some sins are not deep rooted and easy to be removed from our hearts. However, the truth is that, just as the weeds in our garden, sin has a very deep root which the love of sin has nurtured. This means that without God's grace it will take over the affections and desires of our hearts and minds, and will bear a sad fruit in our lives.

Is there any remedy for these deep rooted sins? Yes, it is to be found in the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, which

cleanseth from all sin, and from His grace of which Paul writes in Romans 5: *“But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”* May Augustus Toplady’s well-known prayer be ours:

“Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.”

THE RETRIEVING OF “GLACIER GIRL” FROM SOUTHEAST GREENLAND

“Glacier Girl” is one of six P-38 aircraft that was forced to land on the southeast Greenland Ice Sheet during World War II. All the men survived and were later rescued. The aircraft were subsequently buried by snow and ice over the years. Pat Epps, a wealthy entrepreneur, decided to retrieve the aircraft, but could not find them at first. Based on sophisticated equipment and eleven years of searching, they found the aircraft buried under 79m (260 feet) of ice and 1.6km (1 mile) from their original location. This was a shock, but they managed after considerable effort to bring one aircraft to the surface, but in pieces that were later reassembled. I happened to visit Middlesboro, southeast Kentucky, where they were finishing the restoration of “Glacier Girl,” and the director told me that the explorers thought the aircraft were buried under about 10m (33 feet) of snow and would be easy to recover.

The assumed depth of burial was likely based on the average precipitation in Greenland, but precipitation is actually over 70 cm/yr (28 in/yr) in southeast Greenland. This makes sense since the area is at low altitude close to the ocean near the semi-permanent Icelandic Low. Such heavy precipitation gives us an idea of how fast snow and ice could accumulate on Greenland when the ice sheet was first developing during the Ice Age which occurred after the Flood.

Creation Magazine

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**SAUL PRESUMES**

After Saul had been king for two years, the Philistines came to fight with Israel. They had a very great army and thousands of chariots and horsemen. The men of Israel did not even have swords with which to fight. They were afraid. Some hid in caves and woods and rocks. Others fled across the river Jordan.

Saul was waiting for Samuel to offer sacrifices and pray for Israel. But he did not come at the set time. Saul's army was getting smaller as the people fled in fear of the Philistines. Then Saul decided to offer the burnt offering himself. Only the priest was allowed to offer sacrifices, as Saul knew. The LORD had chosen Saul to lead Israel as king, but he must not presume to take upon himself the office or work of the priest.

As soon as Saul finished the offering, Samuel came. He reproved Saul for what he had done. He said: *"Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God"* Because Saul had not obeyed the law of God, his kingdom would not continue. Another king would be chosen.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was Saul waiting for?
2. What did Saul decide to do himself? (4 words)
3. Who alone was allowed to do this?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (See page 242 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

Contributed

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS

1. Oil.
2. In a book.
3. The Spirit of God.

*“And
Samuel
said, What
hast thou
done?”*

*1 Samuel
13. 11.*

BIBLE LESSONS**THE APPEARANCE IN THE MOUNT**

When Jesus gave the command: *"Feed My sheep,"* Peter understood what Jesus meant and of whom He was speaking. He had heard Jesus speak of the Good Shepherd who gave His life for His sheep. He believed that poor sinners were the sheep for whom Jesus died and who must be fed by the preaching of the Gospel. Thus Jesus called him away from his work as a fisherman to feed His people.

After Jesus had asked the searching questions regarding Peter's love to Himself, He began to tell Peter what would happen to him in years to come. In the Book of Genesis we are told how Jacob called his sons around his bed to tell them what would befall (happen to) them in later days. Jacob could only prophesy of those things by the Spirit of God. The Lord Jesus could tell Peter, because He had ordered it in His divine wisdom and providence.

Jesus told Peter that while he (Peter) was young, he was able to gird himself and walk at liberty wherever he would. But when he became old, he would be taken captive and bound and put to death. Jesus finished by saying to him: *"FOLLOW ME."*

As Peter turned around, he saw the disciple John. He wondered why Jesus did not tell John what would become of him. Would he experience the same mode of death as Peter? He asked Jesus: *"Lord, and what shall this man do?"* Jesus answered: *"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? FOLLOW THOU ME."* Peter was not to be concerned about John's way, even if it was the will of God that he should live until Jesus came again.

The other disciples misunderstood what Jesus said, thinking that John would not see death. However, Jesus did not say that John would not die, but only if it had been God's will that he should not die.

What a special appearance it had been for those seven disciples by the sea shore! What sacred lessons they had

received!

On another day, a great company of people were making their way up a mountain in Galilee. Paul tells us in the Epistle to the Corinthians that there were more than five hundred brethren, including the eleven disciples. Jesus had told them earlier that He would meet them there.

The resurrection of Jesus, although not fully understood, was the subject of their conversation. Suddenly, and even mysteriously, Jesus appeared unto them. The Bible tells us that they all *"worshipped Him."* Whenever Jesus appears to His people, that will be the response - true, divine, spiritual worship.

The Bible tells us that some of them had still been in doubt, but now they saw Him with their own eyes. They heard His well-known voice. What joy filled their hearts at the words He spoke: *"All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."*

He gave a special command to the eleven: *"GO YE ... and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."*

He then spoke one of the most wonderful promises in the Word of God: *"and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."*

They must go forward leaning upon these two promises: *"ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME,"* and *"I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS."*

You can read about this in Matthew chapter 28 verses 16 to 20, John chapter 21 verses 18 to 24, and 1 Corinthians 15 verse 6.

QUESTIONS:

1. How are the sheep of Jesus to be fed? (6 words)
2. After telling Peter what would happen to him in old age, what did Jesus command him to do? (2 words)
3. What did Jesus say was given unto Him? (2 words)
4. What did Jesus command them to do? (first 6 words)
5. What wonderful promise did Jesus give them? (14 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (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. Fish.
2. One hundred and fifty-three.
3. "Lovest thou Me."
4. "Yea Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee."
5. My lambs. My sheep.

G.L. Tenbroeke

TWO WOLVES

One evening an old Cherokee man told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside God's people, the battle is between two wolves.

"One wolf is evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego. The other wolf is good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

"Which wolf wins?" asked the child. The reply? "The one you feed."

Contributed

COPY OF AN OLD LATIN INSCRIPTION

For the servant, the Master
For the guilty, the Innocent
For the debtor, the Creditor
For the sick, the Physician
For the flock, the Shepherd
For the subject, the King
For the soldier, the Leader
For the work, the Maker
For man, God manifest in the flesh.

"What shall I render unto the Lord, for all His benefits toward me?" "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."

A DEVOUT SOLDIER OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Ebenezer Oliver (1890-1983) was one of many of our “denominational heroes” who fought in the Great War, 1914-18. Many of the young men from our Gospel Standard churches were volunteers who went to the “trenches” in France and overseas to defend our country and Christian values which we have now forsaken.

Ebenezer Oliver had several natural gifts and loved singing and writing. He started the singing when his battalion was on the march. On one occasion his officer asked him to start an immoral song, which he refused.

The trauma of the Great War, which he called “Satan’s sieve,” affected Ebenezer Oliver’s life in after years, as it did many other soldiers who survived. He had terrible nightmares all his days because of a certain episode during the last German offensive in March 1918. He was entrenched in a position opposite a gap in a hedge which the enemy was attempting to get through. His officer said: “Oliver, train your machine gun on that gap in the hedge and if any Germans try to get through, fire!” The firing went on for some time until they ran out of ammunition. The officer then said to his men, “Now fix bayonets.” They then stood and waited but the enemy never came. He saw this as a deliverance by God from certain death.

Ebenezer Oliver was “a devout soldier” (Acts 10. 7). Soon after he was promoted to Lance Corporal, his officer called him into his dugout (a room dug into the side of a trench as a resting place for the infantry to shelter safely) and told him there was going to be a raid the next morning and they were expecting heavy casualties. Lance Corporal Oliver returned to his trench and was sitting in a corner in silence. This was the first time he was to lead a platoon into action. His men came to him and said: “What’s up *Corp* (corporal)?” He then told them of the raid and that they expected heavy casualties. He then said to them: “Can I read the Bible and pray with you?” They gathered around him and he read Psalm 91 and prayed with them: “*Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night;*

nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

The next morning they fixed bayonets and at 4 a.m. went "over the top." He said he could feel the heat of the stream of bullets as they passed by his head. His platoon was the only one to return without a single scratch. Three weeks later he received a packet with some brushes in it and a note which said: "Thank you Corporal for your *grace* before we went over the top." There is a good account of this in the *Friendly Companion* for 1999 pages 53-54. There are also other pieces in the *Friendly Companion* in the 1980s. I always remember his prayer in the vestry on a Sabbath morning before the service: "Lord, make it a good day!"

A. G. Randalls

The regiment in which Ebenezer Oliver served was known as The Royal East Kent Regiment, colloquially known as the Kent Buffs. Their regimental motto was, "Steady the Buffs." Each regiment had its own prayer (or Regimental collect) and the one for the Buffs read as follows: "O GOD, who hast promised that those who love Thy law shall be as trees planted by the waterside, give Thy grace we beseech Thee to the Buffs that, rooted and grounded in love, our ancient honour may never wither, for His sake whose love is our law, Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, Amen."

The following article, written by the late Ebenezer Oliver, together with extracts from his diary 1917 and 1918 (in France) have been contributed by his grandson, Graham Collins:

THE CAPTAIN'S LAST WORDS

"The Captain wishes to speak to you. Keep straight down this trench and you will come to his dug-out."

A tall well-built Sergeant addressed these words to one of his platoon. They were engaged in cutting out a communication trench. The Sergeant was a kind, considerate man, none of

that overbearing bluff about him, yet he carried the authority when needed, and the platoon greatly respected him. There was much difference in the build and size of the Sergeant and the soldier (Ebby): he being below the average height, looked up into the Sergeant's face. There was a noted contrast between both, as regards size and bearing; the latter so army like, with the other, like thousands more in those days when men were needed for the army, it was not his career. Leaning his spade against the side of the trench he trudged off round the traverses and came to the Captain's dug-out. This was about a six-foot square cutting in a bank, not high enough in which to stand upright. The Captain was seated behind two boards across the aperture which served for a table where were various papers arranged in order. The soldier looked at him wondering what was coming as the Captain eyed him somewhat scrutinisingly. "Now I have your letter before me that you wrote to your brother Joe, yesterday. You have not had much experience out here yet, and I notice that you have given in considerable detail what the conditions are like out here in the trenches. It is not wise to write like this. It upsets our people at home, when they think about us." This was very sensible advice. Then he went on. "You have mentioned, too, about the sad affair yesterday with that poor chap saying how he did curse and swear. Well, if you had your leg blown off you would, and so would I. No, I can't let this letter go. Tear it up and try to write another."

A few months passed and the Division was moved on to the Ypres sector. The Captain with his runner went out between the lines: "No Man's Land," was the term used for the space between the armies facing each other. A German sniper saw the Captain and took a correct aim, mortally wounding him. His runner came back to the trench for two stretcher bearers to convey the Captain to the First Aid Post. His conversation with the soldier came back to mind.

Knowing one of the stretcher bearers, he watched for an

opportunity to speak to him. "Was the Capt. Hill conscious when you picked him up?" "Yes," the stretcher bearer replied. "Did he say anything?" "Yes, we got him on to the stretcher and he rolled over on his side and said, 'Oh Lord, have mercy upon my poor soul,' and died."

'A' Company were allowed off duty the next day to see their Captain buried in a wood a short distance behind the line. In the absence of an army chaplain, the Colonel officiated. There were a few Church of England hymn sheets shared out and the Colonel started the tune for the hymn, "For all the saints who from their labours rest."

Extracts from Ebenezer Oliver's Diary

1917

Sunday, September 23rd. This afternoon I was able to have a little time to myself. Coming across hymn 941 it did seem to suit me well and I tried to sing it with "Justification" – also 615 and 1059. Read Isaiah 51 and "Early Gracious Leadings" out of "G.S."

Tuesday, September 25th. Yesterday, we marched back to the place we came from a week ago. We have pitched our camp about an hour's walk from our last place. Enjoyed good night's rest under the roar of the guns and awoke feeling with the Psalmist: "*I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.*" "Dickebush" (Ypres).

Wednesday, September 26th. We are having an anxious time holding ourselves in readiness for the line, if needed. Some hard battles are being fought. The company's cookers are halted about an hour's march from our billet. Here we have had dinner and tea and another day's ration issued to us. These are the times of severe testing and it is a solemn question with me whether I am right for eternity. Much mercy has followed me thus far. God grant a continuance if His holy will. We have often sung, "Not a single shaft can hit, Till the God of love sees fit."

Thursday, September 27th. Last night we were on the

battlefield. What a scene of woe and destruction! I was much calmer in my mind than I feared and, to my encouragement, felt I had something solid to rest upon. We are again expecting a repetition this evening.

Sunday, September 30th. Came out of the line on Friday to our bivouac, but returned same day at very short notice. Went a good distance further up to do some barbed wiring in front line, also for carrying parties. We return with five less, four wounded and one killed. I was very nervous all the time but desire to be grateful for continued mercy. This morning we have again returned to Dickebrush. It does seem nice to get into our little bivouac again. There are some hard battles fought. We wonder where the scene will end. Have received letters from wife, Joe, Wallie and Fred.

[Bivouac – A military encampment made with tents or improvised shelters, usually without shelter or protection from enemy fire or such a site where a camp may be built.]

Sunday, October 7th. 140 of our men have been sent to line battalions. We are now awaiting orders. Came back through heavy fire yesterday. My life is spared, [I still have] the use of every limb. Oh that it may be sanctified. How the dark clouds hover over us still!

“Let the sweet hope that Thou art mine,
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey’s end.”

That will make amends for all.

Saturday, October 20th. I hardly know what to put in my diary. The Company have paraded tonight for concert. Have evaded it. May the Lord in mercy screen [me] from trouble. Why are we afraid of man? I have been reading: *“Be not afraid of them that shall kill the body”* (Luke 12. 4). Am glad to be alone in this room for a little while and have felt a little quieted to commit everything into God’s hands.

Sunday, November 4th. Spared to see another Sabbath day. Tomorrow we depart for the [front] line and am therefore much sobered down. I am sure I will need special help for that which lies before me. Thinking of the dear ones at home.

Monday, November 5th. Long march. Full pack. Platoon billeted in loft over house. One of 'C' Company shot himself through the leg. Saw him being attended to. We desire to be kept from doing harm to ourselves but really it is to be hardly wondered at; it seems more than nature can bear. "Sin is the cause of all the woes."

Friday, November 12th. Ah, "How false and yet how fair" is everything here. Tuesday morning we had to return to the line on account of the turn things are taking. Have had a rough time but spared once again. Oh how it makes one's heart ache to see the effects of war, the enemy advancing, women fleeing from their homes, little ones looking on as they pack up, wondering whatever is happening. Were relieved this morning. Brigade organised a bit in meadow in reach of long-range shells. Are now spread out in a line not knowing what our next course may be. Read Psalm 94.

1918

Monday, April 22nd. Good night's rest. Close to the guns again which have been booming all night.

Tuesday, April 23rd. We have again pitched our tents. Sent letter to wife with new address. Heavy bombardment on Thursday 26th. Have been digging today. Lost my Bible yesterday evening. How I miss it. Yet am I glad, because now I know I love my Bible. It is my chief companion in lonely hours.

Saturday, April 27th. Both yesterday and today have been expecting to rejoin our unit. Are now "Standing by." Many rumours about. I long to get letters from home. Just a fortnight I last heard from dear wife. No letters, no Bible, but there is a never changing Friend. Oh that I may know Him! Hymn 971 so sweet tonight.

ABOVE SUSPICION

The Chinese have a curious proverb; it is: "Don't tie up your shoe in a cucumber field." It is another way of saying: "*Abstain from all appearance of evil.*" If you were passing through a cucumber field, of course all the cucumber vines would be running along the ground, and on the vines there would be the cucumbers, and though you stooped down only to tie up your shoe, others might think that you had stooped down to steal.

Are you particular about your life as this text says you should be? Do you not only abstain from evil, but do you abstain also from even the appearance of evil? We have to remember not only what we are, but to think also of what we may seem to be. And all this we have to do not for our own sakes merely, but for the sake of the Gospel and for the sake of Jesus Christ. We may personally be indifferent as to what people think of us – as far as we are concerned, we may think a clear conscience everything; but if our action shall lead to disastrous consequence in other directions, if it shall bring discredit on Christ, we cannot be indifferent as to what others think of Christ.

But who can make us so wise that we shall be able to keep ourselves above all suspicion? Only He who kept His own life above all suspicion; and so free was He from all evil, or appearance of evil, that He could boldly ask: 'Which of you can convict Me of sin?' Let us ever remember that it is a solemn and serious thing to have even the appearance of evil.

John Eames M.A.

A PRINCELY SUBSTITUTE

An eastern legend tells us of a young prince who had just ascended the throne. During his minority, for many years, the government had been in the hands of his mother. She was proud and loved to rule; it was not easy for her to put the reins in the hands of her son.

There was a hostile party plotting a revolution. Strange to say, some of the most important decisions of the cabinet state secrets leaked out and came into the hands of the enemy. When this happened a second time, the king issued an edict that whoever the guilty person might be should be openly scourged in the market place. Investigations were made, traces led to the royal palace, and it was found that the old queen was the guilty person. This became known. The people said: "The king will not have his own mother punished; there is one law for the rich and another for the poor."

A public dais was raised on the market place. The judges and nobles had taken their seats; people had come from far and near to witness the trial. At twelve o'clock, the gates of the palace were opened; the king appeared and leaning heavily on his arm the trembling woman. The court opened, witnesses were heard, and in profound silence the verdict was given – "Guilty." Already an officer had laid his hand on the shoulder of the guilty woman to lead her to the whipping post. The young king sprang from his throne, bared his back, and blow upon blow fell upon it, till with bleeding back he was carried into the palace. Was it right? The principle of equal justice was more firmly established for the good of the kingdom than ever before. No one could say: "There is one law for the rich, another for the poor." Nor did the king ask any of his nobles to bear the punishment instead of his mother. He took it himself.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Corinthians 5. 19). "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85. 10). "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1. 9).

Taken from Simple Talks on the Tabernacle

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF A HOLIDAY IN NORTHERN SCOTLAND

For many years my wife and I have visited the North of Scotland during the first two weeks in August and have many happy memories of seeing the wonderful scenery and the wildlife at first hand. This year we saw deer; an osprey catching fish in Loch Fleet; seals; dolphins in the Moray Firth; various birds of prey, as well as highland cattle who looked at us suspiciously through their long hairy coats.

Also we visited several of the Free Presbyterian Churches during our stay, and heard the gospel preached, not in a foreign language, but with pronounced highland accent. We did, however, whilst on the Isle of Harris, hear for the first time the Psalms sung in the Gaelic language. It puzzled us that it seemed to take so much longer to sing four stanzas in Gaelic than when the same verses were sung in the English Metrical Version. We were told that in the Gaelic, the precentor (the man who leads the singing) usually sings a line and then the congregation repeat it after him. As the singing of the Gaelic is somewhat slower than in English it takes that much longer to sing.

In our travels back to the mainland, we noticed a sign to Spinningdale, not far from Bonar Bridge. There is a true story of a minister who was forbidden to preach in a parish adjoining the Spinningdale parish because the truths he preached were offensive to those who held the power of appointment to the kirk (or church). But there were many people in the parish who loved him for his ministry and still were determined to hear him preach. So they arranged to meet at a point where the two parishes adjoined, and the godly minister stood on the one side of the stone wall dividing the parishes, and his congregation stood attentively on the other side in their own parish. Such was the thirst for the truth in those days that hindrances of this nature that might have stood in the way of hearing the gospel, were often overcome.

Not far away are the parishes of Alness and Nigg, where two

godly men laboured. (There is a small car ferry at Nigg which operates between there and Cromarty. We travelled on it on a windy day and the crossing was very rocky!) Mr. Fraser was very much used of God to quicken sinners into a sense of condemnation under the law of God. Mr. Porteous was very much used of God as a son of consolation, like Barnabas, to lead sinners to Christ. So many of Mr. Fraser's convicted hearers would make their way to hear Mr. Porteous to get their wounds healed under the gospel. Mr. Porteous was anxious lest this should provoke jealousy between him and his brother minister. However, Mr. Fraser said that God had given him a quiver full of arrows that had not yet been exhausted. He was to continue shooting these and if the wounded went to Mr. Porteous for healing he saw this as the sovereign purpose of God for the furtherance of the gospel.

Not far from here also is a place well-known to Scottish believers, called Ferintosh. Many years ago, on a Lord's Day, the Communion service was taking place here. As there were so many attending, the service was held on the sea shore. It was a beautiful day with hardly a breath of wind. The minister, a Mr. Robertson, had a loud clear voice which carried a great distance. On the other side of the Firth (or estuary) was a young boy looking after his father's cows. As the sermon progressed, the voice of the minister got louder and louder: the young lad could actually hear and follow the message being delivered, so that he became quite engrossed with it. The minister quoted from the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, which quotation entered the heart of this unseen listener, like an arrow. So deep was the impression that this arrow from God's Word made, that the young lad could find no rest in his soul until the same gracious Spirit, who had used this unusual means of quickening him, also led him to the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon and forgiveness. His life afterwards showed a genuine change which continued to the end of his days. How this reminds us of the hymn we sometimes sing:

“Sinners shall hear this joyful sound
When God designs it so:”

John Kent

Editor

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

**LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF
GOD’S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (XI)**

My mind is drawn to Isaiah 42. 16: *“And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.”* This word is spoken by Almighty God with reference to those that are blind. This, of course, does not refer to natural blindness but to spiritual blindness. We are all born spiritually blind and remain so until the Holy Spirit gives us spiritual life. A naturally blind person lives in darkness: they do not know what light is or what colours are. So we read of the natural man: *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”* (1 Corinthians 2. 14). Until we are spiritually enlightened by the Holy Spirit we have no spiritual discernment or perception. But when the Holy Spirit enters our heart and dwells there, He then by His divine power gives us light and spiritual discernment.

It is then we begin to discern our darkness, our lost condition. It is then we feel our need as a poor guilty sinner before a holy heart searching God. It is then we are convinced of sin, personally. Convinced of the righteous holiness of the eternal God and convinced that one day we shall have to stand before Almighty God as the Judge of all the earth (John 16. 8). We then realize how blind we are; we then begin to pray. This is one of the clear marks of divine life in the soul, as we read of the Apostle Paul when the Lord stopped him on the road to

Damascus: "*Behold he prayeth.*" We can be blinded by false religion, blinded by covetousness, blinded by Satan's deceptions. We could continue with many different things that blind us and until the Lord by His Spirit opens our spiritual eyes, we remain in that condition; but when He does open our eyes we shall begin to understand this word of bringing the blind by a way that they knew not. The Lord gives us light in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit shining by the Word of God in our heart, and instructing us by the Word of God and through the ministry of the Word. The Holy Spirit does not only reveal to us our lost, wretched, ruined condition, but He reveals Jesus Christ to us as the only Saviour of sinners; as one 'that is able also to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him' (Hebrews 7. 25).

Then we shall begin to understand by a living experience: "*I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.*" The Lord will never forsake His children but will guide them safely unto His heavenly kingdom. We read in Proverbs 4. 18: "*But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*"

The just are those that are justified by faith in Jesus Christ: "*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*" (Romans 5. 1-2). The perfect day is eternal glory in heaven, to be with Christ which is far better.

Our earnest prayer for each one of you is that you will be brought out of nature's darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

J. R. Rutt

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from BENJAMIN CHAPMAN; NOAH de VOOGD; JEMIMA KERLEY and KEVIN MUIS.

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are related to AGRICULTURE. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 242 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. What did Solomon say about a farmer who is always looking at the weather? (Ecclesiastes 11. 4)
2. Jesus spoke of a man who sowed his seed, but some fell by the wayside. What happened to the seed? (Matthew 13. 4)
3. In another parable Jesus spoke of a fruitless fig tree. What did the "dresser of the vineyard" say he would do to try to make it fruitful? (Luke 13. 8)
4. What happens to the sluggard who will "not plow [plough] by reason of the cold"? (Proverbs 20. 4)
5. A farmer found tares (weeds) amongst the wheat in his field. When his servants asked: "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" what did the farmer reply? (Matthew 13. 28-29)
6. Insect pests were no doubt a problem in Bible times as in our own. What four pests did the prophet Joel speak of? (Joel 1)
7. Jeremiah 4. 3 says where seed should not be sown. What happens if it is? (Mark 4)
8. Sowing and reaping go together. Write out two verses where the Apostle Paul connects them. (2 Corinthians 9; Galatians 6)
9. Who said: "Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same"? (Job 4)
10. Who was described as a "tiller of the ground" and who was the first "husbandman"? (Genesis)

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS

1. Two men in white apparel; the disciples or "ye men of Galilee."
2. The Lord Jesus; Saul of Tarsus.
3. An evil spirit; seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish priest.
4. Peter; the men sent by Cornelius.
5. Peter; Sapphira.

6. The Philippian Jailor; Paul and Silas; Acts 16. 31.
7. Annas and other kindred of the high priest; Peter and John; Acts 4. 10
8. The Ethiopian eunuch; Philip; Acts 8. 37.
9. Saul of Tarsus; the Lord Jesus; Acts 9. 6.
10. The chief captain; Paul's nephew; Acts 23. 20-21.

Contributed

“O KEEP ME FROM PRESUMPTUOUS SINS”

Psalm 19. 13.

O keep me from presumptuous sins,
 May they not rule my life and heart –
Those sins which by Thy Spirit's beams
 Thou hast revealed, though but in part.

O let me not indulge again
 Wrong ways, which ignorantly I did,
Let me not still that course maintain
 Which conscience now would quite forbid.

O may I heed that gracious voice
 Which kindly checks my rising guilt;
O may I ne'er transgress from choice,
 Since 'twas for sin Thy blood was spilt.

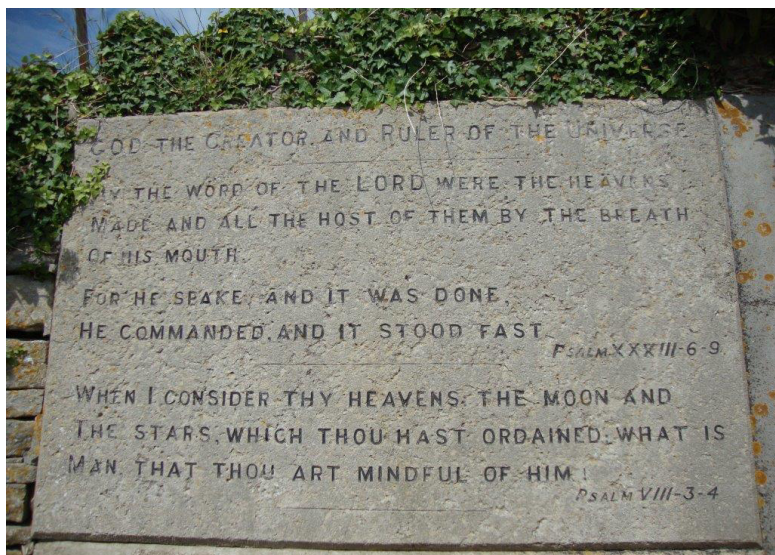
Dear Jesus, Thy good Spirit send,
 A tender conscience give me, Lord,
O may I fear lest I offend
 My gracious God, or slight His Word.

E. Jempson (June 1961)

“When I die, I shall then have my greatest grief, and my greatest joy. My greatest grief that I have done so little for Jesus; and my greatest joy that Jesus has done so much for me.”

William Grimshaw

The Friendly Companion



“All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.” (John 1. 3-4)

December 2014

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

The Book of Genesis is rightly called by many the “Book of Beginnings.” The word *Genesis* contains this meaning. The first four words give its whole purpose: *“In the beginning God....”* Here we read of the beginning of creation, the beginning of sin on this earth and also, very wonderfully, the beginning of the revealing of the way of salvation, and especially of the coming of God’s dear Son, Jesus Christ into the world to save sinners.

The very first promise from God’s mouth was this, in condemning the serpent, Satan: *“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.”* The *“seed of the woman”* spoken of here is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

A little later we read that God gave to Adam and Eve a son. As this new-born babe lay in her arms, I wonder if Eve fondly thought that this was the fulfilment of the promise? If she did think thus, she would have been bitterly disappointed, for Cain grew up to be the murderer of his brother, Abel. Indeed, however fondly any parent has looked on their child at its birth, as it grows up every parent will find that similar disappointment, as sin shows its face in the life of the growing child in one way or another.

The earth had to wait many more centuries and had many disappointments before this wonderful promise, given to Eve, was fulfilled in God’s own time. Then, a truly perfect Babe, innocent, holy and pure was born. We read in Galatians 4. 4-5: *“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”* It was when Mary held the Babe, Jesus, in her arms, as also did the aged Simeon, that they could look on Him and say: ‘this Babe is my Saviour.’ They were not to be disappointed in Him as Eve was to be with her son, Cain. All

who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation are not disappointed in Him. *"He is altogether lovely,"* to them.

More importantly, His Heavenly Father was not disappointed in Him. He gave Him a work to do, which at the end of His life He could say: *"I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do"* (John 17. 4). God said of Him: *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased...."* (Matthew 17. 5). His Father also added three more words which we must never forget: *"Hear ye Him."*

And what did the Saviour say to those who heard Him preach? *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow Me"* (John 10. 27). In another place He added these words also: *"If any man have ears to hear, let him hear"* (Mark 4. 23). May God give to us each that hearing ear and then we will know the blessing that the shepherds had when the angel said to them: *"For unto **you** is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord"* (Luke 2. 11). Then with Isaiah, in chapter 9. 6 you will be able to say: *"For unto **us** a Child is born, unto us a Son is given."*

With every best wish from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Two of our readers spent a few days in Dorset and have sent this most instructive account of what they saw of God's goodness in creation.

"We have just been favoured to have a couple of days away together in Dorset, where we enjoyed two beautiful walks. One of these was around Durlston Country Park, which includes passing by Durlston Castle; the Great Globe and the Tilly Whim Caves.

"Having parked in the official car park, we walked down towards the castle where the way is lined with walls depicting, as fact, the Jurassic story, telling the passer-by what was alive so many millions of years ago, etc. It caused the comment as to how it was all presented as fact and that future generations

were not being given the truth.

“We turned off onto the coastal path to Durlston Head, admiring the beautiful views, and as we turned a corner, we came to a flight of steps leading us to the Great Globe.

“Our guide book told us: *‘George Burt (1816-1894) was the nephew of John Mowlem, Swanage resident and founder of the great Mowlem construction business. Burt followed his uncle to London to work for him and eventually took over the running of the business in 1845 ... The Great Globe at Durlston is one of Burt’s creations. It was made from Portland Stone at a stoneyard in Greenwich in 1887. Weighing around 40 tons it was brought to Swanage in fifteen pieces.’*

“We climbed up to see it and you may imagine our pleasure to find the truth clearly portrayed in the stone panels forming its backdrop. Then in a series of panels, facts are presented in which the essence is to acknowledge His Creation. One of these reads: *‘The earth is a planet and one of God’s glorious creations showing the wonders of land, air and sea. As seen from the nearest planet it would appear like a beautiful evening star: having its place in the mighty system of worlds as the marvellous plan of the universe.’* Then interesting facts are listed.

“Another panel was worthy of note, containing a nice verse of poetry by the Russian poet (and statesman) Gavril Romanovich Derzhavin (1743-1816). Other panels contained verses by other poets.

“We continued our walk to the entrance to the Tilly Whim Caves which were 18th century quarries. Sir George Burt had opened them as a tourist attraction but they were closed in 1976 due to rock falls. Nevertheless you can look down on the workings over the cliff (the stone was lowered by cranes called “whims” into barges and taken away by sea). Pausing to look we noted an inscription on one of the rocks below: *‘Look around and read great nature’s open book.’* Here we have a clear witness that reminds us of various portions of Scripture:

'The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handiwork' (Psalm 19. 1), or as Job said: *'Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee'* (Job 12. 8).

"Another word is both on point yet also contains a solemn warning: *'For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that **they are without excuse**'* (Romans 1. 20).

"As David says: *'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God'* (Psalm 14. 1).

"One also thinks of the word: *'Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding'* (Isaiah 40. 27-28).

"What a blessing to be brought to wait upon this God, to be able to say: *'O LORD of Hosts, my King and my God'* and to be humbled *'under the mighty hand of God.'*"

R. & J. Saunders

"GREATLY DESIRING TO SEE THEE"

Pondering over what to write to you for the end of the year, my eyes suddenly fell on the words: *"Greatly desiring to see thee."* They come in 2 Timothy 1. 4 and are Paul's words to Timothy; he loved him so much that he longed to see him.

Perhaps you know that experience, especially as you grow older: there is someone you are longing to see, and the time seems to pass so slowly while you wait. It may be that, at the end of this month, you are looking forward so much to seeing someone you have not seen for a long time.

The shepherds "greatly desired" to see the infant Saviour in the manger. The blessed news having been made known to them by the angel, *"they came with haste."*

Simeon "greatly desired" to see *"the consolation of Israel,"*

and when he had seen the Lord Jesus, he felt he could die.

The wise men “greatly desired” to see the new-born King, and journeyed from afar to find Him.

Have you noticed that one of the beautiful titles of the Lord Jesus is “*the desire of all nations*” (Haggai 2. 7)? So, in some versions of “Hark, the herald-angels,” we sing:

“Come, Desire of nations, come,
Fix in us Thy humble home.”

and in our Gadsby’s 1054:

“Israel’s strength and consolation,
Hope of all the saints Thou art;
Dear Desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.”

Now, by nature we do not desire the Lord Jesus: rather we “fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind” – that is, we long for sinful things, carnal things. If you were really honest, *what do you desire more than anything else?*

The Bible is very clear: the real *you*, the real *me*, is not what we appear to others, it is what we desire in our hearts. “*As he thinketh in his heart, so is he*” (Proverbs 23. 7). To our carnal hearts ‘there is no beauty in Christ that we should desire Him’: by nature we do not long for Him.

When the new birth takes place, everything is different. Whatever else, you will have new desires, and in a gracious way concerning the Lord Jesus it will be: “*Greatly desiring to see Thee*” by faith here, by sight hereafter.

O! as the year comes to an end, may there be these “great desires” after the Lord Jesus – to know Him and to experience His pardoning love and mercy: “*object of my first desire,*” and may our readers prove the beautiful promise: “*Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*”

Seeking for you the best of blessings,

B.A. Ramsbottom – Friendly Companion December 1991

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**JONATHAN HAS FAITH IN GOD**

King Saul had a son named Jonathan. He was a brave young man with strong faith in God. He helped his father fight the enemies of Israel.

One day Jonathan and his young armour-bearer went over to the camp of the Philistines. They were a very large army, but Jonathan said: “... *it may be that the LORD will work for us.*” He believed that God was able to save Israel with two as easily as with many. Jonathan did not tell his father where he was going. When the Philistines saw them, they called out: “*Come up to us.*” Perhaps they thought it would be easy to kill them.

Jonathan said to his armour-bearer: “*Come up after me: for the LORD hath delivered them into the band of Israel.*” They climbed up upon their hands and feet. In a short space they slew twenty Philistines. Then God caused the enemy to tremble and the earth to quake: “*so it was a very great trembling.*” The Philistines began to fight with each other and to flee in fear. Saul and the men of Israel also came after them to the battle. “*So the LORD saved Israel that day.*”

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the name of Saul's son?
2. What did God cause the enemy to do? and the earth to do?
3. With whom did the Philistines begin to fight?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 266 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. Samuel.
2. Offer the burnt offering.
3. The priest.
Contributed

*“... for
there is no
restraint to the
LORD to save
by many or
by few.”
1 Samuel
14. 6.*

BIBLE LESSONS

JESUS ASCENDS TO HEAVEN

The appearances of Jesus to His people always seem to pass too quickly. His appearance to the more than five hundred brethren on the mount in Galilee surely must have seemed very short. Still, it became the subject of their conversation in their homes, and when they came together.

After the appearance in the mount, Jesus appeared to one of His apostles all alone. Perhaps you remember that He appeared to Peter alone on the resurrection morning. Who was the disciple that Jesus favoured with one of His last appearances while He was yet on earth? Might it be John, who would live the longest of the apostles? or James his brother, who would be the first of the apostles to be killed? No, the apostle that Jesus favoured with such a personal appearance was another man called James. He was sometimes known as James the less, or James the son of Alphæus, or James the Lord's brother (because he was a cousin to the Lord Jesus).

This apostle would become the leader of the church in Jerusalem and also the author of the Epistle of James. Just as in the appearance to Peter, we are not told what Jesus said to James, but we may be sure that it was counsel that James greatly needed and would never forget.

It had been forty days since the Lord Jesus rose from the grave. Once again the apostles were gathered at Jerusalem. Suddenly Jesus appeared unto them and: *"commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, ... ye have heard of Me."* Jesus reminded them what this promise was by saying: *"For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."*

Jesus then led them out of Jerusalem up to Bethany to the Mount of Olives. As they walked, the disciples asked Him: *"Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"* They thought that Jesus was going to set up His kingdom upon the earth. Perhaps they were thinking that they

would have some eminent and powerful position in such a kingdom.

However, Jesus told them they were not to be concerned about such things. Rather, they were to be His witnesses, starting at Jerusalem and then in Judæa and Samaria, even unto the uttermost parts of the world. They were to preach the gospel in every place. Believers in Jesus must be formed into churches and established in all the teachings of Jesus.

As they ascended the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane lay in the valley below them. With what mixed emotions they must have looked down upon it! Just six weeks before, they had all forsaken Him when He was arrested by the soldiers and the chief priests.

Surely they must have felt shame and sorrow for their actions. What a sight it must have been, to see Jesus standing on the Mount with the place of His great sorrow and shame now low at His feet. His face now reflected victory! His heart was filled with joy! He lifted up His hands and began to bless His disciples.

As they watched Him, Jesus began to ascend up from the earth. They stared with wonder as He went higher and higher. Suddenly a cloud came and hid Him from their view. No doubt, they looked on in great silence. Yet the Bible tells us: *"God is gone up with a shout."* All the host of heaven shouted as the Lord returned to His Glory.

As the disciples stared intently into the sky, two men in shining white apparel stood by them saying: *"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? **This same Jesus, which is taken up from you ... shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.**"*

You can read about this in Mark chapter 16 verses 19 and 20, Luke chapter 24 verses 48 to 51, and Acts chapter 1 verses 2 to 12.

QUESTIONS:

1. To which apostle did Jesus appear alone before ascending to heaven?

2. How many days had it been since Jesus rose from the dead?
3. What mount did they ascend?
4. What hid Jesus from their view?
5. What did the men in shining apparel say to the men of Galilee? (15 words beginning with the word "This")

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 266 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. By the preaching of the Gospel.
2. Follow Me.
3. All power.
4. Go ye and teach all nations.
5. "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

G.L. TenBroeke

"THE NAME THAT IS ABOVE EVERY NAME"

I've tried in vain a thousand ways

My fears to quell, my hopes to raise;

But what I need, the Bible says,

Is ever, only, JESUS.

My soul is night, my heart is steel –

I cannot see, I cannot feel;

For light, for life I must appeal

In simple faith, to JESUS.

He died, He lives, He reigns, He pleads;

There's love in all His words and deeds;

There's all a guilty sinner needs

For evermore, in JESUS.

Though some should sneer, and some should blame.

I'll go with all my guilt and shame;

I'll go to Him because His name,

Above all names, is JESUS.

Alexander's Hymnal

A DIVINE AUTHOR

Genesis 1 not only teaches about the creation of the universe, it also emphasises that God, and God alone is the Author of creation. The first exalted page of Holy Writ reveals this truth with apparent force. The triune God (God in three persons Ed.), the only living and true God, is active in creation. He is the sole Author. *“Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being His counsellor hath taught Him?”* (Isaiah 40. 13).

The first chapter of Genesis contains thirty-one verses. It is remarkable that in these thirty-one verses, God is the subject of the sentence thirty-seven times.

We read:

“God said” ten times,
“God saw” seven times,
“God created” three times,
 (and “He created” two times),
“God called” three times,
 (and “He called” two times),
“God made” three times,
 (and “He made” one time)
“God blessed” two times,
“God divided” two times,
“God set” one time, and
“the Spirit of God moved” one time.

The abundant evidence points to the truth that God is working in this account, and He is working alone. This is another unique feature of the Genesis account of creation. The one God, the sovereign Maker of the heaven and the earth, is the almighty God who is without limitations. Our Creator is able to accomplish whatsoever pleases Him. Nothing is too hard or too wonderful for this God. He does not share His powers with any other “god,” or with any of His creatures. Our Maker is the almighty God.

*(Extracted from “The King in His Beauty”
by Gerald Hamstra)*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT AS CROCS BRANCH OUT

Mugger crocodiles (*Crocodylus palustris*) are no mugs when it comes to subterfuge to obtain a meal, as researcher Vladimir Dinets from the University of Tennessee discovered while observing them at an Indian zoo.

Dinets saw crocs with twigs across their snouts remain still for hours under nesting egrets and, when a bird went to pick up one of the twigs for its nest, it became lunch.

After further research revealed the same behaviour in American alligators, Dinets said: "This study changes the way crocodiles have historically been viewed. They are typically seen as lethargic, stupid, and boring but now they are known to exhibit flexible multimodal signalling, advanced parental care, and highly coordinated group hunting tactics."

Scientists blinded by evolutionary thinking often both overstate and underestimate the capabilities of animals that are endowed with purpose by the Creator.

For instance, despite the alleged 'genetic closeness' between humans and chimpanzees and an expectation that chimps could gain language skills, African gray parrots have far more creative language use and complexity of reasoning.

Birds are not supposed to be our close evolutionary cousins because of smaller brains but, as crocodiles have shown, their smaller brain size does not mean less complex skills.

Creation Magazine

"GATHERED"

A young highland sailor was called to fight for his country in the Second World War during which many brave men and women lost their lives in defence of freedom. Before he received his call-up papers, this lad had experienced the Lord striving with his soul by His Word, reminding him of the uncertainty of life and his need of salvation in Christ. This led him to seek the Lord in prayer, and in due time the Lord whom he sought heard his prayer. Shortly afterwards he wrote to a

friend back in Scotland, telling him of the memorable night when his soul entered into *"the peace of God which passeth all understanding."*

"One night," he wrote, "when on the 'look out,' I heard the Lord's voice speaking to me with power: *'Gather my saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice'* (Psalm 50. 5). For the rest of the night I felt as if I was talking to my Saviour, face to face. The hours on the 'look out' after that, in the middle of the night, passed too quickly. I have a small room to which I go for secret prayer and many a happy meeting I have with Him there. Indeed, I can often say in this room: *'a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand.'*"

The words through which this lad of twenty years was led into a state of grace had another and a higher meaning. In a few days the ship in which he was serving was struck down and he was gathered into the presence of One whose word had healed him."

Contributed

MEANS OF TRANSPORT

Today most ministers have their own cars in which to attend to the Lord's work. Just once in the Bible we read of the apostles having their own transport. It is Acts 21. 15: *"And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem."* We would assume that these were some form of horse-drawn chariots, although in the margin of many Bibles, for the word 'carriages' there is a suggestion that it could also be rendered, 'baggage.' Of course we read of Paul travelling by boat several times, but this would not have been his own boat whereas it appears that these carriages were Paul's.

No doubt when the Lord Jesus was a Babe, his parents would have travelled by ass or even camel when they went down into Egypt, a distance of at least two hundred miles. We only read of the Lord Jesus Himself travelling once by ass, when He rode into Jerusalem. At all other times it would appear that He walked. This would have accounted for His

weariness when He came to Sychar and met the woman of Samaria as He sat on the well. It is estimated that He walked forty miles to be baptized of John the Baptist, which shows us the honour He put on that sacred ordinance. One of the mighty miracles the Lord wrought for Israel was that when they walked through the wilderness their shoes did not wear out!

Many years ago, in Coventry, there lived a godly couple, William and Betsy Stone. William had been remarkably kept during the First World War, the Lord having promised him a safe return from that terrible battle ground. However a few years after his return the Great Depression set in and times were very hard, even for those who had work. At this time they had four children and they needed new shoes as their present ones had worn out. Betsy was a woman of great faith, and she prayed to the Lord that somehow the children could have the much needed shoes. To her great surprise a few days later a box was delivered to their house, from Mr Jesse Delves, the esteemed Pastor at Ebenezer Chapel, Clapham, London. He had it on his mind to send new shoes to William and Betsy's children. He did not know their shoe sizes, but no doubt guided by the Lord, the shoes he sent exactly fitted each of the children! What a privilege these children had, of walking around the city in shoes that God had so wonderfully provided for them!

No doubt William and Betsy were not slow to thank the Lord for His mercies and could say with the Psalmist in Psalm 57. 2: *"I will cry unto God most High; unto God that performeth all things for me."*

I wonder if you could say what sort of shoes Asher was promised in Deuteronomy 33, and what sort of shoes Paul told the Ephesians that they needed to have in Ephesians 6?

Editor

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from JOSHUA BROOME; ISAAC COTTINGHAM; BENJAMIN and JOSHUA INCE; BRENNAN KNIBBE and CHLOE ROSIER.

JESUS CHRIST AND CÆSAR AUGUSTUS

Cæsar Augustus was born sixty-three years before Christ, and on the death of Julius Cæsar was taken into the Triumvirate – the three rulers of the great Roman Empire. He sought, however, for sole authority, and by a victory over Anthony (one of the Triumvirate) at Actium (BC 31), he obtained the title of Imperator or Emperor. It was then that he was called “Augustus,” the great one, his real name being Octavianus. He affected humility, and lived very plainly; yet he was willing to obtain any kind of honour that the people gave to him. None could have been more sly and self-seeking; cold and unfeeling – a man without heart – his sole aim was to obtain and maintain supremacy. Augustus was worshipped and deified by the people, yet it was a notable fact that he was afraid of being left alone in the dark, and trembled at thunder and lightning.

The first link that connects Augustus with the New Testament is found in his treatment of Herod the Great after the battle of Actium. In unconscious obedience to inspired prophecy, Augustus instrumentally caused the sceptre to depart from Judah, for Shiloh had come (Genesis 49. 10). It was about three years before Christ’s birth that Augustus ordered an enrolment throughout the Roman dominions: *“There went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed”* (Luke 2. 1). The object of this enrolment was to introduce an equal system of taxation throughout the empire. The decree led to Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem, and the fulfilment of the prophecy of Micah 5. 2. that Christ should be born in Bethlehem.

On the death of Herod the Great, Augustus divided the Jewish kingdom between Herod’s three sons – Antipas, Archelaus and Philip. He himself died in 14 AD, in the 76th year of his age, and was buried in the magnificent tomb he had erected for himself and his family. When the Goths invaded Italy and took Rome, they broke open the tomb, and flung the imperial ashes to the winds. The glory of Augustus has

departed; but the glory of Him who was born in Bethlehem shall increase for ever and ever.

In contrast to the man who for forty-four years held possession of the greatest power, and was at the head of the most extensive territory that had ever fallen to the lot of man, Jesus was *“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens”* (Hebrews 7. 26). Jesus is the embodiment of all the fulness of God, and this mystery can never be fathomed by any created intelligence. *“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory”* (1 Timothy 3. 16).

Augustus was sly, but Jesus was true and open in a way and measure that our dull minds cannot fully appreciate. No shade of deceit ever darkened the motives or actions of Jesus. The purity of holiness was manifest in all that He said or did. He was the light that reproved everything that was evil. His was purity that could not be corrupted. He detected all hypocrisy, and exposed it. As a ray of sunlight cannot be polluted, so Jesus was *“pure without a spot, and all His nature clean.”* Jesus lived and died for others; our words will ever fail to set Him forth, who *“came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.”* No king ever manifested such condescension and kindness as Jesus; they are not in a position to do it. Augustus did many things to please the people, and in some senses was a benefactor, but he was utterly selfish in all his actions. Jesus went about doing good; but especially is His love seen in laying down His life to save His people from their sins. *“Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich”* (2 Corinthians 8. 9).

The power and glory and works of Augustus have passed away; but He who was born in Bethlehem and laid in a manger, sits on the throne of universal dominion as a Prince

and a Saviour. He humbled Himself to die. *“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name”* (Philippians 2. 9). May it be our favoured lot to know the *“only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.”* Only Jesus can bestow durable riches, and to have Him for our portion will enrich us in life and death. May the record of the vanity of earthly things cause us to seek the things that are at the right hand of God.

G. Rose (Pastoral Counsels)

‘ANCIENT’ DATE FOR ‘TOOLMAKER’ BONE FIND

The reason apes are unable to fashion and use complex tools is not just that they lack our brainpower. Their hands do not have the necessary power and precision of grip, either.

The suite of features that makes our hands suitable for this includes a little projection of bone called a styloid process on the third metacarpal bone. It helps the bone lock into the wrist, and both modern and ‘archaic’ humans (e.g. Neandertals) have it. By contrast, those ‘apemen’ (australopiths), which creationists regard as non-human, lack this process.

So it was out of sync with evolutionary expectations when a team led by the University of Missouri’s Carol Ward recently reported a fossil third metacarpal which had the styloid process. That is because the ‘dates’ made it 1.4 million years old, way before our ‘tool-making hand’ was supposed to have evolved such features.

The bone was found close to Kenya’s Lake Turkana, near where stone tools such as hand axes and clavers had been recovered. Since people have always been people, designed for complex tool usage from the start, then if one ignores the dating, there is nothing surprising or unusual about finding a human hand bone in association with tools made by humans.

Creation Magazine

GOD CONTROLS THE WIND

When the Spaniards were trying to make the best of their defeat by the English at the time of the Armada, they said that were it not for the unfavourable weather conditions they would not have been defeated. Whereupon Elizabeth I commanded a special medal to be struck, representing the Armada scattered and sinking in the background; and in the front, the British fleet riding triumphantly, with the words of Moses from Exodus 15. 10 engraved around it: *"Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them."* Let us never forget that God holds all nature in His hand and nothing happens without His divine permission.

The following are two of the quotes which were written in the last Bible owned by Mr. Herbert Dawson of Bethersden who was Pastor there from 1915 – 1969.

"What! Shall the old African blasphemer leave off preaching Jesus Christ while there is breath in his body?"

John Newton

Godly MacPhail the Covenanter – restless on his death bed, gave as the reason: "I am as much assured of being for ever with my Saviour as I am of being on this bed; but I know not how I can look Him in the face, when I think how little I have done for Him."

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

LIGHT AND DARKNESS VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S HOLY INFALLIBLE WORD (XII)

This brings us to the last instalment for this subject and for 2014. And my mind is directed to the Scriptures that reveal to us the glorious light that will shine upon the church of Jesus Christ in heaven. The clearest revelation in Holy Scripture regarding eternal glory is in Revelation 22. 5: *"And there shall*

be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

Day and night is a very natural thing in this world but they will not be part of eternal glory, it will be one eternal day. Of course, the Holy Spirit is using the natural things in this world, which we understand, to convey to us things in the spiritual world that are beyond our comprehension. He uses this same method throughout Scripture. Just look at an example in 1 Thessalonians 5. 4-5 that the Apostle Paul uses by comparing true Christian believers to light and all others to darkness: *"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."*

If we, by God's free grace, are in the true spiritual light of Jesus Christ in this world, it is but the beginning of that glorious light that the Lord's people will be in forever. There will be no darkness: none of the powers of darkness that Satan, all his angels and all his children will be confined to forever. Jude 6: *"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."* The Holy Spirit gives us a solemn light on those who leave the ways of righteousness and truth and wander into the ways of sin and unrighteousness in 2 Peter 2. 17: *"These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever."* What a solemn end awaits those who leave the ways of truth and righteousness.

We need to ask ourselves a very important question. Have I been brought to the true spiritual light in Jesus Christ? Has that light shone into my heart? How blessed if you can humbly say: "I believe I have." If you cannot say that you have and it is something that does not really bother you, you are indeed in a very solemn place. One hymn writer says:

“But, if still a total stranger
To His precious name and blood,
Thou art on the brink of danger;
Canst thou face a holy God?
Think and tremble,
Death is now upon the road.”

But for those who do know Jesus Christ, it is the dawning of an eternal day of everlasting glory. They shall bask in the light of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, forever. Old things are passed away, all things become new. We read in Revelation 7. 15-17: *“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”* My dear young friends, these are sacred divine realities that are found in one place, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. May the Holy Spirit lead, guide and direct you to Him and reveal to you something of the glory and loveliness of His Person and grace. Those persons truly in Christ are washed in His precious blood, cleansed from all their sin and clothed in His righteousness: therefore they are before the throne of God. May we obtain like precious faith.

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about CHASTENING AND CORRECTION. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 266 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. Which man is described as “happy” in Job 5. 17?
2. Write out Psalm 94. 12, which expresses the same truth.

3. How does Solomon describe the difference between a “fool” and a “prudent” man in Proverbs 15. 5?
4. Why should none despise “the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of His correction”? (Proverbs 3. 11-12)
5. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” What four things is Scripture profitable for? (2 Timothy 3. 16)
6. Jehoshaphat was a godly king who joined with the wicked king, Ahaziah. What did God do to chasten him? (2 Chronicles 20)
7. Paul says chastening seems to be not “joyous but grievous.” But what does it yield afterwards? (Hebrews 12).
- 8&9. God promised David that Solomon his son would reign after him. What would be the difference between Saul and Solomon? How would that difference be seen in the way God dealt with Solomon? (2 Samuel 7)
10. From the list of people at the end of the question, choose two and for each say why God chastened them, and how He chastened them. (David, Jonah, Uzziah, Zacharias)

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. “He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.”
2. The birds devoured it.
3. Dig about it and dung it.
4. He shall beg in harvest and have nothing.
5. “Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest.”
6. Cankerworm, palmerworm, locust, caterpillar. (Joel 1. 4)
7. The thorns grow up and choke the seed and it yields no fruit. (Mark 4. 7)
8. “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” (2 Corinthians 9. 6) “For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” (Galatians 6. 8) (or Galatians 6. 7)
9. Eliphaz the Temanite (Job 4. 1, 8)
10. Cain (Genesis 4. 2); Noah (Genesis 9. 20)

Bethlehem! little though thou be,
(Honour amazing!), –
The Father saith that “Out of thee,
My Son, Beloved, shall come to Me,
The Ruler of My people He –
My will fulfilling.

“His goings forth are from of old,
From everlasting,”
But now the prophecies unfold,
The wondrous Babe of whom they told,
Born of the Virgin, now behold, –
Our flesh assuming.

His perfect life, vicarious death –
 (The curse removing) –
 Here the poor contrite sinner hath
 Salvation; and, by living faith,
 Shelters for evermore beneath
 The blood-atoning.

Death could not hold Him, thence He rose –
The Lord all-conqu'ring.
In Heaven He lives to interpose
For a loved people whom He chose,
Till all their sorrows reach a close,
In joy unfailing.

R.J. Morris

(Zion's Witness December 1961)

“The New is in the Old concealed; the Old is in the New revealed.”

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OUR MAGAZINES

This month brings us to the end of another year, and the completion of the 140th Year of *The Friendly Companion*. We are deeply indebted to the God of all grace for His continuing aid in this labour of love. Also we deeply appreciate the help of our many friends who have contributed articles either regularly or occasionally. The 'army' of helpers behind the scenes in typing, proof reading and checking each month provides invaluable support. It is our desire to maintain the standard of truth which our forefathers contended for and also to retain the emphasis on the infallible Word of God in our articles each month. We live in changing times and there has never been a greater need than there is at present to stand fast for the doctrines, experience and practice of the Word of God in setting suitable material before our readers, young and old. The prices for the magazine in 2015 will remain the same as for 2014 in the United Kingdom, but the overseas prices will show a slight increase due to exchange rate variations. The revised rates are displayed on the inside cover of the magazine this month.

"Brethren pray for us."

G.D. Buss