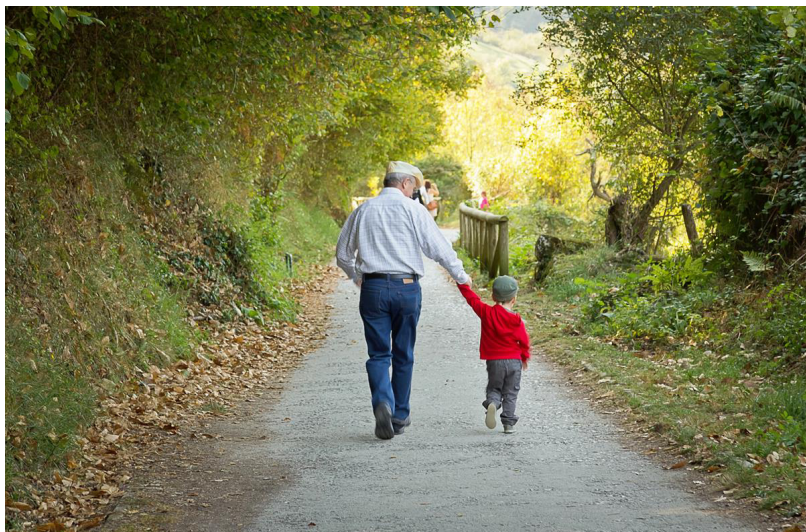


The Friendly Companion



“Hold up my goings in Thy paths,
that my footsteps slip not.”
(Psalm 17. 5)

January 2015

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

It is the custom to wish each other a Happy New Year when January 1st arrives, and as your Editor, we heartily follow the tradition of wishing you all, happiness in 2015. I wonder what you think would make us truly happy? If we answer really honestly, (i.e. not just saying what others might expect us to say!) that answer would tell the true state of our heart before God.

Many of you will know the story of the two brothers, Jacob and Esau. Sadly, when they were young they could not agree, and as is usually the case, there were faults on both sides. Jacob has to flee from Esau's anger and threats, to live many miles away with his uncle, Laban. After many years Jacob was commanded by God, whom he now had learned to serve, to return to his homeland. This meant meeting his brother Esau again.

However, Esau was not a God-fearing man. What reception would Jacob get? In answer to a night of prayer by Jacob, when they met, Esau had laid aside all anger and the two brothers kissed each other. Jacob kindly, trying to amend for past wrongs, offers Esau many sheep, camels and cows, which Esau at first declined saying "*I have enough.*" Jacob pressed him to take them, saying, "*I have enough.*"

In the original Hebrew text, the word '*enough*' which Esau used is different from the word '*enough*' Jacob used. To Esau '*enough*' meant having lots of cattle, camels and sheep. This was the wealth of his day. To Jacob '*enough*' meant to have God's favour and blessing. Jacob had been taught, through difficult times, what Solomon tells us: "*The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it*" (Proverbs 10. 22).

So what would make us happy in 2015? If we are truly wise, like Jacob, we shall be seeking the Lord's blessing each day. It will be a truly happy year for us if we prove Psalm 146. 5 to be

true: *"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God."*

May this be the happiness we each desire and obtain.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

PSALM 17. 5

There is hardly a prayer more important to us each, and especially to young people, than the words of Psalm 17. 5: *"Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not."* There are many paths of which we could speak but here are four in which we should all be concerned to be held up. In each case we have the example of four godly men.

The Word of God: When Moses died, Joshua, his successor must have greatly missed the counsel and advice of his spiritual father. Where was he to look now for wisdom in the great burden that had fallen upon him? He was to go to the Book of the Law, (the Scriptures as far as had then been revealed), meditate in them day and night, and follow their rule. In this way, God said his way would be made prosperous and then he would have good success. You can read in the Book of Joshua how this godly man was held up in this path; an example to us all.

Prayer: When it was decreed by Darius that no man should ask a petition of any god (and Israel's God was included), Daniel would not be deterred from the path of prayer. He continued his pattern of prayer, unashamed of being seen as a praying man, even though it meant that a den of lions awaited him. How wonderfully did God honour him, by shutting the lions' mouths and delivering him from the malice of his enemies! God held him up in the path of prayer.

Humility: Naaman wanted to be healed from his leprosy very sincerely, but at first he wanted it to be in such a way that would be for his own honour and glory and not God's. How at first he despised the waters of Jordan in comparison with those

of Abana and Pharpar! But when he humbled himself, and left behind his own way of pride, he proved the blessing of submission to God's way. God taught him the path of humility, a lesson we each need to learn.

Forgiveness: All of God's people long to know the great blessing of forgiveness. But also we must never forget that a forgiven person ought also to be a forgiving person. When Onesimus ran away from Philemon, he stole some of Philemon's money. In Rome he found that the Lord had other purposes for him: that of saving him by grace. But having been forgiven he now had to return and say sorry to Philemon, and Philemon was to forgive him unreservedly. This is a path that proud nature often shuns. Saying sorry on the one hand, and forgiving and forgetting the sins of those who have offended us, often goes against the grain of our proud nature. These are paths in which we each need to be held up.

THE BIG WEED

Your article and picture of the big weed with its long roots (November 2014 issue), reminded me of something else about weeds.

I once heard the late Mr. John Green say in one of his sermons that some big weeds grow so close to the plant and look so much like the real plant that they are almost imperceptible. He went on to say that this was like some professors, who look so much like the Christians, but are only hypocrites. Should not this make us each pray to be made *real* Christians?

“Pause, my soul! and ask the question,
Art thou ready to meet God?
Am I made a real Christian,
Washed in the Redeemer's blood?
Have I union
To the church's living Head?”

W. Gadsby

An older reader

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**SAUL DISOBEYS**

The LORD sent Samuel with a command for King Saul: *"Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have."* Saul went with his army and smote the people of Amalek. But he kept the king of Amalek alive. Saul and the people also saved the best sheep and oxen.

Then the LORD told Samuel that Saul had not obeyed His command. How this grieved Samuel! He cried unto the LORD all night for Saul. In the morning he went to meet him. When Samuel heard bleating of sheep and lowing of oxen, he asked Saul what it meant. Saul said the people had saved the best sheep and oxen to sacrifice unto the LORD. He blamed the people and tried to excuse his own sin by saying that he *"feared the people."*

Samuel said that to obey the LORD was better than offering sacrifices. He told Saul: *"Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, He hath also rejected thee from being king."* Samuel rent or tore his garment to show that the LORD had taken the kingdom of Israel from Saul and given it to another. Samuel mourned for Saul but never came to see him again.

QUESTIONS:

1. With what did the LORD send Samuel to King Saul?
2. What did Saul and the people save to sacrifice to the LORD?
3. What did Samuel say was better than offering sacrifices?

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. Jonathan.
 2. Tremble. Quake.
 3. Each other.
- Contributed*

*“Behold,
to obey
is better
than
sacrifice ...”*

*1 Samuel
15. 22.*

BIBLE LESSONS**A NEW APOSTLE APPOINTED**

The Bible tells us that when Jesus ascended to heaven: “... *by His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place.*” It also tells us that: “... *after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.*”

In the Old Testament, Israel's High Priest would enter the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle once a year. That is where the ark of God with the mercy seat on it was located. He would take the blood of a goat or calf and sprinkle it before the Mercy Seat. Those Old Testament High Priests could never sit down in the Tabernacle because their work was never done. When the Lord Jesus sat down at the right hand of His Father, it was proof that He had finished the work His Father sent Him to do.

After the Lord ascended to heaven, the disciples returned to the city of Jerusalem as the Lord had told them. Although Jesus was no longer with them in bodily presence, their hearts were filled with joy. Everything seemed different!

When Jesus died on the cross, they were all scattered, each going to their own homes. Now they “*all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren.*” How they must have rehearsed all that Jesus did and all He had said! Especially, they would speak of His promise to send the Holy Spirit upon them.

On one of those early days, nearly one hundred and twenty disciples of Jesus were gathered together praying. Then Peter stood up and said: “*Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas ... in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate ... and his bishoprick (office) let another take.*”

Peter told the rest that they must appoint one to be an apostle. It must be one who had been with them from the early days of John the Baptist to the resurrection and ascension

of the Lord Jesus. He must have been an eye witness of all the works of Jesus.

The other disciples agreed with Peter and brought forth the names of two men. One was named Barsabas, who sometimes was called Justus, and the other was named Matthias.

How careful they were! They did not dare to lean on their own wisdom or feelings. They again prayed unto the Lord saying: *"Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two Thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell."* What a good thing it was that they would have the Lord decide the matter! What a good example they set for the church in every age to follow!

But how was the matter to be decided? Well, they would cast lots, praying that the Lord would direct it. It is hard for us to understand just how they did it. Perhaps you remember that the mariners cast lots in Jonah's day to determine who was at fault for the terrible storm they were in and how the lot fell on Jonah. The disciples did something similar, and the lot fell on Matthias. Thus, he became the twelfth apostle in the place of Judas Iscariot.

You can read about this in Acts chapter 1 verses 14 to 26.

QUESTIONS:

1. With what did Jesus enter into the Holy Place (heaven)?
(3 words)
2. What did He do after He had offered one sacrifice for sin?
(8 words)
3. What did all the disciples do when they returned to Jerusalem? (8 words)
4. Whom did Peter say had prophesied about Judas and of another taking his office?
5. Who was chosen in the place of Judas?

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. James. (James the less, or James the son of Alphæus)
2. Forty.
3. The Mount of Olives.
4. A cloud.
5. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you ... shall so come in like manner."

G. L. TenBroeke

THE VENGEANCE OF THE INDIAN (I)

"Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." (Matthew 7. 12).

These beautiful words which our Lord spake in His sermon on the mount, form a pattern to which at least every confessing Christian should live up. But alas! How sad it is to behold that what is highly prized in theory is so often neglected in practice.

If we followed this golden rule how different all things would appear in our circle and families, where, alas, we find everything except agreement. Also the whole world would have a different appearance, because if this example was brought into exercise it would prove that the love of God was shed abroad in our hearts. Indeed, except we are His children, and He has become precious unto us, we can never live up to this great command as we should.

History informs us that the Roman Emperor Severus was so greatly overwhelmed by the beauty and chastity of the Christian moral doctrine as it manifested itself among the first Christians, that although he hated religion (and in the time of his reign they suffered cruel persecution), yet he commanded that the above text should be written on all the public buildings that were erected by him. Although he was a heathen, yet he realised how much better the world would be if they followed this rule.

Many examples could be brought forth to prove that, in some instances of their behaviour, uncivilised heathens and

wild tribes have put to shame many who call themselves Christians and have the name of being God-fearing people, but whose words and actions do not show it. One of these facts we shall now relate; and we will back the truth of our statement.

Far away in North America many years ago, on the border of a flourishing plantation of people, a small but neat little farm was discovered, that was occupied by a diligent young farmer. While only a lad he had left his birthplace in England to seek his home and bread in America.

It was a beautiful and lovely situation. The farm was located on a portion of land that gradually sloped upward, and then ran down to a turbulent river that turned a saw-mill.

There was a nice garden filled with fruit trees and plants, among which were some pretty pumpkins, which are used very much in America. However, they did not yet have that golden colour that they have when they are ripe in the autumn.

On the south side of the hill there was an orchard of peach and cherry trees. The latter were loaded with lovely crimson fruit. In this manner the greatest part of his farm was laid out, and it was so well cultivated that it promised a blessed harvest of grass and Indian corn, which was already forming ears.

The northern and eastern sides of the farm were protected by a large pine tree forest which provided wonderful hunting grounds. After they had gathered in their harvest, great numbers of hunters came together there to hunt wild animals for their winter supply.

In those days there was little or no cooperation between the white people and the Indians. The white people called the Indians redskins, and as they were much greater in number than in our days the white men feared them. The Indians very seldom came near to the above mentioned farm except on one or two occasions when some appeared at the border of the great pine forest, but not to do mischief, as these Indians lived in peace with the white folks.

Upon a lovely evening in the month of June the sun had just gone down, but the heavens were yet displaying its beautiful rays of various colours. (The writer, when he was yet a child, often thought that this was granted to mortal man, that he being here on earth, may behold a little of the glory of that New Jerusalem which is above.)

Soon the moon was spreading her silver light around, clearly displaying its beautiful purpose. It shone upon the lone figure of William Sullivan, who sat in the doorway of his house busily preparing his scythe for the coming haying season. He was a favourable young man with a sun-tanned countenance. Although he was kind hearted in general, yet he was filled with prejudice, which had been formed in his heart while he was still in England, against the Americans in common, but especially against the Indians in North America.

When he was a youth his mother had taught him not to be careless, but to provide for the future. He had received much instruction in his early days, more than most of the children, but not in the exercises of the beautiful pattern of the gospel. He was as ignorant in this matter as if he had never heard anything about it. In all respects he was an Englishman through and through, even so, he looked down with contempt upon all who were not Englishmen, especially the Indians, whom he despised and detested as being heathenish creatures. He forgot the truth, that all those who had an opportunity and privilege of being able to hear and read the truth and neglected it, were more guilty in the eyes of God than these poor, ignorant, wild people.

He was so deep in thought that he did not notice the approaching Indian, in his hunting costume, who pleadingly asked him if he would kindly give a forlorn hunter something to eat and a lodging place for the night.

The young farmer raised his head, and with a look of contempt and anger, and with an unbecoming surly voice, he said: "Be gone, you heathen Indian dog! You will get nothing!"

The Indian turned around, looked at Sullivan, and with a meek soft voice, said: "But I am so hungry ... it is a long time ago since I had any food. Give me a crust of bread and a bone, so I can get a little strength to go on my way."

"I tell you ... be gone, you heathen dog!" said the farmer. "I have nothing for you!"

A conflict seemed to rise in the bosom of the Indian hunter. Pride and need were wrestling for the upper hand; the need prevailed, and with a faint, weak voice he said: "Give me a drink of water, for I feel faint."

This request had no better result than the former. Insultingly he replied: "The river is not far away ... drink out of that, you red dog!"

This was all the poor Indian got from one who called himself a Christian. Through prejudice and stubbornness the young farmer had hardened his heart against his red brother, but which he would have opened at once for his own kindred and people.

With a proud but sad countenance, the Indian turned around and travelled slowly towards the river. The weak pace of the native clearly showed that his need was urgent. Indeed, he must have come to great extremity before the proud Indian could keep asking against all denials.

(To be continued)

Selected

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

Notice: *Would the young people answering the Monthly Questions please remember to give their name and address. We have received several "unknown" answers recently. Ed.*

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from FLORENCE MACPHERSON.

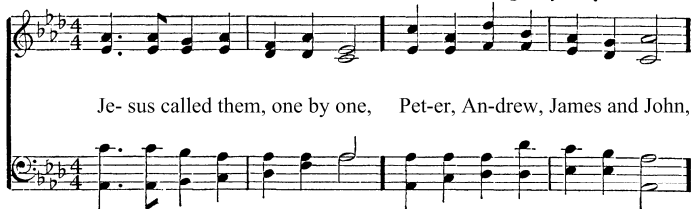
THE TWELVE DISCIPLES

(Whilst visiting friends in Chilliwack, the following lines were sung to the Editor by young children.)

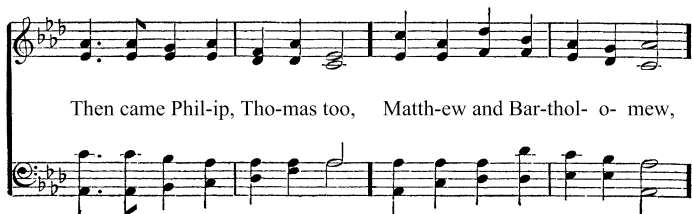
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SPANISH HYMN

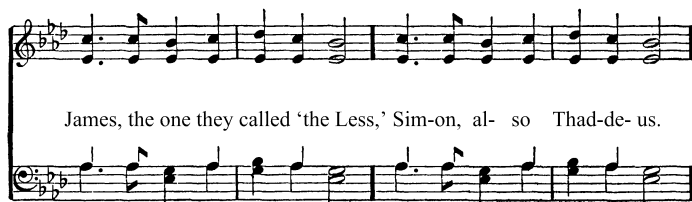
Arranged by Benjamin Carr



Je- sus called them, one by one, Pet-er, An-drew, James and John,



Then came Phil-ip, Tho-mas too, Matth-ew and Bar-thol- o- mew,



James, the one they called 'the Less,' Sim-on, al- so Thad-de- us.



Twelve di- sci- ples Ju- das made, Je- sus was by him be-trayed.

THE HOLY BIBLE (I)

An address by the late J. K. Popham

The account of Creation is grandly simple language; the generations of men and the formation of families; the flood and the miraculous preservation of the human race; the history of nations in the world's infancy; the divine call of Abraham, and God's covenant with him, and its renewal with Isaac and Jacob; the sojourn and oppression of Israel in Egypt, and her deliverance; the history of the wondrous theocracy; the captivity of the covenant people for their sins; the preservation of the kingly tribe of Judah who ruled with God until Christ came; the record of the virgin birth; the Saviour's substitutionary life, given in touching simplicity; the account of His vicarious death, told in awful dignity and majesty; His resurrection, and ascension into heaven; the day of Pentecost, and the subsequent and consequent ministry of the everlasting gospel, and its glorious success; Christ's care of the newly-planted churches, exhibited in the epistles; the descriptive and prophetic Book of Revelation; – all these matters constitute the Bible, and were given by inspiration.

The inspiration of the Scripture sets it alone, above, and different from every other book that has existed, does exist and shall exist. The Bible is what it is because it is the inspired Word of God. It is therefore absolutely unique. We call it the "Holy Bible." It is supremely, exclusively so. It is holy in the sense of being written by inspiration, and infallible. It is not composed of words chosen by the human writers of it, to express thoughts which the Holy Ghost suggested; they spake as they were *moved* (inspired) by the Holy Ghost. They constantly say the Word of the Lord came to them, the Spirit of God spake to them and by them. Inerrancy requires that God should choose His own words. The revelation of Himself, of His will and purposes, must needs be made to man in His own pure words. The man of business will dictate his own words to his secretary in all business letters; he will not trust that his secretary will correctly express important, delicate, and

complicated matters, which might be given to him in general terms. Much less would the Holy Ghost say to His penmen, "Write to the effect." No, the deep things of God must be expressed by Himself. The words must be His own. He must say His own things in His own words. His things are eternal. They are the Being of God, His eternity, His perfections, His subsistence in three Persons, bearing the essential names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, showing their distinct Personalities, their eternal equality. Only God could, in the first place, utter the sublime sentence: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* It is too profoundly incomprehensible and glorious for merely human expression. And again, John 1. 14, 18: *"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."* *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."* A mere suggestion of such divine truths would have shattered the mind which was required to express it in correct and adequate terms, by its very weight, mystery, and glory. Only an involuntary pen, under the absolute control of the divine Dictator, could write such awfully grand and blessed words. Thus the Bible makes revelations of the eternal, internal acts of Jehovah, and who but Himself knew how to put those mysteries into human language?

SMEATON'S TOWER

Following the article about Smeaton's Tower in the August 2013 *Friendly Companion*, there are a couple of points that may be of interest.

The first of these relates to Smeaton's design of the tower, which was based on the gracefully tapering outline of an oak tree. To quote Smeaton himself: "... as for my plans, put it this way – the English oak tree withstands the most violent weather conditions; so I visualise a new tower shaped like an oak.

Why? Because the oak tree resists similar elemental pressures to those which wrecked the lighthouse [presumably referring to Winstanley's]; an oak tree is broad at its base, curves inwards at its waist, becomes narrower towards the top. We seldom hear of a mature oak being uprooted!

“... Connected with its roots, which lie hid below the ground, it rises from the surface, therefore, with a large swelling base, which at the height of one diameter is generally reduced by an elegant curve, concave to the eye, to a diameter less by at least one-third, and sometimes to half, of its original base. From thence, its taper diminishing more slowly, its sides by degrees come into a perpendicular, and for some height form a cylinder.”

In addition, Smeaton decided that each stone block in each course should be dovetailed to its neighbour to securely bind the blocks together, thus making solid mass. To lock the layers of stone together, he used heavy marble “joggles” (marble plugs 1ft square) set into the top of each course and projecting into a hollow cut into the underside of the next course.

“Smeaton’s design was to change the whole course of lighthouse engineering in the future. His graceful, sloping lines were to be copied by almost every eminent designer to come, earning for himself the title ‘Father of modern lighthouses’” – Christopher Nicolson, *Rock Lighthouses of Britain*, Whittles Publishing 2006, page 35.

The words from Psalm 127: “*Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it,*” were cut into the wall of one of the rooms, where they can be seen today; and in the current Eddystone lighthouse “PSALM CXXVII” is carved into the wall of the service room.

Smeaton’s Tower withstood the elements for nearly 120 years, and when it had to be replaced in the 1880’s, the problem was not that the lighthouse had failed in any way structurally, but that the rock on which it stood was being cut away by the action of the sea.

The other point I wanted to mention, concerns my great-great-grandfather, Joseph Steer. Originally he was a shoe maker residing in Bovey Tracey, Devon and in all likelihood attended the Particular Baptist Chapel in the town (he was married there in October 1855). However, after becoming intimate with one Captain Ware who was one of the Trinity Brethren, he was introduced into the Lighthouse service, commencing his duties on the Eddystone Lighthouse – this would have been Smeaton's Tower.

Joseph Steer served on at least six other lighthouses around the coast, his last posting being to the Trwyn Du lighthouse at Penmon on Anglesey from where he wrote a letter to the Editor of the *Gospel Standard* which was printed in 1880 (page 298). Two poems of his also appear in 1881 (pages 111 and 259). From Penmon, he retired to London and attended the ministry of Eli Ashdown at Zoar Chapel, joining the church in 1894, the year before his death. The Zoar Church Records indicate that he had been baptised previously; this may have been at Bovey Tracey as a Joseph Steer was baptised there in March 1851, but with other men of the same name living in the town at the time, it is not clear that this is "our" Joseph Steer.

D. Surridge

**"JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY,
AND FOR EVER"**

My yesterday was Christ upon the tree,
Who bore the condemnation due to me.

Today I travel on and still He leads,
He knows my pathway, and He knows my needs.

Tomorrow is not yet; His wisdom plans.
I leave my future in His loving hands.

Author unknown

(Sent by an esteemed fellow-labourer in the gospel)

SARAH: AN ANSWERED PRAYER

It is hard for us to imagine what it must be to live without electric lighting. With a click of a switch we can light up a room in a moment, however dark the evening may be. However, before the invention of electric light many of the poorer people especially, had to live by candlelight and if they were too poor to buy candles, they had to live in darkness from sunset to sunrise.

Such was the condition of a lady named Sarah, who lived in a cottage on the edge of a village where there were no lamps in the street to relieve the long dark winter nights. One winter Sarah was given by a neighbour, a large print Bible, for which she was very grateful, but not having any light after dark, she could not spend her lonely hours reading the “good Book,” as she called it. So it became her prayer that someone would be kind enough to send her some candles to give some light in her little cottage.

Not far away, lived a lady who was not unaware of Sarah’s poverty, and indeed had more than once given to relieve her needs. But she had no idea that Sarah had not enough money to buy candles. One evening a voice spoke in her heart: “Send Sarah a pound’s worth of candles.” At first she ignored the call, but it grew more persistent until she felt she had no option but to go and buy candles for Sarah and take them to her immediately.

You can imagine Sarah’s surprise and delight when the lady arrived bearing this unusual gift. Her prayer had been answered and now she could read the Holy Word of God during the long winter evenings. The lady was equally delighted to have been used of the Lord to supply this need to her friend. Both of them felt the sweetness of having a God in heaven who hears and answers prayers, of whom they could say: “He is my God.”

We take for granted the electric light we switch on, and yet we need a light more important than that to uncover the truths in God’s Holy Word. Sarah had this inner light of God’s Spirit, and it was this which made the Word so precious to her. May it be so to us also!

Editor

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (I)**

My dear young friends, if the Lord opens our eyes we shall find Christ in the whole of the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation: indeed central to the whole of the Holy Scriptures is the revelation of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Son of God who was made flesh, that is, the Son of God who is from everlasting to everlasting, took into union with His divine nature a holy human nature: He became a real man and lived upon this earth for thirty-three years (John 1. 14). Now in this glorious unique Person we see a profound mystery, as we read: *"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).

Part of that great mystery is that we do not see in Jesus Christ two persons, a human person and a divine Person, but we see one Person, the Son of God, with two natures. The divine nature assumed a holy human nature in the womb of the virgin Mary (Luke 1. 26-35). The mystery is that the divine did not become human, nor did the human become divine, but are indissolubly united in one glorious Person, Jesus Christ. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, lived as a Man on earth and fulfilled the holy law of God, the Ten Commandments. He lived a holy life without sin, for His chosen people. He then laid down that holy life in the sacred sacrifice on the cross of Calvary to redeem His people. Listen to the words of the Son of God regarding His holy human nature, which He calls 'My life': *"No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father"* (John 10. 18). The Son of God voluntarily gave His life. On the cross of Calvary He said: *"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost"* (Luke 23. 46). The Son of God voluntarily gave up His holy human soul to His

Father and thereby entered into death, and on the third day He rose from death fulfilling what was prophesied: *"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: repentance shall be bid from Mine eyes"* (Hosea 13. 14). My dear young friends, this is the foundation of our hope: a Saviour that saves with an everlasting salvation. A glorious Saviour who lived, suffered, bled, died and rose again for His people and now sits at the right hand of His Father in heaven, to intercede for His people.

Listen to those wonderful words of grace from our ascended Saviour: *"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. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know"* (John 14. 1-4).

My purpose in introducing this subject in this way is to try to convey to you the wonderful glory of the Person of Jesus Christ and as we peruse through the Book of Genesis we may behold His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

The first place we shall look is in Genesis 1. 3: *"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."* We see in this not just the creation of natural light but also the creation of spiritual light. In John 1. 4-5 we read of the coming of Jesus Christ into the world: *"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."* We read in the same chapter concerning Jesus Christ: *"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."* In Corinthians the apostle speaks of the wonderful grace of our triune God in the creation of the world and how that same almighty power that was put forth in the creation of the world was put forth in the sending of Jesus Christ into this world to

redeem His people and deliver them from the awful darkness that they had fallen into. *"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).

O how glorious when that light first shines into our hearts and Christ is made so precious and becomes the altogether lovely one unto us. We have those precious words of the Lord Jesus: *"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"* (John 8. 12). We can see from the words we have quoted from Scripture in this article that if we have spiritual life we also have spiritual light, the one represents the other.

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about FIGHTING. 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. When David went to fight Goliath, what weapons did Goliath have? (1 Samuel 17. 45)
2. What armour did David put off, because he had not proved it? (1 Samuel 17. 38-39)
3. What weapons did David choose? (1 Samuel 17. 40)
4. What did Solomon say is "better than weapons of war"? (Ecclesiastes 9. 18)
5. The Apostle Paul speaks of a "good fight" (1 Timothy 6. 12). To what kind of fight is he referring?
6. How does Paul describe the weapons used in this warfare? (2 Corinthians 10)
7. Why do believers need to "put on the whole armour of God"? (Ephesians 6)

8. What does Paul call “the sword of the Spirit”? (Ephesians 6)
9. “So shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion” (Isaiah 29). What does the prophet say they shall be like?
10. On what occasion were the words spoken to Israel: “The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace”?

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS

1. “Happy is the man whom God correcteth.”
2. “Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of Thy law.”
3. “A fool despiseth his father’s instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.”
4. Because chastening is a mark of God’s love to His people, just as a father corrects his son because he loves him. (See also Hebrews 12. 5-6)
5. Doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness.
6. Jehoshaphat made ships to go to Tarshish, but they were broken and unable to go. (2 Chronicles 20. 35-37)
7. The peaceable fruit of righteousness. (Hebrews 12. 11).
8. God promised His mercy should not “depart away” from Solomon as He took it away from Saul. (2 Samuel 7. 15)
9. God promised He would chasten Solomon if he did wrong. (2 Samuel 7. 14)
10. David committed adultery and murder; God sent Nathan to him, caused the child just born to him to die, and brought the sword upon his house. David also numbered the people contrary to God’s order and God sent three days’ pestilence. Jonah tried to flee to Tarshish, but God sent a tempest into the sea, Jonah was cast overboard to be swallowed by a whale, yet miraculously preserved. Uzziah tried to usurp the priest’s office, but was smitten with leprosy. Zacharias was made dumb till John the Baptist was born, because of his unbelief.

Contributed

SEEK JESUS AND NEVER GIVE IT UP

In my younger days, and when I hope the Lord constrained me to follow Him in the ordinance of baptism, after I had seen the Pastor and the deacons, and whilst waiting to speak before the Church, I felt greatly tried about it, feeling I had made a great mistake. (One had to wait four weeks in between the two meetings in those days.)

During that time I went to stay with my parents for a weekend and happened to pick up an old book of my father's which had some verses in it entitled: "Seek Jesus and never give it up." They greatly encouraged me at that time to go on and indeed after fifty or more years feel that is what I must still do.

An older reader

RETROSPECT – PROSPECT – TRUST

Look back! 'tis time I marked the road,
Another year my feet have trod;
What numerous blessings all my days
Deserve my love – demand my praise.

Look round! what thousands madly go
Their sinful course to endless woe:
Lord, make me choose a better part,
Renew by grace this worthless heart.

Look forward! through the unknown way,
O Jesus, guide me day by day;
Preserve my life from future ill,
Direct my steps, and bless me still.

Look up! I would on Thee depend,
Thou only true and constant Friend;
Be Thou *my* Friend till life is o'er,
And sin and death are known no more.

G.T. Congreve

The Friendly Companion



“Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars ... for nation
shall rise against nation, and kingdom
against kingdom ...”
(Matthew 24. 6, 7.)

February 2015

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

I wonder if you know what the word *prudent* means. In my dictionary it says: “sensible and careful, discreet or cautious, exercising good judgment.” The Bible has quite a lot to say about prudence. It is to be found particularly in the Book of the Proverbs: for example in Proverbs 8. 12: “*I wisdom dwell with prudence.*” This important verse tells us that whatever wisdom we might have, that knowledge should always be exercised with prudence. Some people are very clever, but they do not use their intelligence wisely. Many scientists make great discoveries but because they do not believe in God, they jump to wrong conclusions. As you learn at school and college, ask God to give you the prudence to handle rightly the wisdom you gain.

One matter in which the Word of God instructs us is the prudent use of our resources. Using the tiny ant as an example, Solomon tells us: “*Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest*” (Proverbs 6. 6-8). How wise and prudent the ant is, having the foresight to lay up for the harsh winter months when food would be scarce. This is a prudence which God has given to this tiny creature. How much more should we be wise, in preparing for our death and eternity, and not be like the foolish virgins who had no oil when the midnight cry went out!

Being in the company of a lovely family last year for a few days, I learned a very pleasant lesson of prudence, which I pass on to you. The children, like most families, were given pocket money. However they were to divide their money into three equal parts whenever they received any. The first part they were to put aside as savings. The second part they were to reserve for giving to others. The third part they could spend for themselves as they wished. In this way they were being taught to be prudent with their resources and to spend what God had given them wisely.

May God make us each prudent in every part of our life, and especially prudent in that great matter of eternity. Remember the man called Ignorance in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, who even reached the gate of heaven, but not having a certificate was not admitted. It is the Holy Spirit who alone can prepare us for eternity. May we be asking God for this vital teaching for ourselves. This will also make us prudent in the other parts of our life.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Our picture this month shows a statue of a soldier in the First World War. It stands outside Winchester Cathedral.

During the First World War the Scripture Gift Mission distributed to each soldier on active service a copy of St. John's Gospel. The commemorative front cover reads:

THE GOSPEL
According to
SAINT JOHN
"Active Service"
1914-18
PLEASE CARRY THIS
IN YOUR
POCKET
AND
READ IT EVERY DAY

On the inside cover is a message from Lord Roberts, part of which reads:

"25th Aug, 1914

You will find in this little Book guidance when you are in health, comfort when you are in sickness, and strength when you are in adversity."

A letter from an appreciative soldier reads:

"When your small Testaments were distributed on the Common at Southampton I, among others, accepted one in a more derisive than a complimentary manner. I little dreamed that I should use it and find it a great consolation in lonely hours. I have since realised the great personality of the Saviour. When at night I have been on duty alone with Him by my side, and the Germans but thirty yards away, I realised that I needed more than my own courage to stand the strain. When the shells of the enemy have burst periodically at my feet I have marvelled at the fact of still being alive."

We are glad that God witnessed His faithfulness on the terrible battlefields on which these soldiers were called to fight. [Editor]

PRAYER AND PRECEPT

Praying and sinning will never live together in the same heart. Prayer will consume sin, or sin will choke prayer.

J. C. Ryle – "A Call to Prayer"

A true Christian is one who has not only peace of conscience, but war within. He may be known by his warfare as well as by his peace.

J. C. Ryle "Holiness"

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

John Bunyan

To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.

Martin Luther

The soul can do without everything except the Word of God, without which none at all of its wants are provided for.

Martin Luther, "On Christian Liberty"

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**DAVID ANOINTED**

God sent Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint a new king over Israel. Samuel was afraid that Saul would hear about it and try to kill him. But God said: *"I will show thee what thou shalt do."* Samuel called the rulers of Bethlehem to sacrifice to the LORD. He also called Jesse and his sons, for God said that one of them would be the next king. Samuel looked at Eliab the eldest son of Jesse. He was tall and handsome, like Saul had been. Samuel thought surely he must be the one God had chosen. But God told Samuel not to look at the outward appearance, for He looks at the heart. Seven of the sons of Jesse passed before Samuel, but God had not chosen any of them.

Finally, Samuel asked Jesse if these were all of his sons. Jesse said that his youngest son was out in the fields keeping watch over the sheep. This son, named David, was quickly sent for. When David came in, the Lord said to Samuel: *"Arise, anoint him: for this is he."* Samuel took oil and anointed David in the midst of his brethren: *"And the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward."*

QUESTIONS:

1. Where did God send Samuel to anoint a new king? (1 word)
2. What did God tell Samuel not to look at? (3 words)
3. Whom did Samuel anoint in the midst of his brethren?

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. A command.
2. The best sheep and oxen.
3. To obey the LORD.

Contributed

“... *man*
looketh on
the outward
appearance,
but the LORD
looketh on
the heart.”
1 Samuel 16. 7.

BIBLE LESSONS**THE DAY OF PENTECOST**

It had been ten days since Jesus had ascended to heaven. The followers of Jesus were all together in the city of Jerusalem waiting for the Holy Ghost to be poured upon them as Jesus had promised.

One of the three yearly feast days for the Jews had arrived. It was called the day of Pentecost. At this feast the Jews remembered how God gave His Law to them on Mount Sinai fifty days after they came out of Egypt. They also took two loaves of leavened bread and offered them to the Lord to mark the end of grain harvest.

A great number of Jews who lived in Israel, along with those who lived in the countries round about, came to Jerusalem to keep this yearly feast. Some Gentiles also came, who were called proselytes because they became followers of the Jewish religion.

As the apostles were praying, a sudden noise came upon them. It was like a rushing mighty wind. As they looked up, they saw cloven tongues in the appearance of fire, which sat upon each of them. The Bible tells us: *"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost."* The fear of man, which had troubled them so often, was taken away and they went boldly among the multitude of people, gathered in and around the temple.

When they opened their mouths to speak, something very wonderful took place. They began to speak to the people in their own languages. Those from Egypt heard one of the apostles speak in the Egyptian language. Those from Asia heard another speak to them in their native language. Every man heard the apostles speaking in the language of the land from which they had come.

The Bible tells us: *"They were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilæans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? ... the wonderful works of God."* They wondered what it all could mean.

Do you remember how God separated the people at the Tower of Babel by confusing their language? Now the Holy Spirit gave utterance to the apostles to speak in these various tongues or languages.

Some of the Jews despised this mighty miracle. They knew that the apostles were unlearned men. They were very unskilled in their own language. How could they ever speak in another tongue? They began to mock the apostles, saying: *"These men are full of new wine."* They implied that the apostles were drunken. What a great sin, to suggest that this wonderful work of the Holy Spirit was the work of the devil!

This false charge by the enemies of God must not go unchallenged. Peter stood up so that all the people could see him and cried out: *"Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you: ... These are not drunken, as ye suppose, ... But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel."*

The prophet Joel had written hundreds of years before of this wonderful event, saying: *"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons ... shall prophesy, ... and I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; ... and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

The words of Peter had a great effect upon the multitude. The Holy Spirit being poured upon the apostles, was also poured out upon the people, preparing them to hear the sermon that Peter would preach.

You can read about this in Acts chapter 2 verses 1 to 21.

QUESTIONS:

1. What were the followers of Jesus waiting for? (8 words)
2. What feast day had arrived?
3. What sat upon the apostles? (7 words)
4. What did every man hear in his own tongue? (5 words)
5. Who prophesied of this hundreds of years before?

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. His own blood.
2. "Sat down on the right hand of God."
3. "Continued with one accord in prayer and supplication."
4. David.
5. Matthias.

G. L. TenBroeke

CALLED UNTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRIST

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Corinthians 1. 9)

This is a beautiful description of the people of God: *"Called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord."* We have this description so often in the New Testament: those who are called – not just a general call, but an effectual call. Chosen before time began, redeemed at Calvary, and called.

Now, beloved friends, may we always keep to the words of Scripture, and I would just address this to our young people. In days past the expression used in our churches was being "called," called by God's grace. You do not hear that expression so much today. We often hear of people "becoming Christians," or people being "converted," and if those expressions are used rightly and graciously, of course there is nothing wrong with them. But let us be clear on this, that the term that the New Testament uses more than anything else is this: being *called* by God's grace. Now let us not be ashamed of the language, the words of Scripture.

What a wonderful thing it is to be called out of nature's darkness into God's marvellous light! For that call to reach our hearts, to bring us out of the world, to call us out of a state of unconcern, to call us away from false religion, to call us away

from sin and self, our own righteousness. O that calling that makes the difference; God's work, not man's work! Not the Lord trying to save the sinner, or attempting salvation, but that "appointed time that rolls on apace, not to propose but call by grace," in which the work is God's, and in which God shall have all the honour and glory.

In the east there was a shepherd who of necessity had to sell almost all his flock; he just retained two favourite sheep. Then the time came when his poverty was so great he even had to get rid of these two favourites. However, some time afterwards he had the means of buying them back. So he went down to the sheep market and paid his money, paid the price for these two sheep. But he said: "I don't want any two sheep. I want my own." "Well," they said, "if you can find them, you can have them." Then a strange thing happened. The shepherd walked just a little distance from the sheep market and as he did, he took out his shepherd's pipe and played a special note on the pipe, and as he played that note, he slowly walked away from the sheep market. From the great mass of those sheep, there was one here and one there, and they irresistibly came out, irresistibly attracted, irresistibly drawn by that alluring call; and as he walked away, they followed after him. Now you see that is just a faint picture of calling. They were his; they were redeemed; he had paid the price for them; but there they were with all the rest. O but that special call, and irresistibly they went after him. You see:

"There is a period known to God
When all His sheep, redeemed by blood,
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,
Turn to the fold, and enter in."

Now, beloved friends, that is effectual calling: "Called." And the apostle says: "*Called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

B.A. Ramsbottom. Gospel Standard June 1994

GOD'S PROTECTION IN THE WAR

There had been a sharp engagement, and the British troops holding a village had been hurriedly forced by great masses of the enemy to retire. In the confusion three Scottish privates and a corporal were cut off in the streets, so they backed into the first open door they came to. The occupants had fled, and they made their way up a long staircase, intending to find the roof and watch events from there. But it ended in an empty loft, where there was only a skylight beyond their reach.

"Better lie low for a while," suggested the corporal as they stood listening to the terrible sounds outside. The Germans were evidently burning, looting and killing. Now and again they heard screams and the discharge of rifles; sometimes an explosion would shake the building; while the smell of burning wood penetrated to their retreat. This went on for hours. The soldiers knew they would be discovered sooner or later, and expected no mercy.

Suddenly the corporal said: "Lads, it's time for church parade; let's have a wee little service here; it may be our last." The soldiers looked a little astonished, but they piled their rifles in a corner and came and stood at attention. The corporal took out a small Testament from his breast pocket and turned over the pages. "Canna we sing something first? Try y're hand at the 23rd Psalm. Quiet now – very quiet."

"Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill;
For Thou art with me; and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still."

There wasn't much melody about the tune, but the words came from the heart.

Then the corporal began: "*Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of*

your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10. 28-31).

As he read there were loud shouts below; doors banged, and glass was smashed. But he went on: "*He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it.*"

He ended, and his grave face took on a wry smile. "I'm no' a good hand at this job," he said, "but we maun finish it off. Let us pray."

The corporal stood with the Book in his hand, and the others knelt and bowed their heads. A little haltingly, but very simply, he committed their way to God and asked for strength to meet their coming fate, like men. While he prayed, a heavy hand thrust open the door and they heard an exultant exclamation and then a gasp of surprise. Not a man moved, and the corporal went calmly on.

After a pause he began, with great reverence, to repeat the Lord's Prayer. That a German officer or private was standing there they realised; they did not see, but they felt what was taking place. They heard the click of his heels, and they knew that he also was standing to attention. For a moment the suspense lasted, and then came the soft closing of the door and his footsteps dying away. The tumult in the house gradually ceased, and soon afterwards the storm of war retreated like the ebb of the tide. At dusk the four men ventured forth, and by making a wide detour worked around the flank of the enemy and reached the British outposts in safety.

Friendly Companion 1915

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from MATTHEW BAKER; POPPY BARKER; DANIEL and LEAH BOULTON; CAITIE and SAMUEL HINDESS; LYDIA MOL; MAISIE WOODHAMS.

“LOST” GREY SEAL RESCUED FROM FIELD IN ST HELENS

On December 22nd 2014 the BBC reported that a grey seal found in the middle of a field in Merseyside had been rescued. The “distressed” sea mammal was found by a dog walker close to Newton Brook near Newton-le-Willows, police said.

Police, firefighters and animal rescue officers herded the seal with brooms and metal fences before it was safely “contained.”

The animal, found about 17 miles (27km) from the nearest coastline, is thought to have travelled up the River Mersey, before getting “lost.” The British Divers Marine Life Rescue Service (BDMLR) put the grey seal in a trailer before releasing it back into the Mersey. Rachael Fraser, from BDMLR said: “We think it came from the Mersey area, which is tidal, and it came up the bank and was lost. It’s very unusual.”

Seals are powerful animals and potentially dangerous, police said. They advised members of the public to stay away from the area. Steve Marsh, from BDMLR said: “It’s not an easy job certainly because they are large animals. They can be quite aggressive and we do have people in our charity that can actually handle those large seals, but in this instance we are probably going to have to be using the fire brigade to help out.” He said the fire service had a “good animal rescue team.”

The Mammal Society

APOLLO 8’s GENESIS READING

On December 24th 1968, the three Apollo 8 astronauts read aloud from the creation account in Genesis, using the King James Bible text while in orbit around the Moon. Apollo 8 included the first lunar orbits, which meant that the astronauts were completely out of touch with Earth for forty-five minutes every time their craft passed behind the Moon. By the time of the Genesis reading, the crew had circled the Moon nine times and had one more revolution to complete. A global audience estimated at half a billion heard and watched their live broadcast, making it the most-watched broadcast in history at that time.

Transcript**Lunar Module Pilot William Anders**

We are now approaching lunar sunrise, and for all the people back on Earth, the crew of Apollo 8 has a message that we would like to send to you.

"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."

Command Module Pilot James Lovell

"And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day."

Commander Frank Borman

"And God said, Let the waters under heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas: and God saw that it was good."

And from the crew of Apollo 8, we close with good night. God bless all of you – all of you on the good Earth.

THE VENGEANCE OF THE INDIAN (II)

The farmer's wife had heard the pleading request. And generally speaking, a mother's heart is more sympathetic towards suffering humanity than the masculine heart. Even in the wilderness, in the midst of Africa, the adventurous and forlorn Mungo Park was rescued by the friendly and generous care of women, whose husbands and brothers were thirsting for his blood.

And so it was here also. The young wife of the farmer, tender hearted Mary Sullivan, had heard everything when she was putting her child to bed. She was looking through the open window at the Indian when she saw his gloomy figure, most likely on account of over-exhaustion, fall to the ground not far from her home. She also noticed that her husband had finished his work. With his eyes cast downward, he was walking towards the barn, for we must acknowledge that he felt very uneasy.

Mary left the farmhouse and was soon standing beside the Indian. She had a pitcher of milk in one hand, and a napkin with bread, broiled goat's meat, and parched corn in the other ... a whole meal.

Stooping down over the fallen Indian, she said: "Will my red brother have a drink of milk?" And when he had raised himself a little to receive the offer, she opened the napkin and told him to eat so that he would be refreshed.

When he had finished the meal he knelt down at her feet, his eyes gleaming with thankfulness. Gently he took hold of her hand and brought it to his lips, in such a graceful manner that it would put many a Christian to shame. With a gentle clear voice, he said: "Carcoochee (for that was his name) shall protect the white dove from the claws of the imperial eagles; for her sake shall the inexperienced young be safe in her nest, and her red brother shall not try to avenge her."

He took a bunch of heron feathers from his breast, and after finding the largest one, he gave it to Mary Sullivan and then said: "When the male of the white dove flies over the Indian

territory, tell him to have this feather on his head." Then he turned around and went into the forest, and soon disappeared out of sight.

The summer was past, the harvest had come to an end, the wheat and Indian corn were safely brought into the barns, the pumpkins were hung in their winter quarters, and the walls made a beautiful display of different autumn colours.

Preparations were now being made for the hunting trip. William Sullivan was among the number who were planning to seek their prey on the Indian hunting grounds which lay between the great pine forest and the river. He was bold, daring, and skilful in handling both the gun and the bow and arrow, and therefore he always looked forward with delight to the time it would commence. He was fearless for the not unusual attacks of the Indians, who often laid in wait for them.

But now, the closer that it was getting to the time they were to start out, the more his mind was filled with strange thoughts and fears about the Indians. In his thoughts he imagined he saw the Indian, whom he had treated so roughly in the past summer, stealing about in the woods.

On the evening before the day they were to start out, he told his kind-hearted wife about his thoughts and feelings, how his conscience smote him, and how restless he always felt on account of the dishonourable and uncivil way he had treated the poor Indian. He added that since that time all the teachings of his mother during his early days had returned to him: how she had taught him to act towards his fellow creatures, etc. He then spoke of the self-reproach which weighed so heavily upon him, as he had not only acted unbecoming to man, but in a manner also very displeasing in the eyes of God.

Mary Sullivan listened silently to the words of her husband. When he had finished speaking, she smiled when she looked at him, although there was a trace of fear in her eyes. She then

told him how she had treated the Indian when he was so faint that he fell to the ground. She also explained that she did not tell him before because she feared he would be angry, for she had heard how roughly he had treated the Indian.

She then went to another room and brought forth the beautiful heron feather which the Indian had given to her. Mary then told her husband that his safety depended upon his wearing the feather.

"No," said Sullivan, "these Indians never forget an offence."

"And they never forget a kind deed either which was done to them," replied Mary. "I will take this feather and sew it on your hunting cap, and now trust in God, my beloved husband. Although I know that God can save you without this feather, yet I remember my father's saying that we should use all the allowable means for our safety and not neglect them. His basic rule was: 'Confide as a child, but fight as a man.' We must endeavour to help ourselves if we wish to succeed. We can not expect any wonders from heaven if we sit fatalistically with our hands in our lap."

"Dear William," she continued, "now, after my father is dead, I think more about what he said than when he was living. I am afraid we are travelling the wrong way. I feel that if God was to treat us according to what we deserve, then He would forget us and leave us over to ourselves, because we have left Him."

Tears were in the eyes of Mary while she was speaking. She was the only daughter of a God-fearing English seaman. During her youth her parents hoped that she would walk in their footsteps. However, she had more piety in her head than in her heart. She could not withdraw from the love shown towards her by William Sullivan, who had anything but an earnest character. And, as a morning cloud and early dew, all her piety disappeared; as a wife she lost all her taste for that which was formerly her pleasure. According to outward appearance she seemed contented and happy, although there was always a worm gnawing at her pleasure, and the

accusation of a restless soul – a secret, yet an always present conviction, that she had left the living God.

Gradually these impressions became stronger; the Spirit of grace was working in her heart, and oftentimes the truths that she had heard in her early youth were called back to her remembrance. She was stopped upon her way ... and she knew not how to go on. A lengthy conversation followed, and for the first time in their married life they knelt together in prayer.

Selected

(To be continued)

THE HOLY BIBLE (II)

This divine Book states most explicitly the fall of man. It tells us that man was made upright, and under the law to God, his Creator. Here we must find man's responsibility to God – a better word perhaps is *accountability*, accountability of which we cannot divest ourselves. The Bible reveals the second Man, the last Adam, who is a quickening Spirit to His seed.

It must not be omitted to state that a holy and wise providence has a prominent, honourable, important place in our inerrant Bible; it is, as it were, the handmaid of grace. The lives of some individual persons, the histories of some nations, are related. Its accuracy in these is matchless; its impartiality inimitable. Viewed from every standpoint it may be confidently affirmed that no merely human mind or hand could have produced our infallible Bible. *It is the very and immediate word of the Holy Ghost.* The penmen were His instruments. The holy, beautiful words of revelation, of description, of history, of promise, of threat, were traced on the original parchments as He dictated them. Both the Testaments, Old and New, thus bear the ineffaceable stamp of divine origin; that is, of verbal, plenary inspiration. Moreover, by His numerous quotations from the Old Testament, the Lord Jesus Christ has welded it into the New Testament, and thus they are manifestly one organic whole. They have but one voice. They stand or fall together. *"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"*

(Revelation 19. 10). The sanction of the adorable Trinity is on holy Scripture.

I judge we are now in a position to adopt and lay down the proposition with which Dr. Owen opens his work on the divine original of the Scriptures: "That the whole authority of the Scripture in itself, depends solely on its divine original, is confessed by all who acknowledge its authority." I hold that that proposition is absolutely correct. The Word of God can receive no accession of authority from any human source. It is a perfect Word. It is the sole and everlasting rule of faith and practice. Against this divine rule both the Papist and the Modernist object. The former, that he may introduce and place above holy Scripture his necessary tradition; the latter, that he may honour his own intellect and inner consciousness – whatever that may be. Alas, divine authority is abhorrent to fallen man. The Papist has numberless idols, the Modernist has but one. He must rid himself of the incubus of authority, otherwise he must bow down to the Bible. Rejecting that, as to its full, complete inspiration, he thinks himself at liberty to edit it, correct it, criticise its facts, question its doctrines, shorten it, omitting what he objects to, and to tell us what God ought to be, what He cannot do, and what He is ever attempting to do, but is unable to accomplish. Be it given us to bow before Jehovah and reverence His Word, which He has exalted above all His name.

J.K. Popham

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (II)

In our last piece we looked at Christ being the Light of the World. In this piece we will look at Genesis chapter 3. In this portion of God's Word we have a very fundamental truth that is recorded, that is, the fall of man into sin and Satan's power. If we do not have a clear view of the awful state of man after the fall, then we shall never understand the vital need of salvation. The revelation of Jesus Christ is to a totally lost man, a totally

depraved man, a man who is totally incapable of delivering himself from this state of spiritual death. My dear young friends, read Genesis chapter 3 and may the Lord by His Spirit open your eyes to behold your utter destitution of all that is good. We read in the Epistle to the Romans 5. 12: *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* David confesses in Psalm 51. 5: *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."* So it is with each and every one of us.

But in Genesis 3 we read of something else in verse 15. The LORD God speaks to Satan, and what solemnly awaits him through the seed of the woman: *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."* No sooner had the LORD God declared the solemn curse on man because of his sin and apostasy from God, He immediately declares the way that He will deliver lost man, through the Seed of the woman. This Seed is Jesus Christ, the Son of God manifest in the flesh. Jesus Christ is called the Second Adam. Adam, the first man created by God, is the federal head of the human race. We are all the sons and daughters of Adam, hence we are born in sin and shapen in iniquity. So we read in Romans 5. 19: *"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous."* We were all made sinners in the first Adam but the true believer in Jesus Christ is made righteous in Him. In 1 Corinthians 15. 45 we are instructed as to the two Adams: through one we die, through the other we shall live; the first is of the earth, the second is the Lord from heaven. *"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."* Then we read in verse 47 that the second Adam is the Lord from heaven: *"The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven."* In verse 22 of the same chapter we read: *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."*

The other solemn thing to notice from Genesis 3 is that we are either of the seed of Satan or we are of the seed of Christ and between these two seeds there can be no peace, only enmity. This enmity is seen immediately in Genesis chapter 4: the two sons of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel. Abel was of the seed royal, accepted in Christ, Cain was of Satan's seed. He therefore rose up in enmity against his own brother and murdered him. My dear young friends, are you in Christ, or are you still in Satan's kingdom? How unspeakably solemn if you live and die in that kingdom under the curse of Almighty God for ever and ever.

You may be asking me the question in your mind: how can I escape from this kingdom of darkness and curse? In John 16 the Lord Jesus instructs us that it is only by the almighty power of the Holy Spirit that we can be delivered from Satan's power and kingdom. He can and does convince men and women, boys and girls of their lost condition by nature and lead them to Jesus Christ the only Saviour of sinners. As the Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3: "*Ye must be born again.*" "*Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*" The Apostle Paul could say to the Ephesians: "*You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins*" (Ephesians 2. 1). My dear beloved young friends, have you been made spiritually alive by the Holy Spirit? Has Jesus Christ been revealed to you as the Way, the Truth and the Life?

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about ELIJAH THE PROPHET. 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. After Elijah had prophesied that there would be no rain, where did God tell him to hide? (1 Kings 17. 3)

2. What birds did God command to feed Elijah, and what kind of food did they bring? (1 Kings 17. 6)
3. When Elijah ran away from Jezebel to Horeb, God sent three mighty things. Of each of them it was said that the Lord was not in them. What were they? (1 Kings 19. 11-12)
4. What did Elisha ask of Elijah before Elijah was taken up to heaven by a whirlwind? (2 Kings 2. 9)
5. When fire from God fell on the sacrifice Elijah offered and consumed it, what did the people around say? (1 Kings 18. 39)
6. On another occasion, at Elijah's command, fire came down from heaven. What did it consume? (2 Kings 1)
7. The widow of Zarephath said to Elijah: "Now by *this* I know that thou art a man of God." What was "this"? (1 Kings 17)
8. Elijah thought he was the only prophet of God left in Israel. How many worshippers did God say there were? (1 Kings 19)
9. After Naboth's death, Elijah prophesied what would happen when Ahab died. What did Elijah say (1 Kings 21), and give the verse in 1 Kings 22 where the fulfilment of it is mentioned.
10. For how long was there no rain or dew in the land of Israel, as Elijah prophesied? (Two verses, Luke and James)

ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS

1. A sword, a spear and a shield.
2. Saul's armour (a coat of mail and a helmet of brass).
3. His shepherd's sling and five smooth stones.
4. Wisdom.
5. The fight of faith.
6. "Not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." (2 Corinthians 10. 4)
7. "That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6. 11)
8. The Word of God. (Ephesians 6. 17)
9. "As when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite" (Isaiah 29. 8).
10. On the banks of the Red Sea. (Exodus 14. 14)

Contributed

HEART RELIGION

'Midst all the opinions, contentions, and strife,
Concerning repentance, salvation, and life,
That ring from the pulpit and teem from the press,
There's one consolation, we are not left to guess.

For Jesus assures us, in language quite plain,
We cannot be saved unless born again.
The works of a creature, howsoever he live,
A fitness for heaven no sinner can give.

The heart must be changed, the mind be renew'd,
An appetite given for heavenly food,
Desires be implanted that never will die,
And needs made most urgent that God must supply.

This change is effected by power divine,
For none but Jehovah the soul can incline;
Though some men assert, with a positive air,
That all that is needed is reading and prayer.

While others, more subtle, their opinions impart,
And tell all their hearers Christ knocks at the heart,
And urge them to open that He may come in,
Or He may be offended and ne'er knock again.

The tears of an Esau, the prayers of a Saul,
The repentance of Judas very short fall;
A Cain may be sorry, a Pharaoh confess,
And all this arise from the works of the flesh.

But regeneration cuts open the heart,
Dissecting the sinner in every part,
And raising him up, by the power of the Word,
To show forth the praises of Jesus the Lord.

Selected

The Friendly Companion



“Hast thou an arm like God?
or canst thou thunder with a voice like Him?”
(Job 40. 9)

March 2015

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Please note: Editor's change of email address (shown above)

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

It is one of the hardest things to cope with, being the only one, and young people especially find this difficult when their school or college friends take a different course to the one they feel to be right.

A few months ago, a Religious Instruction lesson was being held at a school in England. At the beginning of this particular lesson the teacher asked the class to divide into three groups. On the right hand were to be those who believed in God; in the centre those who said they did not know; and on the left hand those who said they did not believe in God. In this class was a young girl who did believe in God. She wondered whether any of her classmates would join her on the right hand side. Sadly, but not surprisingly to her, she found herself alone on the right hand and all her classmates in the other groups. Distressing though this was, she nonetheless had a good conscience before God that she was not ashamed to own Him.

In this, the young girl joined the ranks of men like Daniel, Nehemiah and Obadiah, to name but three, who were prepared to stand alone. To do so, needs grace and God-given courage. As Simon Peter proved when he tried to stand in his own strength, the fear of man is so strong that left to ourselves the boldest profession will fail. But often it is the weakest who stand the firmest because they rely on God for all-needed help. When the Lord Jesus returns, He will call to His right hand all His children for whom He died and who were led to believe in Him for salvation. How the words of the hymn-writer express the thoughts of God's children:

“When Thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To take Thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at Thy right hand?”

Our dear friend, Mr J K Stehouwer of Grand Rapids, tells of a time during the war with Japan, when men from his platoon were being called out on a dangerous mission. How he hoped his name would not be called out! But then the words of the hymn-writer above came forcibly to his mind. How in that great Day of Judgment he *would* want his name *to be* called out to stand among God's people, of whom Christ is not ashamed.

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

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

What a storm is to be seen in the picture on our front cover this month! Thunderstorms are one of the most awesome displays of nature's power. Of course we know from God's Word, and some of us also from our own experience, that God does control the weather. We read of God sending a thunderstorm at the time of wheat harvest in the days of Samuel as a sign of His displeasure with them, in wanting a king to reign over them instead of Him. (1 Samuel 12. 17-18). No doubt the heavy rain that came with it damaged the harvest.

We remember once in our own experience at the time of our daughter's wedding in September. It had been a beautiful week right up until the day before and then the weather turned very thundery and wet. How rebellious one felt that the good weather did not last for a day or two longer! However, the Lord kindly quietened our rebellious mind with the words of the hymn writer:

"Still is He gracious, wise, and just,
And still in Him let Israel trust."

Doddridge

The effect of these words was that we could leave the matter entirely in the hands of the Lord, and that he would send whatever was for His honour and our good. It rained right up

until the moment my daughter and I left the house for the wedding service. But then it stopped, the sun came out, and the rest of the day was exactly as one would have wished. How we proved the control of the Lord over His weather!

Our own dear father, who recently passed into his eternal rest, told us of a time when a thunderstorm during a service was so severe that worship had to be abandoned and the service brought to a premature close. As he walked out of the chapel full of fear, the word of Isaac Watts came very powerfully:

“The God that rules on high, and thunders when He please;
That rides upon the stormy sky, and manages the seas;
This awful (awesome) God is ours, our Father and our love;
He shall send down His heavenly powers, to carry us above.”

Immediately he felt a calm in his mind and a sacred sense that he was safe in the hands of this great God.

As one old believer said to a man who was complaining about a wet day: “It is God’s weather.” May we always remember that and ask for grace to be content with whatever He sends, whether it be sun or rain.

When the minister, Bernard Gilpin, was on his way to London to be tried for heresy during the reign of Mary I, he broke his leg, which put a stop to his journey for some time.

His escort taunted him with his own philosophy that nothing happens by chance but what is intended for our good. Gilpin replied that even this strange event did not alter his faith in God in this respect.

In the event the queen passed away before Gilpin’s leg healed, and so he was able to return to his own people who received him with great joy and thanksgiving to God for sparing him to them.

Selected

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**SAUL SENDS FOR DAVID**

Samuel quietly anointed David to be the next king at Bethlehem. It seems that few understood what he had done. Samuel returned home and David went back to his sheep.

The Spirit of the LORD came upon David when he was anointed, but an evil spirit began to trouble King Saul. His servants wanted him to seek a man who was skilled in playing the harp. The sweet music would calm his mind and make him well. One of the servants had seen David playing his harp as he cared for the sheep. He spoke very highly of David and added: "... *the LORD is with him.*"

Saul sent for David as he cared for the sheep. What questions David must have had! Why must he go to Saul? Would he soon be made king? No, it would be many years before David held that office. The LORD had important lessons for him to learn first. When the evil spirit was upon Saul, David played on his harp until he was well.

QUESTIONS:

1. What came upon David when he was anointed? (5 words)
2. What began to distress King Saul? (3 words)
3. What was David skilled in playing?

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (See page 50 for the new e-mail address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. Bethlehem.
 2. The outward appearance.
 3. David.
- Contributed*

*“Send me
David thy
son, which
is with
the sheep.”*

1 Samuel

16. 19.

BIBLE LESSONS

THE LORD ADDING TO THE CHURCH

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." These words of Peter fell with a measure of power upon the multitude. They carefully listened as he declared how Jesus of Nazareth was honoured by God through the miracles and wonders which God wrought by Him in their midst.

How bold Peter was! Just eight weeks before he had denied his Master, but now he was no longer ashamed of Him nor afraid of His enemies. He declared that God in His foreknowledge had determined that Jesus should suffer and die for His people. Yet he charged the men of Israel with the awful deed, saying: *"... ye have taken (Jesus), and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."* Although Pilate gave the command and the Roman soldiers carried out the command, Peter told the Jews before him that they were guilty of the crime because they had demanded it.

Peter continued his sermon, telling them that God raised up Jesus from the dead. He and the other disciples were witnesses of it. He reminded them that David wrote of the resurrection of Christ in the Psalms, saying: *"... that God had sworn with an oath to him (David), that of the fruit of his loins, ... He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell (the grave), neither His flesh did see corruption."*

Peter told them how David further prophesied of Jesus: *"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool."* Peter summed it up, saying: *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."*

A great number of those who heard Peter preach that day felt *"pricked in their heart."* Their heart was made alive by the Holy Ghost. Their heart became very tender before the Lord. They realized their guilt - their great sin. Oh, whatever would

become of them? They cried unto Peter and the other apostles: *“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”* Whenever God opens the heart of any sinner, they will feel in some measure the same distress: What must I do? Where can I go?

Peter knew from his own experience what the people needed to do. After he had denied the Lord Jesus, he went out and wept with bitter tears of repentance, confessing his sin. He now directed the people to repent of their sin and believe on the Lord Jesus for the remission (forgiveness) of sin. Further, he told them to give proof of repenting and believing by being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Peter had more good news for them. He told them that the promise of forgiveness was to them and to the generations that were to follow: *“...even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”* With many more words he instructed them, saying: *“Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”*

Although not all who heard Peter that day were converted, yet a great number were. The Bible tells us: *“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”*

They proved their conversion to be of God by how they continued in the apostles’ doctrine and their fellowship with each other. Their conversation, prayers, public worship, and providing for all that had need were all done with gladness of heart.

The Holy Ghost working all these things in them: *“added to the church daily such as should be saved.”*

You can read about this in Acts chapter 2 verses 21 to 47.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Peter say the multitude had done with Jesus? (11 words)
2. What did those who heard Peter feel? (4 words)
3. What did Peter tell the people to do? (10 words)
4. How many were added to the church under Peter's sermon? (4 words)
5. What did the Holy Ghost add to the church daily? (5 words)

Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (See page 50 for the new e-mail address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. The Holy Ghost to be poured upon them.
2. Pentecost.
3. Cloven tongues in the appearance of fire.
4. The wonderful works of God.
5. Joel.

G. L. TenBroeke

THE VENGEANCE OF THE INDIAN (III)

The morning that witnessed the beginning of the hunting trip was beautiful. Not a cloud was visible; and on the face of William Sullivan it seemed as though the glittering morning sun had taken all the fear away of the foregoing evening. An earnest pleading of his wife was needed to prevent him from pulling the feather off his cap. He had attempted to do this, but she held his hand, and when she whispered in his ear, his lips somewhat trembled, and he said: "Well, dear Mary, if you really think that this feather of the redskin shall protect me, good, then I shall keep it on." With this, William put on his cap, shouldered his gun, and the hunters were soon on their way to seek game.

The day was swiftly past, as it generally is at such times. Several animals were killed, and the hunters found a place of shelter for the night in the cave of a bear. One of the hunters was enabled to shoot the bear just before sunset as it was wending its way towards the river. The flesh of the bear served as a good evening meal and his skin for pillows, and they made a bed of leaves for this long November night.

With the dawning of the morning they left their rugged shelter and continued hunting. William lost his companions by running after a young deer, and when he tried to find them

again he lost his way. Hour after hour he looked for signs whereby he could find the right track, but it was all in vain. The trees were so thickly grown together that it was very seldom that a ray of sunlight could be seen.

As William was not a man who was well acquainted with travelling through the woods, he could not judge by the moss and liverwort that grew on the side of the trees. He felt very uneasy. Often he sprang up, thinking that he saw the shining eyes of an Indian sneaking up on him; and he had often taken his gun with the intention of taking his own life at a tremendous cost.

Towards sunset he noticed that there were fewer trees, and that they were not so stout, and in a few minutes he discovered that he was at the border of a large field covered with long grass, shrubbery, and cope wood. A river wound its way through this field, to which Sullivan dragged his footsteps. He was tired and exhausted for he had eaten nothing since early morning.

At the brink of the river there were several small thickets. Therefore Sullivan was careful, and he pulled back the hammer of his gun to be prepared to meet any oncoming danger.

He was only a few yards from the river when he heard a rustling noise among some small trees. He looked, and lo, a dangerous buffalo dashed out of the thicket. These animals generally came in groups through the prairies, sometimes by thousands. Although we seldom see them, they generally appear when they have been chased by the Indians.

The buffalo stopped, stood still for a moment, and then with his head down he ran towards the intruder. Sullivan aimed and fired, but the animal was so close to him that he could not aim correctly, and thus he only wounded him slightly. This made the buffalo angry, and he charged with double fury.

Sullivan was a strong man, and although he was weakened through travelling and hunger, yet in these perilous moments he received strength and courage and had the presence of

mind to grasp the long hair on the forehead of the buffalo just as it was about to thrust its horn into his side. With his left hand he pulled out his knife, with a little hope that he would be enabled to thrust it into the throat of his adversary, but the chances were slim. The buffalo shook him off, cast him upon the ground, and was just going to trample upon him when unexpectedly the loud shot of a gun was heard. The animal sprang up, then fell to the ground, partly upon Sullivan.

A dark figure in Indian apparel came walking towards him and made a cut through the neck of the buffalo. Although the bullet had struck the brain, this was done to bleed the animal so the meat could be kept for some time.

The Indian then turned to Sullivan, who in the meantime had crawled from under the buffalo. Although fearing that this Indian did not belong to the tribe which was at peace with them, he asked the Indian if he could direct him to the nearest white settlement.

"If the tired hunter will take a rest until tomorrow, then the eagle will show him the way to the nest of the white dove," replied the Indian in the figurative language which is common to them.

Then he took him by the hand and swiftly led him through the woods, for darkness would soon overtake them. He took him to a small lodging place close to the river, sheltered by some trees that grew at the riverside. Here the Indian gave Sullivan a rich supper of corn pudding, which was made of mashed corn that had been cooked, and also some venison. He also gave him some hides of animals that he had shot, which served as a bed, and then left him to rest for the night.

(Selected)

(To be concluded)

The Lord's Table is for those who know themselves as sinners and Jesus as a Saviour.

H. Cartwright

THE BIGGEST MATHEMATICAL MIRACLE IN THE WORLD!

Moses and the people were in the desert, but what was he going to do with them? They had to be fed, and feeding two or three million people requires a lot of food. According to the Quartermaster General in the Army, it is reported that Moses would have to have had 1,500 tons of food each day.

Do you know that to bring that much food each day, two freight trains, each a mile long, would be required! Besides you must remember, they were out in the desert, so they would have to have wood to use in cooking the food. This would take 4,000 tons of wood and a few more freight trains, each a mile long, just for one day.

And just think, they were forty years in transit. And, oh yes! They would have to have water. If they only had enough to drink and wash a few dishes, it would take 11,000,000 gallons each day, and a freight train with tank cars, 1,800 miles long just to bring water!

And then another thing! They had to get across the Red Sea at night. (They did!) Now, if they went on a narrow path, double file, the line would be 800 miles long and would require thirty-five days and nights to get through. So, there had to be a space in the Red Sea three miles wide so that they could walk 5,000 abreast to get over in one night.

But then, there is another problem. Each time they camped at the end of the day, a campground two-thirds the size of the state of Rhode Island was required, or a total of 750 square miles long ... think of it! This space just fortnightly camping.

Do you think Moses figured all this out before he left Egypt? I think not! Moses believed in God.

Contributed

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **SEBASTIAN COOPER, NANCY COTTINGHAM, AIDEN LUCAS, and TOBIAS ROSIER.***

Please Note the Editor's change of e-mail address on page 50.

“OUR LIFE’S MINUTEST CIRCUMSTANCE”

During the Second World War, Sir Winston Churchill was once entertaining some guests in the Garden Rooms at No. 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister’s official residence. The steel shutters were closed and they could hear bombs dropping nearby.

“Suddenly,” (Churchill wrote) “I had a providential impulse. The kitchen of No. 10 Downing Street is lofty and spacious, and looks out through a large plate-glass window about 25 ft. high. The butler and parlour maid continued to serve dinner with complete detachment, but I suddenly became acutely aware of this big window, behind which Mrs. Landemare, the cook, and the kitchen-maid, never turning a hair, were at work. I got up abruptly, went into the kitchen, told the butler to put the dinner on the hot plate in the dining room and ordered the cook and the other servants into the shelter, such as it was. I had been seated again at the table only about three minutes when a really loud crash, close at hand, and a violent shock showed the house had been struck. We went into the kitchen. The devastation was complete. The blast had smitten the large, tidy kitchen, with all its bright saucepans and crockery, into a heap of black dust and rubble. The big plate glass window had been hurled into fragments with splinters across the room, and if there had been any occupants, would of course have cut them to pieces, but my providential inspiration, which I might have neglected, had come in the nick of time.”

We hope that those who were involved in this remarkable deliverance would give the glory to God for His undoubted preservation at that time. Editor

Kindly submitted by one of our older readers

The everlasting covenant made between the ever-blessed Trinity is full of shalls and wills. It is well ordered in all things and sure. For a man then to throw his ifs and buts against it, is folly in the extreme.

A. Peet

A CALL BY GRACE

In 1 Kings 17, we read of the widow woman of Zarephath, and how the Lord taught her of Himself, through His servant Elijah, by the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil, and then through the raising of her son from death, this last event being used of God to convince her of her need as a sinner and of salvation from the God of Israel. The following account from one of our readers was prompted after hearing a sermon on this subject, being reminiscent of her own call by grace.

She was brought up as a Roman Catholic and was sent to a Convent School for her education. Here she was taught the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church. One doctrine in particular puzzled her, namely that of the infallibility of the Pope. Doubts on this dogma raised other doubts which in particular persisted in her late teenage years.

Going on holiday about this time she met the boy who was eventually to become her husband. They were immediately attracted to each other and by the end of the holiday had already become closely-knit in natural affection. However, at the end of this holiday her friend said that sadly he would not be able to see her again as he was a Protestant and regularly attended the Strict Baptist Chapel in his home town. He rightly felt that unless they were agreed on their faith they could not be happily married. Already having doubts in her mind about the Roman Catholic faith, this caused her to ask herself what was the true faith of God. This prompted her to pray earnestly that God would show her the right way.

In this spirit she agreed that she would meet his family and for the first time in her life she entered a Protestant chapel. Everything was very different from the services to which she was used. Not only was the chapel very plain in comparison to the Roman Catholic church but the service, especially the preaching, was entirely different. She somehow felt that what was preached here was the Truth. After hearing the Pastor for the first time, she was enabled by God's grace to resolve to make a clean break with her childhood faith and like Ruth of

old to go out from 'Moab' to 'Bethlehem.' She knew this would upset her family who were closely attached to the Roman Catholic faith, but she felt sure the Lord was guiding her. Firstly, by being given a mind to study the Word of God, like the noble Bereans who *"searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."* But secondly, the mother of her boy-friend, a very godly woman, immediately took her into her heart, and patiently showed her the way of God in salvation as shown in the Bible. She was the true 'Naomi' to her being her instructor in the things of God (see Ruth 2. 16).

Eventually she and her boyfriend were married and they continued to attend the Strict Baptist Chapel of his childhood. Now the Word of God was becoming precious and the services and the preaching no longer strange. She looked forward to hearing God's servants.

But now the Lord began, as He did with the widow woman, to deepen His work. In this case He brought a time of deep affliction which culminated in a time in hospital. It was then that she knew that as a sinner she needed to know the Lord for herself as her Saviour, in the way that she had longed for. Whilst praying for the Lord to help her, the words of Hebrews 13. 5-6 came very powerfully to her *"... be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."* After her return from hospital and pondering this word whilst reading the Scriptures, the Lord filled her whole being with a sense of thankfulness. Such was the blessing of the Lord that she cried for joy and thanked Him for His wonderful ways in bringing her out of spiritual darkness into His marvellous light. She could look back and see how kindly and gently, yet firmly, He had brought her to know the truth.

Unexpectedly her Pastor called to see her, at which time her mouth was opened to relate what the Lord had taught and shown her. Like the widow woman in 1 Kings 17 she could

now say to him in spirit: *"Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the Word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth."* He told her of a church meeting that same evening when two other believers were going to give their testimonies. He felt that she should also tell the Lord's people what He had done for her soul. Being troubled and concerned as to whether this was the right time for such a solemn step, her eyes lighted upon the calendar text for the day. The Lord used this to encourage her with these words in John 15. 27: *"Ye also shall bear witness."* Down on her knees she went in prayer and humility. That evening she testified before the church and was graciously received, and a few weeks later baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost to whom she owed so much.

Editor

THE BOMBARDIER BEETLE

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so." (Genesis 1. 24)

This tiny little insect only about 1 to 2 cm in size has an incredibly powerful and highly complex system for protecting itself from enemies and predators. When in danger, glands within the beetle secrete a mixture of two hydroquinone compounds and hydrogen peroxide. These chemicals due to their nature must be held in separate chambers for if they were to come into contact with each other, they would react. This mixture is then injected into the explosion chamber where another enzyme is added.

The heat generated from the reaction brings this hot corrosive mixture to about 1000°C, building up pressure to the point that the mixture is expelled explosively from the chamber through two tubes at 20 metres per second. The force of the liquid firing should be enough to blast the little beetle into orbit off its feet or possibly even destroy it if all the

liquid were to be discharged at one time. This amazing beetle however opens and closes the door of its combustion chamber with great precision allowing the liquid to escape in a stream of hundreds of little pulses per second to prevent blowing itself up.

The beetle can also control the pressure and direction of the explosion with incredible precision at whatever is trying to eat it or scare it away. It is possible for it to repeat this process numerous times and it can spray up to four times its body length.

There is no realistic way in which the Bombardier Beetle could have evolved its sophisticated defence system over time all by itself. It needs all the compounds to be in place at the same time. Imagine a beetle that fired all the mixed compounds at once – it would blow itself up and would therefore not be around to develop a more refined firing system. A beetle that could not keep the enemy in firing range would not survive to work on less manoeuvrable firepower. If this system is missing any of its parts, it is more than worthless to the beetle.

The bombardier beetle is evidence that the insects were created in their perfected amazing finished form by an all-wise Creator, without the need for endless stages of improvement.

The Explorer

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (III)

In Genesis chapter six we have the solemn record of man's utter apostasy from God. God declares that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were evil continually. It is instructive to notice that when man was created the divine order was that he should only have one wife. The Lord Jesus confirms this in His teachings in Mark 10. 2-12. He instructs them that Moses added the precept of divorce: that was not in the original law because of the hardness of their hearts. He

then takes us back to the original institution: *"But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."* In the New Testament the Lord Jesus clearly restores what man had corrupted. But we notice in Genesis 6 that man in his wickedness was having as many women as he desired: *"That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man."* The LORD then goes on to say that He repented and it grieved Him at heart that He had made man on the earth. One of the evidences of man's gross wickedness was his moral depravity.

As we are on this point of marriage let us seek to open this in a spiritual way. Just as the Lord Jesus takes us back to the original institution, so the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5 takes us back to the original institution of marriage when God created woman in Genesis 2 and 3. Adam loved Eve and through that intimate love, a child was born. This sacred institution was instituted of God for the procreation of children and for the raising of children within the family unit, the husband, wife and children. When boys and girls become men and women it is natural for them to desire a husband or wife. Any physical relationship must be kept within the marriage bond. Now if we look closely at Ephesians 5 we find the Apostle teaching us that marriage was instituted of God to show forth the sacred mystical union between Christ and the church: *"For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church"* (Ephesians 5. 30-32). I remember reading some comments of Thomas Goodwin, the learned puritan, on Psalm 40 where Christ is speaking through His servant David: *"Then said I, Lo,*

I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart" (Psalm 40. 7-8). In these words "*the volume of the book*" is obviously God's holy Word but apparently in the original Hebrew there is a sense which it means the beginning of the book, and Goodwin felt it was referring to the sacred union of marriage in Genesis. He then refers to this Scripture in Ephesians 5. 32: "*This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*" The Lord Jesus speaks in Proverbs 8 of His eternal generation as the Son of God: "*The LORD possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was*" (Proverbs 8. 22-23). He then goes on to say of that time before He became a man on earth: "*Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men*" (Proverbs 8. 30-31). What a sacred thought that the Lord Jesus was delighting in coming to this earth, to redeem His bride, His church, His people. In the Revelation John had revealed unto him the redeemed church of Jesus Christ: "*And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*" (Revelation 21. 2). Then later in the same chapter: "*Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God*" (Revelation 21. 9-10). In the Canticles is revealed the love that Christ has to His spouse: "*Thou hast ravished My heart, My sister, My spouse; thou hast ravished My heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, My sister, My spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! Thy lips, O My spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon*" (Song of

Solomon 4. 9-11). What a profound mystery that the Holy Son of God should so love a poor sinner. We read of this love: *"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee"* (Jeremiah 31. 3).

My dear beloved young friends: does Jesus love you? If He does, His heavenly Father will draw you to Him by the Holy Spirit working in your heart, and Jesus will become very precious to you. The spouse of Christ says: *"My Beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, He standeth behind our wall, He looketh forth at the windows, shewing Himself through the lattice"* (Song of Solomon 2. 9). He reveals himself to His spouse through the lattice of His Word, also through the lattice of the ministry of the Word and through the sacred ordinances of the gospel, baptism and the Lord's supper: *"Unto you therefore which believe He is precious"* (1 Peter 2. 7).

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about THE TRIAL OF FAITH. 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 50 for the new e-mail address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. How old was Abraham [Abram] when God gave him the promise that He would make of him a great nation, when as yet he had no children? (Genesis 12. 4)
2. How many years did Abraham have to wait before God gave him a son (Isaac) as He had promised? (Genesis 21. 5)
3. Later God tried Abraham's faith severely. What did God command him to do? (Genesis 22. 2)
4. Jacob ran away to Padan-aram, but God came in a dream and promised to be with him and bring him back again. How long was it before this promise was fulfilled? (Genesis 31. 41)

5. David was only a young shepherd-boy when first anointed by Samuel. How old was he when he became king? (2 Samuel 5. 4)
6. When Joseph was young (about 17), God gave him two dreams. What was the second of these two dreams? (Genesis 37)
7. For many years, the fulfilment of these dreams seemed impossible. Where was Joseph before he was made ruler of Egypt? (Genesis 41)
8. God commanded Moses to return from Midian and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt. In what way was his faith tried? (Exodus 5)
9. Write out a verse in 1 Peter 1 where Peter speaks of the “trial of your faith.”
10. About how old was Joseph when he remembered his dreams (Genesis 42. 9) as his brothers bowed down before him, and how long therefore was it before God’s promise was fulfilled?

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. By the brook Cherith.
2. Ravens; bread and flesh.
3. A wind, an earthquake and a fire.
4. A double portion of Elijah’s spirit.
5. “The LORD, He is the God, the LORD, He is the God.”
6. Two captains, and their 100 men. (2 Kings 1. 10-12)
7. The raising from the dead of the widow’s son. (1 Kings 17. 17-24)
8. Seven thousand. (1 Kings 19. 18)
9. “In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.” (1 Kings 21. 19).
1 Kings 22. 38.
10. Three years and six months. (Luke 4. 25, James 5. 17)

Contributed

LIST OF NAMES

The following young people have answered questions during the months July – December 2014. The total number is 235, for which we would thank God.

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

Ellie and Matthew Baker; Katie and Tommy Baker; Anna and Jethro Baldwin-Jones; Daisy, Josiah, Lily, Noah and Poppy Barker; Kate Barnett; Daniel and Leah Boulton; Abigail, Daniel, Joshua and Samuel Broome; Jemima, Josiah, Kezia, Phebe and Tabitha Burden; Emily Buss; Jennifer and Sophie Buss.

Benjamin, Bethany, Daniel, Elizabeth and Victoria Chapman; Anna-Louise, Isaac and Sophie Clark; Samuel Cooper; Alice, Beth, Charlotte, Isaac, Katy and William Cottingham; Annie and Lucy Cottingham; Freddie, Isobel and Oliver Cottingham; Owen Cottingham; Alicia and Emma Cottingham; James, Rebecca and Thomas Crowter; Annabel, Elsie, Esther, Daniel, Kate and Penny Crowter.

Edward and Harry Dadswell; Louise Dadswell; Jonathan and Nicholas De Vogel; Noah de Voogd.

Rebekah Field; Ruby Field.

Ella Green.

Abigail, Cornelia, Luke and Nathanael Hayden; Kezia and Tom Hayden; Katharine Hills; Caitie and Samuel Hindess; Caleb and Joseph Hydon.

Benjamin and Joshua Ince; Joshua Izzard.

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

Helen Kerley; Jemima Kerley; Joshua Kerley; Annabel Kinderman.

Aiden, Joel and Megan Lucas.

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

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

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

Eddie, Jessica and Oliver Raymond; Alexander Rayner; James Rice; Isobel, Samuel and Tom Riche; Susanna Risbridger; Andrew, Daniel and Joseph Rosier; Chloe, Isabella and John Rosier.

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

Harry, James, Jemima and Phebe Tarbin; Elisabeth 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 and Thomas Woodhams; Maisie and Rosanna Woodhams.

Overseas Names:

Sophie Bruere, Calvin and Dennis Glass; Jarrod Greyn; Kilee and Montanalee Greyn; Brennan, Cayley, Olivia and Quinton Knibbe; Isaac Knol; Luke Linna; Rachel and Shelley Mol; Heidi, Kevin and Mariah Muis; Paul Nowlan; Emily Quist; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Abigail, Bethany, and Kaitlyn Teunissen; Danielle Van Vugt; Jonathan, Laura and Rebekah Wesdyk; Tyler White.

“REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS”

Rejoice believer, in the Lord,
Who makes your cause His own!
The hope that's built upon His Word
Can ne'er be overthrown.

Though many foes beset your road,
And feeble is your arm,
Your life is hid with Christ in God,
Beyond the reach of harm.

Weak as you are, you shall not faint,
Or fainting, shall not die:
Jesus, the strength of every saint,
Will aid you from on high.

Though unperceived by mortal sense,
Faith sees Him always near,
A guide, a glory, a defence;
Then what have we to fear?

As surely as He overcame
And triumphed once for you,
So surely you that love His name
Shall triumph in Him too.

John Newton

The Friendly Companion



“Teach me, O LORD, the way of Thy statutes;
and I shall keep it unto the end.”
(Psalm 119. 33)

April 2015

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

This month it is customary with many of God's people to especially remember the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were commanded to remember the Passover each year. The Passover, which was God's way of delivering His people from the bondage of Egypt slavery, was ordained by God to teach them the way of salvation which was to come in the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul, writing to the church at Corinth, said that Christ is the Passover of the Christian church and so the remembrance of how He delivered His people from the bondage and slavery of their sins, is also to be remembered each time the Lord's Supper is administered (1 Corinthians 5. 7).

In Exodus 12, where the instructions for the first Passover were given by God through Moses, there are three very important allusions to the sacrifice which was to be made.

Firstly, it was to be *a lamb* (see verse 3). The Word of God often likens God's people to a flock of sheep and lambs. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of His people, but He is also to be spoken of as a Lamb. This tells us that He was made like unto His people a real Man such as you and I are, but just as this lamb was to be separated out from the flock, so the Lord Jesus Christ was separate from sinners. He was sinless.

Secondly, the chapter speaks of *the lamb* (see verse 4). It had to be of the first year, so in its prime. It had to be without blemish of any kind. In other words it was to be the very best of their flock. So the Lord Jesus Christ is perfect both as God and Man, and He is without comparison. Solomon says that He is "*the chiefest among ten thousand ... He is altogether lovely.*" There never has been a person like the Lord Jesus, before or since He came into this world to save sinners.

Thirdly, the chapter speaks of *your lamb* (see verse 5). How precious must this lamb have been to the owner, and yet how much more precious to the firstborn in every Israelite house

was the blood which flowed from this dying creature to be sprinkled on the doorpost and lintels of the house! The blood indicated that the lamb had died, and so the destroying angel would pass over that house when he saw the blood sprinkled as had been commanded (see verse 13). This is where the word Passover comes from. It was to be a personal possession of each household reminding us that we need to know the true meaning of Christ as the Passover in a personal way for ourselves if it is to be of benefit to us.

This is what John the Baptist meant when he said to his disciples on seeing Jesus coming towards him: "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*" (John 1. 29). May we each seek and be given that same faith to see our sins borne away by this wonderful and only provision of God for the salvation of sinners.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

What a sweet little puppy is to be seen on the front cover this month! He looks so innocent and lovable, but if he is to be a dog of any use, he will need to be trained, right from a puppy, or else he will become unmanageable and a perfect nuisance to others!

So God's Word tells us, that when we are young we need to be trained. That is the best time to learn the lessons of life. Jeremiah tells us that: "*It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth*" (Lamentations 3. 27).

Christian parents are told from God's Word to bring their children up "*in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*" (Ephesians 6. 4). That means that from their earliest days, children should be acquainted with the Word of God, by hearing it read, and that any reproofs that are needful in bringing up a family should be based on the Word of God as the rule. Your parents have a duty before God to do this, and if children disobey their parents they are rebelling against God's order and He takes notice of their behaviour.

But however good our parents are as parents, there is one thing they cannot do! They cannot make us real Christians! This is God's work alone. He has often used godly parents and a gracious upbringing as a means of bringing this to pass but the power is His alone. Jesus says of His children: "*Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*" (John 1. 13). He has also said that all His children "*shall be taught of the LORD.*" Elihu said: "*who teacheth like Him?*" (Job 36. 22).

When we were teaching mathematics in senior schools there were three sorts of pupils. There were those who did not want to learn: they had no heart or interest for the subject. Then there were those who were so sure they knew it all and did not need to be taught: pride was their hindrance! Then there were those who wanted to learn and realised that they needed to be taught. God's children are those who have been given a heart to learn, and who realise that they need to be taught. Which of these three children describes you or me?

A maidservant said that her idea of praying without ceasing was: "When I get up in the morning and put on my clothes, I ask the Lord to clothe me with His righteousness; when putting on my shoes, I ask Him for strong shoes of faith; when washing my face I ask Him to wash away my sins; and when at my different tasks throughout the day, such as polishing brasses, I ask Him to polish up my life that I may shine brightly for Christ."

Selected

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from BEN ALDRIDGE, T.L. HUGHES, HENRY KERLEY, JARED KLOP and HANNAH YMCKER.

The names of CARISSA, CAROLYN, HANNAH, JANNA and LEAH YMCKER are added to the list of names published in March.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**GOLIATH DEFIES ISRAEL**

The Philistines came into the land to fight with Saul and his army. The three eldest brothers of David followed Saul to the battle. David returned home to keep his father's sheep.

The Philistines stood on a mountain. Israel stood on another mountain, and there was a valley between them. The Philistines chose a giant named Goliath to go before them. He wore armour of brass and carried a great spear. Goliath shouted: *"I defy the armies of Israel...; give me a man, that we may fight together."* For forty days he came out every morning and evening and shouted the same words. The men of Israel fled from him and were afraid. Nobody dared to fight the giant.

David was sent by his father to the camp of Israel with food. While he talked with his brothers, Goliath came forth. David heard his words and said: *"Who is this ... Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"* Soon David was brought before King Saul. David said to Saul: *"Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine."*

QUESTIONS:

1. Whom had the Philistines chosen to go before them?
2. The armies of Whom had the Philistine defied? (3 words)
3. Who said that he would go and fight with this Philistine?

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. The Spirit of the LORD.
 2. An evil spirit.
 3. The harp.
- Contributed*

“... he hath
defied the
armies of
the living
God.”

1 Samuel
17. 36.

BIBLE LESSONS**A LAME MAN HEALED**

The beautiful temple of the Jews was always a busy place with the priests going about their work and the people coming and going. Every day a poor lame man was brought by kind friends and laid at the gate of the temple called Beautiful. There he would beg for alms (gifts of money) from the people as they entered into the temple. The Bible tells us that he was over forty years old and was lame from his birth. He had never walked! When he was a little boy, he could not run and play with other children. When he was older, he could not go to work and earn a living: all he could do was beg.

One day Peter and John went up to the temple at the hour of prayer. That was at three in the afternoon. As they approached the gate Beautiful, the lame man called out to them asking for money. Peter and John stopped and steadfastly looked upon him. They said to the beggar: *"Look on us."* How the lame man must have looked with anticipation, expecting to receive a generous sum of money. Peter spoke again: *"Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee."*

What a disappointment it must have been! No doubt the lame man looked at Peter and John and then at their hands. They had nothing in their hands. Whatever could they give him? Peter continued: *"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."*

Peter took the lame man by his right hand and pulled him up. Immediately his feet and ankle bones were strengthened. He began to leap and walk. It must have been a wonderful sight!

As Peter and John entered the temple, he entered with them, walking and leaping and praising God. The people in the temple looked with amazement. They had just passed the lame man who lay at the gate, and now he was leaping as if he had been walking all of his life!

It is possible this man had been laid at the gate when Jesus Himself came up to the temple. Yet He had not healed him. The lame man had to learn what you and I must learn: *"... for*

the time to favour ... yea, the set time, is come."

When Peter and John went out of the temple, the man who had been healed held them tightly. He was so thankful for what they had done. As they stood in the great porch of the temple called Solomon's porch, a multitude of people ran unto them, looking upon the disciples and the healed man with great wonder.

Peter, under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, saw a great and effectual door opened and began to preach unto the people, saying: *"Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power ... we had made this man to walk?"* He told them that the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of their forefathers, had by this miracle glorified His Son Jesus: that very Jesus whom they had denied before Pilate. Even when Pilate was determined to let Jesus go, they had chosen a murderer to be spared and Jesus to be put to death.

Peter told them that they had *"killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses."* Peter told them that by the name of Jesus, through faith in His name, the lame man had been made strong and enabled to walk.

How gentle Peter was in charging them with this great sin! He called them brethren. And he told them that they had done this wicked deed through great ignorance, even though God had prophesied of it by the mouth of all His prophets.

Peter told them that they needed to REPENT and be CONVERTED, that their sins may be blotted out.

You can read about this in Acts chapter 3 verses 1 to 19.

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the name of the gate where the lame man lay?
2. How did the lame man enter the temple? (6 words)
3. What had God done by this miracle? (4 words)
4. By whose name and through what in that name was the lame man made strong? (2 parts)
5. What did Peter say they needed that their sins may be blotted out? (5 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. "Ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."
2. "Pricked in their heart."
3. Repent of their sin and believe on the Lord Jesus.
4. About three thousand souls.
5. "Such as should be saved."

G. L. TenBroeke

THE VENGEANCE OF THE INDIAN (IV)

The day had hardly dawned when the Indian came to awaken him, and after giving him some breakfast they started off for the white settlement. The Indian led the way through the dark woods, walking very fast and accurately, proving thereby that he was acquainted with every inch of the way. He took the shortest way without any fear of going astray, for he knew the signs which were known only by the old established hunters.

They crossed through the woods much faster than Sullivan could have done, and before the sun disappeared behind the tops of the mountains Sullivan caught the first glimpse of his beloved home. There it stood in peaceful rest, and Sullivan could not refrain from weeping for joy. He then expressed his hearty thanks to the Indian for the great kindness extended unto him.

The warrior, who had not given Sullivan a chance to see his face (for he only faced him in the dark, in his wigwam or hut), now stood before him so that he could be clearly seen. Now the young man was amazed to see the face of the same Indian whom he had treated so brutally five months ago.

A noble expression, yet also of slight reproach, was seen on the face of the Indian as he looked at the shamefaced Sullivan; but his voice was meek and gentle when he said: "Five months ago when I was tired and faint, you called me an Indian dog and ordered me away from your door. Last night I could have

taken revenge on you, but the white dove fed me, and for her sake I spared the male dove.”

After a moment he continued: “Carcoochee requests you to go home, and if later on you see a red man, treat him as I have treated you. Farewell.”

He waved his hand and turned around with the intention of leaving, but Sullivan sprang in front of the Indian and urged him to come into his house to show that he had really forgiven him for the sin which he had committed so brutally. The Indian finally agreed, and the humble farmer led him to his farm.

His early return was a great surprise to his wife, and she was filled with thankfulness for the marvellous way that God had saved him from perishing amidst the great danger he had experienced. She likewise expressed her gratitude towards the noble warrior, who had so richly rewarded her for the kind deed she had done to him, and for having forgiven the cruel actions of her husband.

Carcoochee was not only treated as an honoured guest, but also as a brother, which, later on, he actually did become to both of them in a spiritual sense. He made many a visit to the farm of the once prejudiced and rude Sullivan, whose behaviour was now improved through the kind and friendly dealings of the uneducated Indian towards him, which he never forgot.

Carcoochee was used as a means whereby William Sullivan learned to know himself as a sinful creature, having received an insight into his shortcomings in treating his neighbours. He was led by the Holy Spirit to feel his need of the purifying blood of Christ, and before many months had passed by, Sullivan and his wife gave clear proofs that they were no longer children of this world, which lieth in wickedness. In their life and behaviour they showed that they had passed from death unto life, not only by loving the brethren, but also by following the example that Christ has set and walking in His footsteps.

The Indian's friendliness was indeed rewarded a

hundredfold. A long time elapsed before there was a visible change in him, however. But at last it pleased the Lord to bless the unwearied teaching of his white friends for his spiritual welfare, hearkening to their earnest prayers. This Indian was the first native inhabitant who was converted through the means of an American missionary, who two years later occupied an office close to Carcoochee's home, where Carcoochee was baptized.

After a lengthy preparation through the instructions of Word and Spirit, the warrior, who once upon a time had used his battle-axe to fight against the white and the red men, now received another weapon – the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God – to acquaint his fellow inhabitants with the glad tidings that *“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”* He told them that *“whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,”* be they Jew or heathen, bond or free, white or red.

For many years Carcoochee laboured thus, till he was tired and exhausted on account of old age, and he then returned to his white friends. Only a few months later he fell asleep in Jesus, after he had given his friends the assurance of a firm hope, and the joyful assurance that on that great day of resurrection he would arise with the righteous.

Many years have passed away since then. There is no trace left of the farm of the Sullivans, who are both resting in the same cemetery where also the bones of Carcoochee lie, but their posterity still live in that district.

Often the old grey-haired grandfather, while sitting under his beautiful magnolia tree, is relating to his grandchildren the history of those who are buried under this tree. And the lesson that he taught to the young hearers is a lesson that should be engraved in the minds of all of us, namely: *“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them”* (Matthew 7. 12).

Selected

THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S LAST PRAYER

One of the amazing features of North America and Canada is the string of enormous lakes, called the Great Lakes, which straddle the border between the USA and Canada. One of these lakes is known as Lake Superior, a vast expanse of open fresh water, large parts of which are frozen during the winter.

As these are also shipping routes for trade, there are a succession of lighthouses to warn ships of rocks and to guide them into safe channels. One of these lighthouses is placed on an island about two miles from the shore, near a place called Marathon. In the present time these lighthouses are automatically controlled so it is rare for there to be a lighthouse keeper living in these lonely habitations. But the time of our story was before this was introduced, neither was there any sophisticated way of communication such as phones or emails, as there are today!

As children often like playing on the shore, especially throwing stones to skim the incoming waves, so two lads were enjoying themselves competing with each other. Suddenly they noticed a bottle lying on the shore near to where they were playing. Inside was a message which read as follows: *"Come and get me. Almost dead. Cannot get out. Sick for three weeks – O'Connor, Light-keeper."*

The two lads quickly took the message to the nearest police station and within a few minutes a boat was launched to the lighthouse. Sadly, when they arrived they found Harry had already passed away. He was only fifty-nine years of age. His boat had been washed away. Beside his bunk-bed the officers found a piece of paper on which was written a prayer which evidently he had written while he waited for the bottle to reach the shore. By the date of the message they could see it had taken six days to reach the beach where the two lads were playing.

The prayer read:

"Oh merciful Christ, most pitying and gentle Redeemer, to whom in the days of Thy sacred life on earth the sick and

suffering, lame and blind were brought and never went unhealed or uncomforted; consider I pray Thee, this sickness which makes me unable to perform my rightful duty. Thou canst ordain life, gracious Saviour, and I do pray Thee to remove me from this burden. Above all, gracious Saviour, I beseech Thee to clean my soul, so that I may be worthy to be called Thy son in righteousness."

When his body was brought back to the mainland a burial service was held at which this prayer was read. Although nothing more is known of the former life of the lighthouse keeper, his prayer suggests that he was not a stranger to the way of salvation. The Lord's answer to his prayer was to take him safely home to heaven. Not a single prayer shall ever fall to the ground which sincerely ascends up to heaven from a sinner's heart, in the merits and name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We wonder if the two lads knew the outcome of their find, and whether they knew of this man's dying prayer.

Adapted

A DOUBLE VICTORY!

In a former generation, Scotland was renowned for a succession of powerful, godly preachers whose ministry had far-reaching effects on their hearers and the society in which they lived. One of these outstanding men was a Dr Macdonald who was often called "The Apostle of the North." Like most of his fellow preachers of that day, he would walk many miles to preach the gospel, often through wild and desolate parts of the highlands of Scotland. On one such occasion, night was quickly falling, and Dr Macdonald lost his way. Seeing a small croft by the wayside he knocked on the door and asked the wife of the owner if he could stay the night. To this reasonable request he received a very surly answer. Although the lady let him into the house, she quickly told him that he could not stay the night. To this ungracious welcome, he retorted that come what may he intended to stay the night! This may seem to us

rather arrogant on his part, but he felt he was the Lord's servant, and as such the Lord intended him to stay there! The wife retorted that when her husband returned he would surely turn him out of doors! As yet she did not understand the command: *"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares"* (Hebrews 13. 2).

In due course the husband was heard returning from one of his poaching trips. As his wife had predicted, he was not too pleased to find this unwanted visitor in his home, and he immediately ordered him out. But Dr Macdonald said that if he was to go out he must be put out by force! The poacher quickly laid hold of him in the form of wrestling. To his astonishment he found he had met more than a match for his strength! In a few moments he was down on the floor, his unwanted guest standing over him in victory. Before he let him get up, Dr Macdonald made him promise that he would never again turn away a forlorn stranger out of doors.

When peace was restored, he proposed that they hold family worship, and the conquered owner dare not refuse! After this was completed, Dr Macdonald told the man and his wife who he was, and that he was on his way to preach the next day, some way from this home. He persuaded his host to be his guide so that he would not get lost again. His physical prowess had won the grudging respect of his unwilling host who accompanied him to the place where the worshippers were gathering. Having experienced the physical skill of this strange preacher, he was interested to know what his preaching was like. So rather like curious Zacchæus, he stayed to listen and found himself conquered by the Spirit of Truth, and from that day was a changed man in soul and life.

Adapted

QUESTION: Which is the first commandment?

ANSWER: "I am the LORD thy God ... thou shalt have no other gods before Me." (Exodus 20. 2-3; Deuternonmy 5. 6-7.)

THE HEART OF MAN AND THE HEART OF GOD

A boy named William, about nine years of age, was told by his father one Monday evening to go to the prayer meeting alone; his father having to complete a piece of work in the shop. No sooner had he started than the temptation seized him to go into the fields and spend the hour in play. He thought his parents would never be the wiser. Accordingly he entertained the temptation until past the hour of service; and then, telling his conscience that it would be unseemly to enter a place of worship late, he wandered in the fields on the other side of the railway in search of something more agreeable than obeying his father.

William went home about the time the meeting ended, and sat down to supper. His inward monitor then began to upbraid him most severely for what he had done. His father came in and sat down at the table. Now the little mind began to prepare answers to the questions expected in reference to the prayer meeting; that is, to frame deliberate untruths. Thus one sin leads to another.

At last the expected query was put: "Well, William, who prayed at the meeting tonight?" Without any hesitation in his manner, though with a very troubled breast, William replied: "Mr. Barlow, Samuel Dexter and Uncle Reuben." This, even though those men had prayed, was on William's part a wilful falsehood. His hand now trembles as he writes it.

But no sooner had the last word left William's lips than Uncle Reuben came into the room. Now the youthful liar was filled with apprehension that his sin would be brought to light, and that he would be subjected to the punishment he deserved. How he sat and trembled! Though sixty-three years have rolled away since that evening, he remembers his troubled feelings, and that it was with painful difficulty he tried to control the storm that was raging within, lest it should manifest itself outwardly.

What a labyrinth of shame and pain is entered when the first step in the path of wrongdoing is taken! All this terror would

have been prevented by a proper obedience to his father's request.

Uncle Reuben was asked to have some supper, and sat down at the same table with father and mother and William. Every minute seemed to be a very long period to one of that company; and as Uncle Reuben stayed for fully an hour, it will be understood that William's terror of mind was most intense. Indeed, it was almost more than he could bear. The shame of having deceived his parents, the loud and severe upbraidings of his conscience, and the dread of punishment, made the youthful sinner as miserable as he could possibly be.

At length Uncle Reuben left. Not a word was said about the prayer meeting. The room by this time was quite dark, and William went to bed without saying a word. Yes: *and conscience went with him*. He now knows that God meant him to weep very bitterly for a long time in bed before he went to sleep; and he also believes that he suffered more on account of his sin than if he had been flogged by his father.

It was nearly twenty years afterwards that William told his father what is written here, and obtained his forgiveness. And William also knows that his heavenly Father has forgiven him. William is now a grandfather, but every now and then the agony of that hour recurs to his memory. It will never be entirely forgotten, nor is it well that it should be. And William is at times inclined to believe that God intended him to endure his severe punishment unknown at the time by his father, in order that he might in later days tell hundreds and thousands of children about it. And he quite hopes that this record in print will be made useful to the many boys and girls who will read it.

O how wicked and deceitful is the heart of man! And O how merciful and gracious is the heart of God! It was this thought that prompted the writing of this page.

If the dread of detection by an earthly parent be so terrible, what will it be to stand before the Great Judge of all, who will

search the sinner through and through? This, in effect, is brought to pass in all the children of God here in their lifetime; but what will be the case of those who live and die in sin, when the judgment shall be set, and the books shall be opened, and they shall be righteously judged according to the things written in the books? And *one* of those books will be the book of conscience: and then where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Selected

BILLY'S PULPIT

One of the most heart-warming books that could possibly adorn any Christian's bookshelf is surely the life of that old Cornish miner, "Billy Bray – The King's Son."

On one occasion there was a need for the provision of a "pulpit" for a new chapel that Billy had recently built in order to preach the gospel to those who stood in need of its saving power. The chapel had been substantially built and completely furnished except for one very special piece of equipment – A PULPIT.

Completely undaunted, Billy set out to find the pulpit that he believed the Lord had laid up for him somewhere in that town in which he lived, but no pulpit was apparently forthcoming. He happened to step into the local auction rooms, and as he strolled among the rows of discarded furniture his eyes fell on two large corner cabinets, beautifully carved and greatly resembling the pulpits in many of the Methodist chapels in Billy's day. "If I could just lay my hands on one of those cabinets," he thought to himself, "I could cut a space in the side, hang a door over the space, put a Bible board on the top, and I would have my pulpit."

Billy ran to the auctioneer. "How much do you reckon these cabinets will fetch?" he asked the man. On being told the likely price, Billy fumbled in his pocket and discovered that he had just enough cash to secure one of them for his chapel. "Mercy me," he thought to himself, "the Lord has given it into my hand."

Next day was auction day and Billy hurried along to the sale. Soon it came the turn of the corner cabinets to go under the hammer. Billy was so convinced that he would have the piece that he held his money at the ready, but his heart sank as the bidding rose higher and higher, and far and above out of his reach. "Oh well," he thought again, "the Lord must intend me to have the other one." But, again, he was doomed to disappointment, for the second cabinet, too, fetched far more than Billy could offer. Somewhat at a loss for an explanation as to what the Lord was performing at this particular time, Billy absentmindedly followed the purchaser of the second corner cabinet out of the auction rooms, where the "valuable" piece was loaded on to a small barrow and trundled up a hill to its new owner's home. Billy followed!

On reaching the front door of the house, the man turned the cabinet, first this way, and then that way, in an effort to get it through the space, but to no avail. The back door was no more accommodating and the man bad-temperedly announced to his wife that he was going to "chop the thing up for firewood." "Please sir," said Billy, stepping forward from viewing the proceedings, "if it would be more profitable for you to sell the cabinet again, I'll gladly offer you what I have in my pocket for it." "It's a bargain," said the man, "and on top of it, I'll take it on my barrow to wherever you want to have it." How Billy danced with joy as the barrow was trundled back down the hill again towards the chapel, with him dancing by its side. "Mercy me, Lord," he sang, "Mercy me; you knew that I could never have carried that old cabinet from the auction rooms to the chapel by myself and so, Ye arranged to have it delivered for me. Mercy me!"

W. J. Seaton (February 1970)

Although Billy Bray was called to minister in a different part of God's church to us, and was undoubtedly an eccentric character, yet he was unmistakably used of God to be the means of salvation of many of his fellow Cornishmen.

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (IV)**

In Genesis 6. 8 we read: *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."* It is very instructive to look at the first mention of something in Scripture. This is the first mention of the word, "grace." How full and precious a word it is: it sends a sacred thrill through the heart of every living child of God. Its meaning is the full, free, unmerited favour of God. Noah did not deserve grace, but grace found him and separated him from his fellow creatures, and showed him his need as a sinner, and revealed unto him the mercy and grace of God that would come at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Through this grace Noah became a preacher of righteousness and warned his fellow men that God had shown him that he was going to flood the world and destroy man from off the face of the earth. Noah, being warned of God, built an ark of wood. What did his fellow creatures do? They laughed and mocked him for doing such a foolish thing. Men are no different today when we warn them that this world is to be destroyed by fire at the coming of Jesus Christ: they mock and laugh at our message and say: *"Where is the promise of His coming."* My dear young friends, are you such a mocker?

This ark of gopher wood that Noah built is a beautiful type of Jesus Christ. It was the place of refuge and safety for Noah and his family amidst the tremendous deluge and awful storm that flooded the whole earth, and destroyed all men. The only place of safety or refuge from the curse of the holy law and in the great day of judgment, for each one of us, is in Jesus Christ and to those that by grace do trust in Him and look for Him there is a sacred promise: *"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation"* (Hebrews 9. 27-28). What a fulness of grace is shown by God here. If man had been totally destroyed there could be no fulfilling of the promise of the coming of Christ made to Eve through her seed. That is the only reason Noah

found grace in the sight of the Lord, because he was in the royal lineage of Christ, and Christ is the source of all grace.

Another beautiful aspect of this narrative is found in Genesis 8. 1: *“And God remembered Noah.”* After the wild storms tossing the ark and then the calm and silence, God remembered His faithful servant. The Lord Jesus will never forget one of His children: He hears all their prayers, knows all their doubts and fears, and at the appointed time sends deliverance unto them.

One last thing to notice, is that when God sent Noah forth from the ark with all his family, Noah built an altar and offered sacrifices unto the LORD: those sacrifices typified the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary and oh the sacred response of the LORD God to those sacrifices offered in faith by His servant Noah: *“And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease”* (Genesis 8. 20-22).

My dear young friends, may you be given like precious faith that Noah had in Jesus Christ. We need to take note when we hear so much of global warming and the loss of seasons, with the total change in our climate predicted by scientists today. God's promise will stand whatever man thinks or predicts: while the earth remains, summer, winter, cold, heat, seedtime, harvest will remain until the end of time: *“Let God be true, but every man a liar.”* This promise can be looked at in a spiritual light in the church: the Lord's servants will be sowing the seed of the Word to the end of time and a harvest will result. Think of the precious last words of the Lord Jesus on earth: *“And, lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about GOD'S GUIDANCE IN PERPLEXING CIRCUMSTANCES. 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. Many of the children of Israel had died after being bitten by "fiery serpents," and Moses prayed for them. What did God tell Moses to do? (Numbers 21. 8)
2. God told Samuel to anoint a king from among the sons of Jesse, which made Samuel terrified of King Saul's anger. What did God tell Samuel to do to relieve the difficulty? (1 Samuel 16. 2)
3. God told Elijah to hide by the brook Cherith where he could drink from the brook. Where did God tell him to go when the brook dried up? (1 Kings 17. 7-9)
4. "And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him." What did God direct David to do in this extremity? (1 Samuel 30. 8)
5. The Apostle Paul was forbidden by God to preach in Asia, then not allowed to go to Bithynia. Where did he eventually go and how did God direct him? (Acts 16. 9-10)
6. The children of Israel came to Marah, where the water was bitter and undrinkable. What did God direct Moses to do when "he cried unto the Lord"? (Exodus 15)
7. Abraham's servant was asked to find a wife for Isaac. What did he pray for as a token that he had been led to the right person? (Genesis 24)
8. King Jehoshaphat had a great army come against him and he prayed unto God. God, through His prophet, showed him what to do, but how was he delivered? (2 Chronicles 20)
9. Three kings went out to fight against the Moabites, but were in danger of dying for thirst. What did God, through the prophet Elisha, tell them to do? (2 Kings 3)
10. Peter had a vision of a great sheet being let down from heaven. Whilst wondering what it meant, what did God tell

him to do, and what did Peter later say God had shown him by it?

ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS

1. 75 years old.
2. 25 years. (Abraham was 100 when Isaac was born.)
3. God commanded Abraham to offer up Isaac for a burnt offering.
4. 20 years.
5. 30 years old.
6. Joseph dreamed that the sun, moon and eleven stars made obeisance to him. (Genesis 37. 9)
7. Joseph was in the dungeon or prison. (Genesis 41. 14)
8. Pharaoh added to the burdens of the children of Israel and it seemed as though the promised deliverance had failed. (Exodus 5. 23)
9. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1. 7)
10. About 38 or 39 years old, meaning that God's promise given when Joseph was 17 was 21 or 22 years before it was fulfilled. [Joseph was 30 years old when Pharaoh exalted him (Genesis 41. 46), then there were the seven years of great plenty through the land of Egypt, followed by two years of famine before Joseph made himself known to his brethren (Genesis 45. 11)]

Contributed

"What I cannot comprehend, shall never be the object of my faith," is the weak language of the sceptic (a person who doubts the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ, and denies the possibility of any knowledge of divine truth).

"Where I cannot comprehend, I silently adore; what I cannot explain, yet I would humbly believe," is the language of a gracious heart.

“JESUS ONLY”

Only a little Babe,
 Low in a manger laid,
As helpless and as weak
 As other infants made;
But faith, with reverent, bended knee,
 In Him can God's salvation see.

Only a patient Man,
 Treading this earth below,
In poverty and pain,
 In weariness and woe;
But faith beholds God's law revealed,
 By His obedience all fulfilled.

Only a suffering One
 On an accursèd tree;
His enemies deride
 His dying agony:
Faith, gazing with adoring eyes,
 Beholds death conquered as He dies.

Only an empty tomb,
 The place where Jesus lay;
Say, who has dared to come
 And take my Lord away?
Faith stoops to view the place, and cries,
 “Since He is risen, I too shall rise!”

Jesus, Thy life and death
 Are all in all to me!
Through these my soul shall stand
 Accepted, pardoned, free;
Saved by Thy righteousness and blood,
 Faultless before the throne of God.

Friendly Companion December 1990

The Friendly Companion



Part of the old citadel, Amman, Jordan

“They shall perish; but Thou remainest....”
Hebrews 1. 11

May 2015

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

You will all have heard of King David; probably the most famous of all the kings of Israel. His anointing by Samuel, the prophet; his wonderful victory over Goliath and many other incidents in his life make fascinating reading. Although David was a good and gracious man, yet he also made some big mistakes for which he came into big trouble. Twice, for example, he ran away from Israel during the time Saul was persecuting him, and joined forces with the Philistine king, Achish. On both of these occasions God reproved him for it, but mercifully delivered him. It was on the second occasion that we read in 1 Samuel 30 of three things about David which show that despite his mistakes, grace reigned.

Firstly, we read in verse 6: *“And David was greatly distressed.”*

Why was this? He had been turned out of Gath by the jealous Philistines; his home town of Ziklag had been burned to the ground; his family and those of his friends had been taken hostage; these friends spoke of stoning him; and last but not least, David had a guilty conscience because he had not walked in the fear of the LORD. He was the loneliest man in the world at that moment.

Secondly, we read in verse 6 also these words: *“But David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.”*

Although he had nothing to encourage him within himself or in his circumstances, he did have God to whom he could go: the same God who stood with him and gave direction and power to the stone which slew Goliath in the valley of Elah. He turns in urgent prayer to this great God who has promised to *“regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer.”* David’s prayer was heard, and in verse 8 God gave him the command and the promise to pursue after those who had ransacked Ziklag, and in so doing was given the assurance that he would without fail recover all.

Thirdly, we read in verse 19: *“David recovered all.”*

God always fulfils His promises to the letter and more. Not

one person was lost; not one possession was missing; and more than that, much spoil was taken from their enemies.

Young friends, David's God still lives, and is still able to do exceeding abundantly more than we can ask or even think. May you prove Him as David did!

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

I wonder if you like visiting old ruins? Our picture shows some very old ruins in Jordan. Perhaps when on holiday you see an old castle which has tumbled down and are able to walk among its ancient walls and try to imagine what it was like when it was built.

Jordan is a country which adjoins Israel on its eastern border. Because it is so close to the land which God gave to His people to settle in when they came out of Egypt, its history is often spoken about in the Bible.

Ruins speak to us of great and powerful nations of years gone by which are now known no more. And so it is with the ruins in our photograph, taken in a place which is called in the Bible, Rabbah; now called Amman, the modern-day capital of Jordan.

If we look in our Bible at 2 Samuel chapter 11, what a sad story unfolds: David had given orders for his army to go and attack the city of Rabbah and those who were against him and most solemnly against God Himself, yet David stayed in Jerusalem and did not go forward to lead his army. He fell into sin; committed adultery and then connived at drunkenness and murder (2 Samuel 11. 13, 15, 17).

Ruins can teach us much. Firstly, as we see the ruins of Rabbah and many other places mentioned in ancient history, it tells us that only God is unchangeable. What God is, what He has given to fallen man in His written Word – our Bible. They are the things which remain – unchangeable.

Secondly, ruins tell us of what human beings are, right from Adam down to 2015, sinners. We see it in 2 Samuel 11; today we hear of it everywhere we go. Yes, man himself is just like

our picture; broken and fallen down. How in our better moments we fight and strive against sin and try by our best work to please God, sadly only to find that, like a ruined building, we crumble and fail. It would be a great mercy if each reader of our magazine was brought like David to see by faith that our only hope for peace and reconciliation to God is through the Lord Jesus Christ. We remember what the Bible says: "*Without shedding of blood is no remission*" (Hebrews 9. 22). So He, who is the Lamb of God, can be our only hope.

We read in 2 Samuel 12, that in the end, by God's grace, Rabbah was taken and a victory gained. So may we all be helped that when we see ruins, to think of these three things: (1) Only God is everlasting: "*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever*" (Hebrews 13. 8).

(2) That man by nature is a ruin, and how we see this in the world around us.

(3) The only thing that can recover fallen man is through casting ourselves in trust on the Lord Jesus Christ: on that blood which cleanses from all sin.

Contributed

QUESTION: Which is the second commandment?

ANSWER: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments."

(Exodus 20. 4-6; Deuteronomy 5. 8-10)

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from SOPHIE PESTELL and WILLIAM WARREN.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**DAVID FIGHTS GOLIATH**

Saul did not believe David was able to fight Goliath because David was young and Goliath was a man of war. David told Saul that he had killed a lion and a bear when he kept his father's sheep. The LORD had helped him, and He would also help him fight Goliath. Then Saul said: *"Go, and the LORD be with thee."*

Saul put his armour upon David and gave him a sword. But David said: *"I cannot go with these."* He was not used to them. He took his staff and his sling and put five stones into a shepherd's bag. With these things he went to meet the giant.

Goliath came to meet David with a sword and a spear. He wore armour of brass and a man with a shield went before him. Goliath saw that David was a youth and had only a staff in his hand. How he mocked David! But David said: *"... I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts"* He also said: *"This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand ... that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel."* As David ran toward Goliath, he took a stone and slung it. The stone hit the giant Goliath in his forehead and Goliath fell upon his face to the earth.

QUESTIONS:

1. What had the LORD helped David to kill? (5 words)
2. What did Goliath come to meet David with? (5 words)
3. David came to him in the name of the __ _? (3 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.

Contributed

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS

1. Goliath.
2. The Living God.
3. David.

*“So David
prevailed
over the
Philistine
with a sling
and with
a stone.”
1 Samuel
17. 50.*

BIBLE LESSONS**PETER AND JOHN BEFORE THE JEWISH LEADERS**

The attention of the multitude had been fixed on Peter and John for the miracle performed on the lame man. Now they listened as Peter began to preach. The Jews loved to hear and read of the history of their fathers and what God had done for them. Peter told them that Moses had written: *"A prophet shall the Lord ... raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you."* Moses had warned the people that everyone who would not listen to that Prophet would be destroyed.

Peter added that all the prophets, from Samuel and those that followed, foretold of the rejection of the Lord Jesus. Yet God was very merciful toward them, for Peter declared: *"Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from His iniquities."* What wonderful news that was!

While the people were intently listening to the words of Peter, there was a great disturbance. The priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them. They were filled with anger against the Apostles, Peter and John, for preaching the resurrection from the dead through the name of Jesus. No doubt, it was these very priests who had paid a large sum of money to the soldiers to keep the resurrection of Jesus secret. They roughly took hold of the apostles, along with the man who had been healed, and put them in prison.

However, the Word preached by Peter had been wonderfully blessed to the hearts of the people, so that some five thousand believed the gospel. The next day the elders, rulers, and scribes gathered together, along with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas, to question the apostles. Perhaps you recognize the names of the high priests. They were the very men who had condemned the Lord Jesus to death.

When the apostles were set in the midst of them, they asked by what power and by what name they had performed this miracle. Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost and boldly answered: *"Be it*

known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole.” How startled they must have been! They thought they would hear no more of “*Jesus of Nazareth.*”

Peter went on to say: “*This is the stone (Jesus) which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*”

The Jewish leaders marvelled at the boldness of Peter and John. They also perceived that they were unlearned (uneducated) men. How was it that they could speak with such authority? They noted that these men had been with Jesus. That must be the secret to their wisdom and boldness. As they looked at the man who had been healed, they could say nothing against it.

They commanded Peter, John, and the healed man to go out of the room so they could discuss what action to take. What could they do with these men? What a difficult place they found themselves in! They could not deny the miracle, for all Jerusalem was talking about it. They decided that there was only one thing they could do. They called the apostles back into the room and charged them not to speak any more in the name of Jesus.

Peter and John answered with great wisdom: “*Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*”

You can read about this in Acts chapter 3 verses 22 to 26 and chapter 4 verses 1 to 20.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was the stone set at nought by the Jews?
2. What had He become? (5 words)
3. “There is none other name under heaven given among men ...” (finish the sentence)
4. What had the Jewish leaders noted of the apostles? (6 words)
5. What did the apostles say they could not but speak? (8 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. Beautiful.
2. Walking and leaping and praising God.
3. Glorified His Son Jesus.
4. Jesus. Faith.
5. To repent and be converted.

G. L. TenBroeke

“WHO HATH GATHERED THE WIND IN HIS FISTS?”

I had to have my lean-to conservatory partially rebuilt. When it was finished all was well until we had rain! When I opened the back door into the conservatory there was a line of water from one end to the other.

I called the builders and they came back and tried to reinforce the seal against the bungalow side, under the guttering. A few days later it rained again and the rain had again leaked in the same place across the floor. Again, I called the builders and they said that their work was done properly, but there must be another cause. They started taking the tiles off the roof and found that the felting was saturated. They took all the tiles off until they found felting that was dry.

While the one man was taking the tiles off, the other man went to get roofing felt. I looked up. The clouds were gathering towards the bungalow and looking very black. I went into my bedroom and begged of the Lord that if it was His will He could turn the clouds. I was so worried: I went into the kitchen and saw that the weather vane at the bottom of the garden indicated the clouds were all coming from the South West. I pleaded with the Lord to change the wind direction. Lo, and behold, the wind swung round to the North and I saw these big black clouds recede. How I had to thank Him for His wonderful intervention! The job was completed in the dry, and the conservatory never leaked again. What a wonder-working God to sinful man!

Contributed

“MY BROTHER’S KEEPER!”

“And the LORD said unto Cain, where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother’s keeper?” Genesis 4. 9.

I have one brother, John, and he and I are good friends. We see each other every now and again and enjoy each other’s company. We have many things in common – we both love fishing and we both were once schoolteachers. We each became ministers of the gospel, but we live well over a thousand kilometres away from each other and only get together a couple of times each year.

One day, when we were very young, I decided to go fishing in the river that was not far from the farm on which we lived. Even when I was young I loved to net some prawns and try to catch a feed of fish. Once I caught a very large fish in the river. There was always plenty of jew fish, perch, flathead and bream to be caught.

This particular afternoon I set out to go fishing by myself. It was a lovely day and I felt sure that I’d catch plenty. When I arrived at the river I unpacked my fishing gear and soon had my line out waiting for a bite. It wasn’t too long before I had several quite large fish flapping about around me. I was really enjoying my afternoon alone.

I hadn’t bothered to tell my brother that I was going fishing. When he found out what I had done he wasn’t very happy. He tracked me down and sneaked over to a tree that was close to my fishing spot. Then he did something that should never be done to anyone who is fishing. He picked up some stones, and began to throw them one at a time into the river where my line was.

At first I didn’t know what was happening. I thought it might have been a fish jumping out of the water, for sometimes a mullet will do that. But now I noticed the splash was near to my fishing area. Suddenly I turned about and saw John in the act of throwing another stone. Quickly he jumped behind a tree, hoping I would not see him. He was angry that I had not asked him to come with me.

I called out to him: "Don't do that! You'll scare the fish away. Go home and leave me alone!" But John just picked up another stone and threw it into the river. I shouted at him again: "If you do that once more I'll come and get you." But sure enough another stone landed in the river.

Then I lost patience with my brother. He was spoiling my fishing. I picked up a large, hard lump of dirt and threw it at him. Now, I'm not usually a good shot with stones, but this time my aim was perfect. The clod of dirt hit him on the side of the head. He gave out a great yell and said: "I'm going home to tell Mum and Dad what you did! You'll get into trouble when you get home!" Then, with tears running down his face and some blood dribbling from his temple, John ran home as fast as he could.

I knew that I really was going to be in trouble, so I began packing up my fishing gear. I didn't hurry as there was no real reason to get home very quickly. I knew that I had done the wrong thing and I was sure that coming home with several nice fish was not going to protect me from Dad and Mum's anger.

When I reached the front door of our home, I heard Dad say: "Jim! Is that you? Get in this moment!"

I entered the door with the fish out in front of me, hoping that they would save me from what I was sure would happen. I started to speak: "Dad, John came over and threw stones in the river where I was fishing. He was scaring the fish away. He's to blame!" But I soon realised that my words meant very little. I knew that the fish I had caught would not protect me from my father's anger. I could see that he would punish me.

I learned that I was to take care of my young brother and be patient with him at all times, even when he annoyed me.

John and I go fishing together now. We don't throw stones at one another and we don't throw stones into the river where we are fishing. In fact, we bought a boat in which we could go out to sea and catch the really big fish. John and I care for each other very much. He is my only brother and I think he is

great.

And what about you, reader? How do you treat your brothers and sisters? Do you look after them and show patience even when they annoy you?

Our text is part of the story of two brothers, the sons of Adam and Eve. They should have been kind to each other, but Cain was jealous of Abel. In fact, he was so jealous of Abel, because God accepted Abel's sacrifice, that he killed him, burying his body in the ground so that it could not be found. But God knew what had happened and asked: "*Where is Abel thy brother?*" God expected Cain to look after his brother, even though he may have been jealous of him.

Let us remember that God is patient with sinners. How often we offend God with our sins, and yet He spares us. May we seek grace to repent and trust in Jesus while it is called 'today.' Even in natural things God is gracious to us, and we should also be gracious, not just to our brothers and sisters, but to all people, even our enemies.

Selected and Adapted

A FAITHFUL GOD

In a past generation in Germany, a godly woman was sitting beside her peat fire, watching the flames slowly die down. Her heart was full of sadness. Her weeping children were begging for something to eat, but she had nothing to give them. How her heart ached for them, yet all the while she assured them that the Lord would provide for their needs. Had she not asked Him to supply and would He not hear their prayer?

Suddenly one of the small girls said to her mother: "Look at the coin in the side of the peat!" The mother pulled the coin out of the burning peat. When she had it examined the next day she found it was a coin of considerable value. With this she was able to relieve her needs and to give praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift with whom is no shadow of a turn.

Adapted

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, HIS FATHER'S SON

Who would be the next president of the United States? The election of 1824 gave none of the three candidates a majority vote. Under the Constitution, the House of Representatives must decide the matter. On February 9th, 1825 they did so. Rejecting Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay, they chose one of their own, John Quincy Adams.

Until George W. Bush's election, he was the only president's son to have become president himself. Before holding America's highest office, Adams was a lawyer, senator, diplomat, and Secretary of State.

That such a man could be elected, is a reflection of America's religious roots. John Quincy Adams sprang directly from those roots and had a firm faith. If Christianity is proven by character, Adams was surely a Christian. This stubborn man whose motto was, "*Watch and Pray*," spoke openly of his trust in God: but not for that did he win his nickname, "Old Eloquence." Rather, it was for championing principle and attacking the institution of slavery.

He was an unyielding patriarch, tough as the granite of his native New England. Every day he read two to five chapters of the Bible in the original Hebrew and Greek and drew strength from them. He prayed daily. Not content merely to read, he acted on what he read. So often did he put principle before party, he became highly unpopular with his followers.

John Quincy did not let their disapproval alter his course. "The Sermon on the Mount commends me to lay up for myself treasures, not on earth, but in Heaven. My hopes of a future life are all founded upon the Gospel of Christ..." he had written to his father. After his single term as President, he returned to Congress.

Christ was central to John's theology. When Unitarianism emerged, denying the divinity of Christ, Adams flirted with it, but the Bible soon convinced him that the doctrine was false. Either Jesus is God incarnate and our path to salvation, or we have none. With characteristic rectitude, John wrote as much to

his parents. "I find in the New Testament, Jesus Christ accosted in His own presence by one of His disciples as God, without disclaiming the appellation ... I see Him named in the great prophecy of Isaiah concerning Him to be the mighty God."

D. Graves, MSL

KING EDWARD VI'S LOVE FOR THE BIBLE

King Edward VI showed His love for the Bible in several ways. One of these was by diligently reading it. Another was by his desire to understand it as well as read it. But best of all, he showed his love of the Bible by trying to carry out its teachings, and to live in the way in which it tells us to live.

Two interesting incidents are mentioned of young Edward, which show how great his love and reverence for the Bible was. The young prince was in the library one day. He wished to get something from an upper shelf, which was beyond his reach. A large book was lying on the table. One of his attendants took it up and laid it on the floor for him to stand on. Edward saw that it was the Bible. Lifting it from the floor he placed it reverently on the table again, and then laying his hand on it, said very earnestly: "This is God's blessed Book. It is not right that we should trample under our feet that which He has given us to treasure up in our heads and hearts."

The other incident is connected with his coronation, or the act of making him king. In countries where they have kings, this is a great occasion. Edward's father died when he was only ten years old. At that tender age he was made king. A great procession was formed on that occasion. Three swords were brought in to be carried before him in that procession. These represented his three kingdoms, England, Ireland and Scotland. Edward said another sword was wanted, which was the Bible, or the Sword of the Spirit. And he insisted on having a Bible carried with those three swords, to show that it was from the Word of God that he derived his authority as king.

R. Newton

“WHAT IS FREEDOM?”

Our readers will, no doubt, be aware of the shootings in January at the offices of the Charlie Hebdo satirical magazine, following the publication of cartoons which offended many followers of the religion of Islam. As a result, in many countries a debate has raged as to what freedom of speech really means and how far it should go, even if it offends others. It was very encouraging to hear of a school assembly which took place at a well-known, large, secular secondary school in England following the shootings. The headmistress, herself not a Christian, gave a sheet of paper to each of the eight hundred students assembled and gave them two minutes to write down what freedom meant to them. There was a huge variety of responses: original ideas; doodles; elaborate drawings and quotations: from the origami plane – with “Freedom” written on its wing; to the winsome creativity of a chained hand stretching through bars to release a bird; from the sketchy mountains; butterflies; birds; to the erudite: a quote from Keats, Voltaire and J S Mill; scrap after scrap of clean white paper spoke of freedom and the young people’s commitment to it.

One thirteen-year old girl sat silently in that large assembly hall. Her understanding of freedom was far less mundane – deep in its conviction and eternal in its dimensions. As the clock ticked she scribbled the following:

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3. 16); “Because the sinless Saviour died, my sinful soul is counted free.”

Having perused the responses, the headmistress publicly announced via a letter to parents that the response which had affected her the most was this simple, yet profound, understanding of true freedom.

How wonderful it is to think that out of the terrible confusion that Satan has sown among those who fear not God, nor acknowledge His dear Son, Jesus Christ, either in the

offices of the magazine, or those who reacted so violently against them, a simple, yet profound, testimony before eight hundred girls should be given to the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, before whom every knee shall bow when He returns in the Day of His Second Coming.

The quotation is from a hymn by Charitie Lees De Cheney, written in 1835, which is reproduced below. It would be a mercy if the Holy Spirit gave to each of our readers the same gracious assurance that the hymn-writer so evidently had:

“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!”

Contributed

LEARNING THE HARD WAY

The vineyard we were going to rob was on the Yarra. We started after dinner as I had to attend to my horses in the morning. We went down Simpson's Road and through Cole's garden. As the vineyard was on the other side of the river, we took a native canoe which belonged to the garden and crossed the river. The canoe was made out of an old hollow log, burnt out. The bottom was round and was kept from rolling over by those in it balancing themselves. The five of us had to sit in single file on sticks placed across the canoe. The middle boy used the paddle, which is in one piece and broad at both ends – this gives a rolling sensation as he uses first one end and then the other. It is not unpleasant if you have confidence, but very dangerous if you have not, for you must by no means lose your presence of mind, but keep yourself balanced. It would not matter much to the natives if they did capsize, as they are as much at home in the water as on the land. Only two of us could swim, and had we capsized the canoe would have gone to the bottom like a stone. But we boys had no thought of any danger. How hard and thoughtless is the human heart! But we were all spared, although on a sinful errand.

We got safely across, and had just begun to help ourselves when the owner came right on us. My first impression was to run, but he did not seem a bit angry, but asked us to stop and hear what he had to say. He was very sorry we had not come in by the gate and asked him for grapes. He told us we were doing ourselves more harm than we were him, for we were committing two sins – Sabbath-breaking and stealing. He then referred to God's great mercy in sparing us on our dangerous voyage across the river, for he wondered how we got safely over seeing we knew nothing about how to manage a canoe. He afterwards invited us up to his house and gave us as many grapes as we could eat. He did not upbraid us any more, but told us we had better go round by the punt (ferry) home. We were so ashamed and sorry that we said we would take the canoe back to the owner. I am sure this kindness did us more

good than any threats or punishment. I have never robbed a garden since. We took the canoe back, and I went home with a sting in my breast. I felt very unhappy. This old gentleman was a true Christian.

Forty Years in the Wilderness (John Chandler)

JOHN OWEN'S THOUGHTS ON MAN'S IMPOTENCE

First: There is a natural impotence, through the depravity of the faculties of the mind, whereby a natural man is *absolutely unable*, without a special renovation of the Holy Ghost, to discern spiritual things in a saving manner; - yet there is no excuse for the sin of rejecting them; for though it have the nature of a punishment, and our misery, yet it is our sin also; it is the misery of our persons and the sins of our natures; and no man can plead his sin as an excuse for a sin of any kind. The impotence is natural, because it consists in the depravation of a power that was originally in our minds; and this is consistent with what has been said elsewhere of the absence of the natural power of the mind to receive spiritual things, for that power respects the natural capacity of our faculties, this impotence, the depravation of them in respect to spiritual things.

Second: There is also a moral impotence, whence the mind will never receive them, but will always reject and refuse them; and that because of various corruptions and prejudices invincibly fixed in it causing it to look on them as foolishness. Hence it will come to pass that no man will be judged and perish at the last day merely on account of natural impotence; everyone to whom the gospel is preached shall be convinced of positive acting in the mind rejecting it for the love of self, sin and the world. The Saviour tells the Jews of their natural impotence in John 6. 44 yet He reproves them in John 5. 40.

(Dr. Owen, a discourse on the Holy Spirit)

Friendly Companion 1900

AFTER MANY DAYS

The account is told of a sailor in the Hebrides who was brought up in a godly home but who had long since abandoned his parents' prayers and counsel, and it appeared to others that he was drinking his way to a lost eternity. His mother's parting gift before he set out on his seafaring life was a Bible. This lay untouched for many a day and year. One night, however, he had a vivid dream that he was in the church of his boyhood days. A godly man was present in the congregation, who audibly repeated with great solemnity the words of the second Psalm in the metrical version with which he had been accustomed to sing.

When he awoke, he could not escape the words he had heard in his dream:

"Kiss the Son, lest in His ire, Ye perish from the way,
If once His wrath begin to burn: Bless'd all that on Him stay."

From this moment he began to seek the Lord while He may be found, and in due time found peace in the blood of Jesus, his sins being washed away.

Adapted

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES:**CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (V)**

In Genesis 12 we have recorded the call of Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees. The LORD said to Abram: "... get thee out...." He was to get out of his country, from his kindred and from his father's house. The LORD is still doing this today. The Apostle Paul quotes Isaiah 52. 11 when writing in 2 Corinthians 6. 17-18: "*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*" So in the call of Abram we see a divine pattern of the call of His people out of this world to follow Jesus Christ. You may not be called to leave your family or your country, but we are called to leave

this world, not physically, but spiritually. We have those searching words of the Lord Jesus: *"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple"* (Luke 14. 33).

But let us look at the wonderful promise the LORD God gave Abram: *"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed...."* (Genesis 12. 2-4). Paul in the Hebrews records that he went out not knowing whither he went. Faith is a very powerful and dynamic principle that works by love: this love moved him to travel to Canaan at the Lord's direction. But there is a wonderful promise concerning Christ in these words: *"...and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."* It would be through the seed of Abram that this dark world would be blessed with light by Jesus Christ, the eternal Word that was made flesh. These blessings by Jesus Christ are to every nation, tongue, tribe and people: *"all the families of the earth."*

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3. 16). This Scripture points us to the unique universal nature of that salvation that is in Christ Jesus. This universal nature is not that every man or woman can be saved, this is what Arminius taught: no, the universal nature of this salvation is expressed in other Scripture: *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"* (Acts 4. 12). In other words, wherever we live in this world there is only one way of salvation through the person of Jesus Christ. In the wonderful prayer of Jesus Christ there is precious doctrine that teaches us the unique and only way of salvation to all flesh: *"Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as*

many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John 17. 1-3). Notice the limitation on this salvation: "*..that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.*" Let us consider those precious words of grace: "*All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out*" (John 6. 37). What a precious promise this is: Abram and all his seed. The seed of Abraham is not just the Hebrew people; they were his seed through the flesh, and Christ came through Abraham of his seed.

But let us look at the Scriptures of the New Testament to see that the promise does not just cover the seed of Abraham's flesh, but his spiritual seed through Jesus Christ. In Romans 4 the Apostle Paul, by the divine inspiration of the Spirit, clearly reveals that all Christian believers are the spiritual seed of Abraham. It would be good if you read the chapter and see the clear instruction on this matter. The following two verses are very conclusive on this promise that we are looking at: "*Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were*" (Romans 4. 16-17). This same precious truth is opened in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians: 3. 6-9: "*Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the beathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham*" (Galatians 3. 6-9). May it be the chief concern of each one of us that we are the spiritual seed of Abraham in Jesus Christ.

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about THE BOOK OF ESTHER. 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. What relation was Esther to Mordecai? (Esther 2. 7)
2. Two men "sought to lay hand on the king." What were their names and how did their evil intentions come to light? (Esther 2. 21-23)
3. Why was Haman angry with Mordecai? (Esther 3. 5)
4. What did Esther reply to Mordecai's second request that she should go in unto the king to plead for the Jews? (Esther 4. 16)
5. After the first day of the banquet to which Esther had invited Haman and the king, what did Haman have made and for what purpose? (Esther 5. 14)
6. God in a wonderful way turned the king's heart towards Mordecai. What was read to the king, and why was he concerned? (Esther 6)
7. Haman came to a sad and solemn end. What happened to him? (Esther 7)
8. "The city Shushan was perplexed" (Esther 3). What had happened?
9. "The city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad" (Esther 8). Why?
10. Write out a verse in Proverbs 16 which aptly describes the fall of Haman.

ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS

1. Moses was to make a serpent of brass and set it on a pole; whoever had been bitten and then looked on the serpent of brass would be healed.
2. God told Samuel to take a heifer and to say he had come to sacrifice to the LORD.
3. Zarephath.
4. God told David to pursue and overtake the enemy, and promised he would recover all that had been taken.

5. Macedonia. God directed him by a dream in which a man prayed him to come over into Macedonia and help them.
6. God showed Moses a tree which when cut down and cast into the bitter waters, they were made sweet. (Exodus 15. 25)
7. Abraham's servant prayed that the woman he asked for drink of water and she should volunteer to give his camels drink also, would be the one God had chosen as a wife for Isaac. (Genesis 24. 14)
8. Jehoshaphat's enemies began fighting among themselves and destroyed each other. (2 Chronicles 20. 22-25)
9. Elisha told the people to make the valley full of ditches. (2 Kings 3. 16)
10. God told Peter that three men were looking for him, and he was to go with them. The vision was to show Peter that he should not call any man (i.e. the Gentiles) common or unclean. (Acts 10. 19-20, 28)

Contributed

WHEN MAY A CHILD OF GOD LIE DOWN?

When he can get no higher in spirituality.
When no lower in humility.
When no further in Gospel experience.
When there is nothing more new in the Bible.
When he seeks Jesus in vain.
When he has attained the full stature of the
invisible image of Christ.

WHEN MAY HE LEAVE OFF PRAYER?

When corruption is entirely destroyed.
When the heart can no longer deceive.
When he has left off kicking at the cross; or,
When he has no *cross* to take up.
When the world no more deludes.
When Satan does not resist him.

Selected

The Friendly Companion



“Yea, the sparrow hath found an house,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young, even Thine altars,
O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.”
(Psalm 84. 3)

June 2015

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

In the Book of Joshua we read that very soon after the wonderful victory over Jericho, the Israelites came into an unexpected trouble. God had commanded that all of the spoil found in Jericho should be destroyed, but a man named Achan, apparently with the agreement of his family, disobeyed God, and for that reason when battle with Ai was joined, the men of Israel fled before their enemies. God was not with them.

We read of Achan's confession in Joshua 7. 21: "*When **I saw** among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then **I coveted** them, and **took** them; and, behold, they are **hid** in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.*"

See the progression of Achan's sin.

I saw, I coveted, I took, I hid.

In the same way it can be said of Eve in Genesis 3. 6. "*And when the woman **saw** that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be **desired** to make one wise, she **took** of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*"

Then by sewing fig leaves to cover their shame, they tried to hide from the consequences of their sin. This pattern is repeated again and again throughout Scripture. Joseph's brethren; David; Ananias and Sapphira being but three instances of the downward spiral of sin. How we each need to pray with David: "*Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not*" (Psalm 17. 5).

It would also be wise, whatever our age, to be reminded of Solomon's words in Proverbs 28. 13: "*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*"

Numbers 32. 23 is also a word to be remembered by all: "*And be sure your sin will find you out.*"

When Achan's sin had been found out and dealt with, then the

Lord returned to help Joshua and the Israelites to overcome Ai.
With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The bird seen on our front cover this month is the swallow. These remarkable birds have been given special characteristics by their Maker and Creator which enable them to migrate thousands of miles.

Many years ago, a man tested a swallow's instinct by managing to catch one that had been nesting near to his home in Chetwynd near Shrewsbury. He put it into a cage and took it the one hundred and forty-five miles to London and released it. Within an unexpectedly short time it had returned to its nest – a swallow can fly at speeds up 35 mph. One can only marvel at the tenacity and skill of these little birds.

They feed on insects which also determine their migration habits. As the days grow shorter in the northern hemisphere the insects that are their staple diet are to be found further and further south. British swallows migrate to spend the winter in South Africa. Again, the reverse happens with the ever-changing seasons and about May in the northern hemisphere they can once more be seen darting to and fro in the sky.

The swallow builds its nest of mud, plastering it against the wall of a house or some high building. The psalmist even speaks of the swallow building a nest on God's altars (Psalm 84. 3). A resting place for a restless one! They never rest or nest actually on the ground as they are incapable of lifting themselves off again. So they launch themselves from an elevated point. Do they send us a lesson in this? We should not build our hopes on the things of this earth as the Puritans used to say: "He builds too low who builds beneath the sky."

Jeremiah speaks of the migrating habits of the swallow when he reproved ungrateful Israel for their behaviour towards their God. *"The crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of the LORD"* (Jeremiah 8. 7). The swallow returns to its nesting area at

almost the same time every year, and departs at the end of the season likewise.

The familiar chattering noise of a flock of swallows was likened by Hezekiah to his feelings when he was so ill. *"Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter"* (Isaiah 38. 14).

All of these things point to the wisdom and skill of God in providing these small birds with the instincts needful for their survival. If God is so careful to order the lives of swallows then He will much more supply the needs of His children while they are migrating to heaven!

"THE SECRET OF A LIVING MINISTRY"

Many years ago, a group of Scottish Christian men were working in a certain district and unable to attend services in their own church. Each Lord's Day they sat in a local church listening to a comparatively young minister of the gospel. As they listened, they were amazed at his spiritual maturity, and at the tenderness with which he proclaimed his message. He was the friend and comforter of the afflicted soul. One day, one of the men ventured to ask the young minister where he had learned these deep lessons in Christian sufferings and the fruits they bear.

"If," he said, "you will come with me to my home, I shall let you know." This they did. He led them to a room where they saw, confined to his bed, a deformed and retarded child. Then they went to another room, and there lay a woman, his wife, in a drunken stupor.

As they walked away, they knew how true the Word of the Lord was, in relation to His own: *"Thou hast showed Thy people hard things: Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment"* (Psalm 60. 3).

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from DANIELLA KAAT and JESSE PEARCE.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**JONATHAN AND DAVID**

Jonathan was the son of King Saul. He saw that David trusted in God when he fought the giant Goliath. He heard the words of David to his father. Jonathan felt a great love to David because of his faith in God. Jonathan took off his own robe and gave it to David. He also gave David his garments, his sword, and his bow. Jonathan and David both feared the LORD. They promised to help each other and they became good friends.

David did not go back to his father's house. He stayed with Saul and his army. He went where Saul sent him and behaved himself wisely. *"Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people...."*

Women came out of the cities to meet Saul and his army as they returned from the battle. They played music and sang for joy: *"Saul bath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."* It made Saul very angry that they gave more honour to David than to himself. He became jealous of David. Saul said: *"What can he have more but the kingdom?"*

QUESTIONS:

1. Who felt a great love to David because of his faith in God?
2. How did David behave himself? (1 word)
3. Who became jealous of David?

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. A lion and a bear.
2. A sword and a spear.
3. LORD of hosts.

Contributed

*“... the soul of
Jonathan
was knit
with the
soul of
David.”
1 Samuel
18. 1.*

BIBLE LESSONS**ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA - LYING TO THE HOLY GHOST**

The church of God had grown from an hundred and twenty to over five thousand. They met together in love and unity. They were like a great family caring for one another. Although some were very poor, they did not go without their daily needs. Such was the love between them, that those who had possessions sold their land and gave the money to the apostles. The apostles gave to every man according to his need.

No one felt that the things he possessed were his own, but they had all things in common. Had the apostles made up a rule and commanded the people to do this? No, this was the sweet constraining of the Holy Spirit. When the Lord's people are walking closely with the Lord, they are taught by God the Holy Ghost how to care for one another.

The Bible tells us of one man named Joses, whom the apostles surnamed Barnabas, which means: "*The son of consolation.*" Such a man was Barnabas. The Bible also tells us that he was a Levite. Barnabas saw the poverty of many of those who believed on the Lord Jesus. He went and sold his land and brought the price and laid it at the apostles' feet. Do you remember how Jesus told the rich young ruler to go and sell all that he had and give to the poor? The Bible tells us that he went away very sorrowful. Barnabas did not feel sorry for himself when he gave the money away. His love to Jesus and His people made him willing to make such a sacrifice.

Those in the church at Jerusalem held Barnabas in high esteem. What a Christ-like spirit he showed! Sadly, a certain man and his wife maybe were envious of the esteem those in the church had for Barnabas. They wanted to be held in the same esteem. The man's name was Ananias and his wife's name was Sapphira.

Ananias and Sapphira also had a possession of land and agreed between themselves to sell it. Having received a good sum of money, they would bring it to the apostles. However, the tempter who came to Adam and Eve in the garden came to

this man and his wife and tempted them to keep some of the money for themselves. They would just pretend that they had given all the money. After all, who would possibly know?

Ananias was anxious for the time when the people came together. Before them all he came and laid the money at the apostles' feet. The eyes of the people must have been fixed upon Ananias as he lay down the bag of money.

Suddenly the Apostle Peter spoke, saying: *"Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost and to keep back part of the price of the land?"* Peter told him that the land was his before he sold it, and after it was sold, it was his right to do what he would with the money. In pretending to give the full price to the apostles, he had been deceitful. Peter answered further, saying: *"Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."*

When Ananias heard the words of Peter, he fell down dead and the young men carried him out and buried him. Those who witnessed what had taken place began to tell others and great fear came upon them. It made them careful of even their words and thoughts.

Three hours later Sapphira came into the house where the apostles were. No doubt, she came looking for her husband, not knowing what had happened. When Peter saw her, he asked her whether they had sold the land for so much? Sapphira quickly replied: *"Yea, for so much."* Peter answered her: *"How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out."* Like her husband, she fell down dead at Peter's feet.

You can read about this in Acts chapter 4 verses 32 to 37 and chapter 5 verses 1 to 11.

QUESTIONS:

1. What does the name "Barnabas" mean?
2. What did Barnabas do when he saw the poverty of the believers? (14 words)
3. What man and wife were probably envious of Barnabas?

4. To whom did Peter say they had lied?
5. What happened to them?

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. Jesus.
2. The head of the corner.
3. Whereby we must be saved.
4. These men had been with Jesus.
5. The things which we have seen and heard.

G. L. TenBroeke

THE POOR PRIEST TURNED PRINTER (1)

It was in the year 1428, or thereabouts, a man named Lawrence Coster was seen walking on the outside of the walls of the old city of Haarlem in Holland. His pace was slow, and it was evident that his mind was engaged in deep thought.

As he walked, he came to a small wood, and there he cut with his knife a piece of bark from a tree. He paced up and down beneath the shade of the trees, and amused himself with carving the bark. Now and then he paused, and then again went on with his work. As he turned to go home, he found he had cut the shape of a number of raised letters on the face of the bark.

That evening he sat down in his house, and soon went on carving more letters on other pieces of wood. When he had done several in this way, he strung them together on a piece of string. Some ink was now made thick, and rubbing the faces of the letters with it, he pressed a sheet of paper against them. He gazed on what he had done with surprise; and well he might. He had caught the first idea of printing. He had made the earliest attempt, in Europe at least, of impressing on paper the thoughts of the mind. There was hope for the word in those pieces of bark hung together on a string.

A few years passed away, and another man, of the name of Gottenberg, was busy in a small workshop in the German city of Mentz, cutting letters. This time, however, they were not

made of wood or of bark, but of metal. Nor were several carved on one piece of wood, each was a separate type.¹ Something of a machine, too, called a press, had been formed; and with these metal types he soon set about printing books. The volume which was printed was a Latin Bible. It was not finished, as it would be now, in a few weeks; but nearly eight years passed before it came from the workmen's hands. Everyone who saw it was astonished; but little did they foresee that this infant effort of the new art was the earnest of the richest blessings to all mankind. It was well that the first volume printed was the best Book – that it was God's Book. It was the pledge of the great things to be done by the discovery of the art of printing, in giving the Holy Scriptures to every nation on the earth.

Latin was the language of the priests and learned men; of what use, then, could the Bible be to the common people, if printed in that tongue? We shall now see that the people were to receive it from the hands of Tyndale, a poor priest of a college at Oxford. As he sat one day with some fellow priests, he spoke of the value of the Word of God, when they mockingly said: "We are better without God's law than the pope's law"; to which Tyndale replied: "If God spare me, before many years I will cause a boy that driveth a plough to know more of the Scriptures than you do."

The young priest saw that the people were living and dying without Bible knowledge, deceived by the vain doctrines of the Church of Rome; and he quietly resolved to get the New Testament printed in England for the use of all. He had heard of the learning and riches of the Bishop of London, and he thought he would surely aid him in the good design; but he soon found that there was "no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the Word of God, nor any safe place to do it in all England."

Selected

(To be continued)

¹ *Type* is from a Greek word, and means to strike, to stamp, or impress.

EXPEDITION TO BALLARAT

The following is an extract from a letter written by Daniel Allen in which he describes his experiences on the gold-digging expedition to Ballarat, Australia.

So far as I have ever heard, I was the first who ever preached or conducted a religious service on Ballarat diggings.

In the middle of August 1851, Mr. Hiscock found gold at Buninyong. The newspapers were full of it, and every mouth in Melbourne was vocal with the wonderful event. Labourers of every grade, tradesmen of every kind, shopkeepers, lawyers, clerks, were all alike throwing down their tools and pens to be off to Ballarat for the gold. All the male portion of our congregation determined to go. I also agreed to go with them and conduct religious services, and dig. Mr E Wood (now J.P.) of Preston; Messrs. Tyler, Vincent, Barrett and Chandler, gardeners and farmers of Preston and Pentridge, with Messrs. Juniper, Osborne, and others, shopkeepers of Melbourne, were of my party. On Monday morning in August 1851, we all met at Flemington at 9 a.m.; seven drays, with seven good horses with cradles, tin dishes, spades, buckets, ropes, flour, tea, sugar, and such like, with about fifty men in all.

On we went, through mud, rain, plains, hills, creeks, rivers, and snow near Ballarat. The first night we slept on Kellor Plains. In the evenings I read the Word of God by firelight, and gave out hymns from memory, and prayed in the dark. We did the same in the mornings by daylight. I never felt my spirituality in the least lowered in that mission to Ballarat, notwithstanding the tremendous excitement of that period.

The men saw that I was a good guide, and proposed that I should conduct and command them, so I went before and led the way. When we came to creeks or rivers, I ordered a long rope to each shaft, with fifty men to pull on the other side when the dray was lowered down; ten men with ropes on the higher sides of the side lines, to keep the drays from going over and ease them down into the water. All pulled in bogs, and pushed up hills.

Thus we arrived at Ballarat on the Saturday evening, after six days travelling, as before noticed. In the falling snow of Friday and Saturday, our men were calling out: "Have you seen anything of Franklin up here?" Thus, with pushing and pulling, praying and singing, waking and sleeping, eating and drinking, reading and talking, raining and snowing, murmuring and grieving, hoping and fearing, up hill and down dale, through mud and over rocks, through scrub and over trees, frightening wild turkeys, kangaroos, opossums, and native cats, we got to the big black hill just off the Melbourne-road by 4 p.m. on Saturday. We pitched our tents, and made all snug and cosy for the Lord's day, when I conducted service in our usual way by publicly singing God's praises, reading His holy Word, calling upon His blessed name, and preaching salvation to guilty men through the precious blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. This I did for four Lord's days, when our large tent was filled with worshippers and attentive hearers.

On the first Monday we fixed our cradles by the little creek that ran along the foot of the big hill. We wheeled down surface from the side of a little gully, and dipped water from the creek, and worked away, surrounded with the dishes, long toms, and all kinds of schemes, to get the gold from the dirt. We got about two ounces per man each week. Golden Point was swallowed up alive, as it were, every foot of it. Some there thought it necessary to be able to fight and swear well to keep your ground. But we kept off that ground, and dug in a harmless place. Hundreds got no gold; sold out, and returned with a bad report. The roads were lined from Melbourne and Geelong, and many strange and lively things were daily seen. But if a man's heart was right with God, I bear witness that he could love, serve, honour, and praise Him as well on Ballarat diggings in August 1851, as in any cathedral in the world.

D. Allen (Forty Years in the Wilderness – Appendix 3)

FOUR CHAPLAINS SET A HIGH STANDARD OF HEROISM

Captain Hans J Danielsen of the *Dorchester* was uneasy. The coastguard had warned him that a U-boat was prowling the shipping lane off the coast of Newfoundland. As icy night fell, he ordered the troops he was ferrying to turn in with their life vests on in case the ship was torpedoed.

Many of the 902 men aboard the ship ignored the order. The hold was hot and the life jackets were too bulky to sleep in. Their disobedience cost many of them their lives. Four who obeyed the captain's command were the ship's chaplains. Lt. George L Fox; Lt. Alexander D Goode; Lt. John P Washington and Lt Clark V Poling had befriended the homesick and seasick men of the troopship. Now they were to be put to a severe test.

At 12.55 a.m. on February 3rd 1943, the German U-boat launched a torpedo at the *Dorchester*. The bomb hit with deadly accuracy well below the water line. Many men were killed outright by the explosion. Others were flung wounded and screaming to the floor. Ammonia gas swirled through the hold, strangling others. In the darkness and cold, men struggled to find their way out. Above the din, the chaplains could be heard calming the men, comforting them, urging them to be brave and directing them where to go.

It was evident the ship could not stay afloat. The captain gave the order to abandon ship and they scrambled for lifeboats, overloading them. On deck, the chaplains encouraged. They opened a locker with life vests and handed them to the men who needed them. Quickly the supply was exhausted. Each of the four chaplains then peeled off his own jacket and handed it to a man. "It was the finest thing I have seen or hope to see this side of heaven," said John Ladd, one of the 230 men who survived the attack.

Twenty-seven minutes after the *Dorchester* was struck, it sank. Survivors said the last thing they saw was the four chaplains linked arm in arm on the deck, praying. Moved by their heroism, Congress afterward marked February 3rd as

“Four Chaplains Day” and issued a Special Medal of Heroism to the four, which their families received posthumously.

Christ taught us ‘greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friends.’ To follow Christ’s example is greater than any honour man can give.

Adapted

ANNIE’S AND VANIE’S ANSWERED PRAYER

Two sisters, one about five years of age, the other one, older, used to go each Saturday morning, some distance from home, to get chips and shavings from a shop.

One morning with a basket well-filled, they were returning home when the elder one was taken suddenly sick. She was in great pain, and unable to proceed, much less to carry the basket home. She sat down on the basket, and the younger one held her from falling.

The street was a lonely one occupied by workshops, factories, etc. Everyone was busy within. Not a person was seen on the street. The little girls were at a loss to know what to do. Too timid to go into any shop, they sat awhile, as silent and quiet as the distressing pains would allow.

Soon the elder girl said: “You know, Annie, that a good while ago Mother told us that if we ever got into trouble we should pray, and God would help us. Now you help me to get down upon my knees, and help hold me up, and we will pray.”

There on the side of the road did these two little children ask God to send someone to help them home. The simple and brief prayer being ended, the sick girl was again helped up, and sat on the basket, waiting the answer to their prayer.

Presently Annie saw, far down the street on the opposite side, a man come out from a factory, look around him up and down the street and go back into the factory. “O dear, he has gone in again,” said Annie. “Well,” said Vanie, “perhaps he is not the one God is going to send. If he is, he will come back again.”

“There he comes again,” said Annie. “He walks this way. He

seems looking for something. He walks slow, and is without his hat. He puts his hand to his head, as if he does not know what to do. Oh dear, he has gone in again. What shall we do?"

"This may not be the one whom God will send to help us," said Vanie. "If he is, he will come out again."

"Oh yes, there he is; this time with his hat on," said Annie. "He comes this way; he walks slowly, looking around on every side. He does not see us; perhaps the trees hide us. Now he sees us, and is coming quickly."

A brawny German in broken accent asked: "Children, what is the matter?" "Oh Sir," said Annie, my sister here is so sick she cannot walk, and we cannot get home."

"Where do you live, my dear?"

"At the end of this street; you can see the house from here."

"Never mind," said the man, "I will take you home."

So the strong man gathered the sick child in his arms, and with her pillowed upon his shoulder, carried her to the place pointed out by the younger girl. Annie ran around the house to tell her mother that there was a man at the front door wishing to see her. The astonished mother, with a mixture of surprise and joy, took charge of the precious burden, and the child was laid upon a bed.

After thanking the man, she expected him to withdraw, but instead, he stood turning his hat in his hands as one who wishes to say something, but knows not how to begin. The mother observing this, repeated her thanks and finally said: "Would you like me to pay you for bringing my child home?"

"Oh, no," said he with tears, "God pays me! I would like to tell you something, but I speak English so poorly that I fear you will not understand." The mother assured him that she was used to German and could understand him very well.

"I am the owner of an ink factory," said he. "My men work by the piece. I have to keep separate accounts with each. I pay them every Saturday. At twelve o'clock they will be at my desk for their money. This week I have had many hindrances and

was behind with my books. I was working hard at them with the sweat on my face, and in my great anxiety to be ready in time. Suddenly I could not see the figures; the words in the book all ran together, and I had a plain impression on my mind that someone in the street wished to see me. I went out, looked up and down the street, but seeing no one, went back to my desk and wrote a little. Presently the darkness was greater than before, and the impression stronger than before that someone in the street needed me.

“Again I went out, looked up and down the street, walked a little way, puzzled to know what it meant. Was my hard work and were the cares of business driving me out of my wits? Unable to solve the mystery, I turned again into my shop and to my desk. This time my fingers refused to grasp the pen. I found myself unable to write a word, or make a figure; but the impression was stronger than ever on my mind, that someone needed my help. A voice seemed to say: ‘Why don’t you go out as I tell you? There is need of your help.’ This time I took my hat on going out, resolved to stay until I found out whether I was losing my senses, or there was a duty for me to do. I walked some distance without seeing anyone, and was more and more puzzled, till I came opposite the children and found that there was a need of my help. I cannot understand it, madam.”

As the noble German was about to leave the house, the younger girl had the courage to say: “Mother, we prayed.”

Thus the mystery was solved, and with tear-stained cheeks, a heaving breast, and a humble, grateful heart, the kind man went back to his accounts.

I have enjoyed many a happy hour in conversation with Annie in her own house since she has a home of her own. The last I knew of Annie and Vanie, they were living in the same city, earnest Christian women. Their children were growing up around them, who, I hope, will have like confidence, and faith in God.

Selected

KANGAROOS: GOD'S AMAZING CRAFTSMANSHIP

Kangaroos are the symbol of Australia. They adorn its postage stamps, coat-of-arms, coinage, and even its major international airline. At the zoo or in their natural habitat of Australia (and New Guinea), they remain the most recognized and obvious of Australia's fauna. Their faces, the way they carry their young in a pouch, their phenomenal leaping power, and their deadly "karate kicking" have long intrigued people.

The whole family is best known as the Macropodidae – literally the "big-footed" family. This includes not just the six largest living species commonly called "kangaroos," but also a further forty-eight species found in Australia alone, and another thirteen found in New Guinea – sixty-seven modern species in all. The range of two Australian species, the agile wallaby and the red-legged pademelon, spills into New Guinea as well. The term "modern" is applied because this vast empire was once much greater, with over one hundred species in Australia alone.

They varied enormously in size. The tiny, scampering musky rat-kangaroo still lives in the tropical rain-forests of northern Queensland. However, the massive, blunt-faced Procoptodon is extinct. Three basic size ranges are recognized today. At the other end of the scale from the six large types mentioned above are the rat/rabbit-sized bettongs, potoroos and rat-kangaroos. In between are the tree kangaroos (a specialised group comprising nine species that live and move about in the trees), and those commonly called wallabies. The term "wallaby" is applied to those species where the adult male has a body mass less than about 20kg (44 lbs) and feet less than 25 centimetres (10 inches) long. However, scientists can recognize no major anatomical difference between these and kangaroos.

Kangaroo reproduction

In the desert species, carrying the baby in the pouch is convenient for the female, who may travel many miles for fresh food and water. The youngster stands a greater chance of survival because it does not have to keep up with her and is

tucked away from predators.

During prolonged drought, kangaroos stop breeding. In some species, a doe is able to delay the development of a fertilized egg inside her until an older joey dies or vacates the pouch. This remarkable phenomenon occurs in the red kangaroo, the eastern grey kangaroo, the common wallaroo (euro), the brushtailed bettong, and several of the larger wallabies. It has also been noted in the honey possum and some non-marsupial mammals such as bats and seals.

Another incredible aspect is that the doe can determine the sex of her offspring. How she does this is unknown, but she tends to put off bearing males until she is older. Males move away after about two years, but females stay with their mothers longer and benefit from ongoing support.

A doe is nearly always pregnant. From sexual maturity to death, she is rarely without three offspring – an embryo in the womb, a joey in her pouch, and a larger youngster at her heels.

The joey is born after a gestation period of about thirty-five days (depending on the species) and in the largest species is the size of a human thumb nail. In the smallest, it is only the size of a rice grain. Naked, blind and deaf, it must make its way unaided from the birth canal to the pouch.

All going well, the climb will take less than ten minutes. The joey can survive only a few minutes unless it reaches the pouch and attaches to one of the four nipples. Once there, its mouth swells on the nipple so that it cannot be removed without injury. A ring of strong muscles, similar to human lips, seals off the opening to the pouch to protect the joey from bouncing out, and keeps the pouch waterproof if mother goes for a swim. After three months, the developed joey emerges from the pouch to make short trips in the outside world. However, it will return to the pouch to suckle and sleep until eight months old.

Why do kangaroos hop?

Over the years, scientists have put forward theories concerning the hows and whys of kangaroo locomotion. As yet, none has fully explained every aspect. Hopping appears to be more energy-

efficient than running or galloping. The faster kangaroos hop, the less energy they use for the same distance. Treadmill studies have shown that kangaroos maintain a constant number of hops per minute. Regardless of how much the treadmill speeds up, they simply take longer and longer hops.

Kangaroos function much like bouncing balls. A ball will bounce a number of times without a fresh input of energy. Every time it hits the ground, some of the energy is shifted to the rubber, stored there, then recycled in an elastic bounce. Jumping kangaroos store 70% of their energy in their tendons, compared to running humans, who can store and reuse only about 20%. A hopping kangaroo also uses less energy to breathe than one standing still. Part of the secret lies in the way the abdominal organs “flop” within the kangaroo’s body. Instead of using muscle power, air is pushed out of the lungs by the impact of the organs against the diaphragm at each landing.

Efficient travel is beneficial to arid-dwellers such as the Red and Western grey kangaroos, the Tammar wallaby and the euro, which may need to travel long distances between water and feed. However, many species inhabit timbered country, with abundant food and regular rainfall.

Kangaroos are ingenious examples of God’s craftsmanship, designed by a Creator who knew perfectly what He was doing. To Him all praise, glory, and honour is forever due.

Rebecca Driver (Creation)

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (VI)

In Genesis 14 it is recorded how the LORD enabled Abraham to rescue his nephew Lot from the hands of his enemies. This reveals to us that Abraham was a wealthy man and thereby influential among the nations; he was also powerful. Sadly his nephew Lot returned to that wicked city of Sodom to live. How different was Lot to his uncle: he chose the lush plains of Jordan, no doubt for the increase of his flocks and herds, and even after he had been delivered he returned. Abraham

remained aloof and separate from the world, no doubt doing business but keeping himself separate. Lot lived in the most wicked city and was vexed with its filthy conversation. Lot was a godly man who chose the wrong place to live and pierced himself through with many sorrows. (1 Timothy 6. 9-12)

Now what I want to come to in this chapter is the mysterious character Melchizedek. This Melchizedek was king of Salem, he was the priest of the most high God. He blessed Abraham and Abraham gave him a tenth part of all that he had. It shows to us that there were other godly people apart from Abraham, in fact, the Lord's servant Job was probably alive in the early part of Abraham's life. But Melchizedek was a lovely type of Jesus Christ. He became a mystical figure in the writings of the Hebrew people; and in that beautiful messianic Psalm 110 the Holy Spirit through His servant David prophesies of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: *"The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."*

The Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews by divine inspiration develops this sacred subject. He quotes again and again the above text but in Hebrews 6. 20 speaks of the ascension of our great High Priest into heaven and calls Him our forerunner: *"Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."* Then in the seventh chapter he opens to us the interpretation of the name Melchizedek: *"For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually"* (Hebrews 7 1-3). He was not the Son of God but *"made like unto the Son of God."* In other words, he was a type of Christ. Nothing was known of his father or mother or where he was born; nothing was known of his death or where he was buried.

Now if we compare this with Jesus Christ the Son of God, He had no father as regards His holy human nature: the Holy Spirit overshadowed the womb of the virgin Mary and that holy thing that was born was the Son of God in flesh. Then he says: *"nor end of life."* Jesus Christ died to rise again and swallow up death in victory; He has the power of an endless life: *"But this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood"* (Hebrews 7. 24). Also regarding the coming of Christ, not through the Levitical priesthood, which is what we would naturally expect, but the Apostle points out that the priesthood is changed under the New Testament. Christ would be born of the seed of David, of the tribe of Juda, not Levi. So we read: *"For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life"* (Hebrews 7. 14-16).

The Apostle says, consider how great this man was that even Abraham, as great as he was, gave a tenth of all the spoils to Melchizedek king of Salem. We have the interpretation of Melchizedek, king of Salem, that is King of peace; King of righteousness. How we see our Lord Jesus Christ in these titles: Jehovah Shalom, the LORD send peace. He said Himself: *"My peace I give unto you."* In Ezekiel 37. 26 the covenant that was sealed by the blood of Jesus is called *"an everlasting covenant"* of peace. In Jeremiah 23 the Lord Jesus is called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (in the Hebrew - Jehovah Tsidkenu).

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about LIONS. 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 said, "The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion ... He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine"? (1 Samuel 17. 37)
2. Benaiah was one of King David's mighty men. What did he do on a snowy day? (1 Chronicles 11. 22)
3. Who "as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"? (1 Peter 5. 8)
4. Which king of Israel's throne had six steps leading to it, with a statue of a lion either side of each step? (2 Chronicles 9. 17-19)
5. Who said: "Is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions"? (Daniel 6. 20)
6. What kind of person says: "There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets"? (Proverbs 22)
7. What riddle did Samson propose after he found honey in the carcase of a lion? (Judges 14)
8. Which of the apostles said, "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion"? (2 Timothy 4)
9. The prophet Amos in describing the folly of Israel compares it to a man who fled from a lion, then a bear met him. He turned aside into a house to escape. What happened then? (Amos 5)
10. Find two consecutive verses in the Book of the Revelation in which the Lord Jesus is referred to both as a Lion and a Lamb.

ANSWERS TO MAY QUESTIONS

1. Mordecai's uncle's daughter, i.e. his cousin.
2. Bigthan and Teresh. Mordecai knew of their plans and informed the king through Esther.
3. Haman was angry because Mordecai would not bow down to him or reverence him.
4. "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."
5. A gallows 50 cubits high on which to hang Mordecai.

6. In the Book of the Chronicles it was recorded how Mordecai had saved the king's life when Bigthan and Teresh tried to kill him, and he was concerned because Mordecai had not been rewarded. (Esther 6. 1-3)
7. Haman was hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. (Esther 7. 10)
8. The decree had been passed for the destruction of all the Jews. (Esther 3. 13-15)
9. The Jews were allowed to defend themselves and destroy their enemies, and Mordecai had been promoted to great honour. (Esther 8. 13)
10. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." (Proverbs 16. 18) (also verse 5)

Contributed

GODLY WISHES

(Written in the year 1660)

O that mine eyes might closèd be
To what concerns me not to see;
That deafness might possess mine ear
To what concerns me not to hear;
That truth my tongue might always tie
From ever speaking foolishly;
That no vain thought might ever rest,
Or be conceivèd in my breast;
That by each word, and deed, and thought,
May glory to my God be brought;
But what are wishes? Lord mine eye
On Thee is fixèd: hear my cry.
Wash, Lord, and purify my heart,
And make it clean in every part;
And when 'tis clean, Lord, keep it too,
For that is more than I can do.

The Friendly Companion



“He leadeth me beside the still waters.”
(Psalm 23. 2)

July 2015

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

If you are able to travel to the little chapel at Allington in Wiltshire, as you approach the chapel on your left you will see that there is a field in which is a long line of mature trees. These trees are the home of a large colony of rooks, who build their nests high up in the topmost branches. The noise of these birds can at times be very substantial as you stand in the graveyard around the chapel. Rooks are very sociable birds preferring to congregate together both for their nests and flying. Their nests are so close that they seem not to want any privacy, unlike their first cousin, the crow, which prefers its own company. It has been said that to distinguish between these two very similar birds: "if a rook's on its own it's a crow, and if a crow's in a crowd it's a rook!"

The Bible has some interesting things to tell us about nests.

In Psalm 84 we read of swallows and sparrows making their nests in the altar where the blood of the sacrifices was sprinkled. Swallows are very restless birds, and sparrows are very common. Perhaps this teaches us that those who cannot find rest in the world are like the sparrow. According to their own estimation, "no-one special," nonetheless they can find rest in Christ Jesus, who laid down His life for sinners.

Then we read in Obadiah (one of the Minor Prophets) of the Edomites (the descendants of Esau) who lived in houses high up on the mountains in the cliffs so that their enemies supposedly could not reach them. God told them that even though they built their nests among the stars He would judge them for their wickedness. None of us is out of the reach of God's hand. The Puritans used to say: "He builds too low, who builds beneath the sky": in other words, to "*seek ... first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,*" as the Lord Jesus Christ exhorts us. While we live on earth, if we are wise, we will be seeking a place in the kingdom of His grace.

Then Jesus Himself again reminds us of His own humble life. "*The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.*" When

He was born, all that could be offered Him was a manger, and when He died, He was nailed to a cross! He tells us that if we are followers of Him, we must not expect this world to be a cosy nest! However, He has promised His people something infinitely better: *"In My Father's house are many mansions ... I go to prepare a place for you ... that where I am, there ye may be also."*

May we be thankful for the comforts we do enjoy, but remember, these are only for a time. If we are not prepared for eternity, we will be without a home when we die. How sad and how solemn!

May God lay these things to our hearts.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

It appears strange to us at first that the name of the barge on the canal, as seen in our picture this month, should be called "Wits End." Usually the term "wits' end" is used when people are at "the end of their tether," or very stressed, not knowing what to do or how to cope with their difficulties. We do not know why the owner of the barge in this peaceful scene should have named his boat "Wits End." Perhaps this is where he went to find respite when he was at his wits' end! However, not everyone shows their innermost troubles to others, and what may seem to us a very calm existence outwardly, may hide very deep unseen sorrows. We can very quickly misjudge others in that way.

Of course, the term "wits' end" is to be found in the Bible in Psalm 107. 27. If you have a Bible with a margin for references and notes, you will see that the Hebrew word from which the term "wits' end" has been translated really means "all their wisdom is swallowed up." These, perhaps very experienced sailors on the ship, after trying every means available, had come to the end of all their ability to control the ship. It is then that the psalmist tells us of their real wisdom: *"Then they*

cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses."

Just as the Lord Jesus Christ calmed the waters and winds of Galilee with the words "*Peace be still,*" so in Psalm 107 we read of the same miracle: "*He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.*" They were then as still as the waters seen on our front cover! The wonderful truth is that the Lord Jesus Christ still has the same power and authority over the natural storms and all the other stormy seas through which His people pass. May we, who know what it is to be where "wits' end" is, be doing as God bid His people do in Isaiah 45: "*Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*"

WHITE DEAD-NETTLE

White dead-nettle (*Lamium album*) looks rather like stinging nettle, or at least its leaves do, but it has large white flowers and square stems and above all it does not sting. They belong to quite different families.

Dead-nettle has a long flowering season, from March to December, and it is said that the seeds can survive a thousand years and still germinate.

It is particularly attractive to bees which have a long proboscis and can reach down to the nectar. Smaller insects cannot probe that far and in any case their weight may not be sufficient to open the flower. Slugs and snails eat the leaves.

Dead nettle and stinging nettle look similar and often live and flourish in the same place, yet one seems to need the protection of stings, the other manages perfectly well without them. God, who created them both, does nothing without a good reason. One day we shall understand why He gave nettles their stings and not dead nettles.

Man loves uniformity. God loves diversity.

Selected

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**DAVID BEHAVES WISELY**

Saul was troubled again by an evil spirit. David played the harp for him as he had done before. This time the music did not comfort Saul. He was filled with hate towards David. Saul had a javelin (a small spear) in his hand. Twice he threw it at David, but each time David escaped. *“And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul.”*

Saul sent David away from his house. He made him a captain over a thousand soldiers. David went in and out before the people of Israel and they loved him. Saul saw that David behaved very wisely, and he became more afraid of David.

Saul had promised to give his eldest daughter as a wife to the man who killed Goliath. But he gave her to another man instead of David. Michal, the younger daughter of Saul, loved David. Saul said that he would give her to David for a wife after he fought with the Philistines. Saul hoped that David would be killed in the battle. When David returned safely, Michal became his wife. Saul saw that the LORD was with David, *“and Saul became David’s enemy continually.”*

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Saul throw at David?
2. Who was with David?
3. Who became David’s enemy continually?

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.

Contributed

ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS

1. Jonathan.
2. Wisely.
3. Saul.

*“And David
behaved
himself
wisely in
all his ways;
and the LORD
was with him.”*
1 Samuel 18. 14.

BIBLE LESSONS**THE APOSTLES ARRESTED - IMPRISONED**

Throughout Jerusalem people were talking about the awful judgment that came upon Ananias and Sapphira. Like Lot's wife in the Old Testament, they became a solemn warning so that no man dared to deceive the apostles. For a time, no one dared to join with them unless they were sure the Lord had blessed them.

Every day the apostles went up to the temple and stood in Solomon's porch, preaching Jesus unto the people. God blessed the preaching so that a great number of men and women believed and were added to the church.

Great miracles were wrought by the hands of the apostles, and all over the city people were talking of the wonderful works. Soon people brought their sick relatives and friends and laid them on beds in the streets of Jerusalem. They hoped that even Peter's shadow passing over them might be a means of healing. The news of such events spread beyond Jerusalem, and soon they came from the cities and towns that were round about. A multitude of sick people and those that were troubled by evil spirits, were healed.

When a great number of people believed on the Lord Jesus and were healed of their sicknesses, the high priest and Jewish leaders were filled with anger against the apostles. They were determined to stop the apostles from preaching the Lord Jesus. They sent their officers to arrest the apostles and put them in prison.

As night fell on the city, the rulers returned to their homes thinking they had accomplished their mission. The next day they would discuss what further action should be taken against the apostles. The keepers of the prison kept a close watch on the prison doors. But the Lord sent an angel from heaven, who opened the prison doors and led the apostles out. He then commanded them: *"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."* When the apostles heard this, they went to the temple early in the morning and

began to teach the people.

That morning, the high priest called the council of the Jewish leaders together and sent officers to the prison to bring the apostles to them for a trial. Soon the officers returned to the council. They said that the keepers of the prison were at their post and the doors of the prison were shut, but when they opened the doors, the prisoners were gone.

The high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests were greatly perplexed at the officers' report and wondered what could have happened. How could the apostles escape from the prison and the keepers not see them? As they talked, one came from the temple saying: *"Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people."*

The captain of the temple and the officers went and quietly arrested the apostles. They would have dealt very roughly with them, but they were afraid the people would stone them, because the people held the apostles in high esteem.

When the captain brought them in, the high priest and Jewish council looked at the apostles with great disdain. The high priest roughly asked them: *"Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? ... ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood upon us."* The apostles were no longer timid and afraid. They boldly answered: *"We ought to obey God rather than men."* They told the council that God had raised up Jesus whom they (the high priest and rulers) had killed. They added further: *"Him bath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."*

No doubt, the words Jesus spoke to them before His crucifixion, that they would be brought before rulers, now strengthened them. They joyfully declared: *"We are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God bath given to them that obey Him."*

The high priest and those with him were cut to the heart.

Surely now they would see their sin and humble themselves in repentance before God! But no, like Pharaoh, they hardened their heart.

You can read about this in Acts chapter 5 verses 11 to 33.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did they hope might be a means of healing? (5 words)
2. What did the high priest and officers do with the apostles?
3. What did the angel of God do for the apostles? (9 words)
4. What did the apostles answer when they were told not to teach in Jesus' name? (8 words)
5. What did the high priest and those with him do when they were cut to the heart? (4 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. The son of consolation.
2. Sold his land and brought the price and laid it at the apostles' feet.
3. Ananias and Sapphira.
4. The Holy Ghost.
5. They fell down dead.

G.L. TenBroeke

“FOR MY BRETHREN AND COMPANIONS’ SAKES”

Sometimes there have sprung from a very humble life deeds which illustrate this text. In the moment of certain death men have stepped into the place of their brother or their companion. In one unassuming Christian act, they have summed up the meaning of the self-sacrificing life of Christ.

Thomas Carlyle tells the story of such a deed. Two miners had gone down the shaft of a Cornish mine to prepare a charge of powder for blasting the rock. They had nearly finished their work when one of them thought that the match which was to

fire the charge was too long; so taking a sharp stone, he tried to cut it shorter. He succeeded, but at the same time kindled the match. Both saw their danger and sprang to the basket which would draw them to the surface; but one only could be drawn up at a time. Both men felt that they were facing instant and horrible death in the explosion which would follow, when one of them, generously forgetting himself, cried to his companion: "Go aloft, Jack; in one minute I shall be in heaven." Jack was hastily drawn to the surface, and the explosion followed. With hopeless hearts they afterwards descended, but to their unbounded joy found that the rocks had so arched themselves over their friend that he was safe.

When we read of the remarkable life of the Apostle Paul, and remember how he was shipwrecked, stoned and left for dead, imprisoned and finally martyred, and yet how that he did it all, not for his own sake, but for the sake of his Jewish and Gentile brethren and companions, we feel too that from his life we get an illustration of our text.

And yet a nobler example still than Paul – even the example of the Lord Jesus Christ – teaches us the same lesson that we ought not to think only of self, or look at life from our own point of view merely, but that we should remember the claims of our brethren and companions. Christ became Man, not for His own sake, but for His people's sake. He endured the taunts and insults of priests and Pharisees not that He might gain anything for Himself, but that He might gain something for us. He suffered the Cross for the sake of His brethren and companions.

Selected

QUESTION: Which is the third commandment?

ANSWER: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

(Exodus 20. 7; Deuteronomy 5. 11)

“I HAVE A MESSAGE FROM GOD UNTO THEE” (1)

Perched upon the top of a hill, 700 feet above sea level, high above valleys that are filled with smoke and steam from works and mines, stands Rowley Parish Church, overlooking in a very literal sense a parish which includes Rowley Regis, Old Hill, and Blackheath, a centre of Strict Baptist movement unlike anything else in the kingdom.

To trace the rise of this movement we shall need to turn back the pages of history for over 150 years, to events which took place in the Parish Church of Rowley Regis, or rather to the building which preceded the present church.

At that time the parish was a very different place from what it is today, and the following description, extracted from a memoir of George Barrs, will reveal the conditions at Rowley at the beginning of our story.

“The Parish of Rowley Regis ... was in a most deplorable condition: in many respects it was scarcely in a state of common civilization.... The lower classes, with few exceptions, were extremely ignorant and wicked; vice and immorality bore an unbounded sway.... The public highways were in many places utterly impassable, even on horseback; and as for a carriage being seen, such a thing was counted little less than a prodigy. The desecration of the Sabbath Day was as awful as it was notorious.... The horrid practice of bull-baiting here prevailed, with all its revolting aggravations; and to their shame be it recorded, receiving countenance and support from many who considered themselves far above the vulgar rabble. Cock fighting, bear baiting, and every other species of wickedness formed the popular amusements of the day; in a word, the powers of darkness appeared to reign with unlimited and undisputed sway.”

In the midst of all this, a faithful Gospel ministry was maintained at the Parish Church, but it seems to have had little success among the people, while the church itself was like a gloomy dungeon, ruinous, and damp.

But one Lord's Day in May 1800 a little stir was manifested

among the parishioners who attended the church, at the coming of a new curate. What would he be like? What sort of preacher? What kind of ministry would this be?

The congregation was larger than usual on that occasion, and an air of expectancy pervaded the place as the new curate entered the pulpit and announced his text. His message was drawn from Judges 3. 20: *"I have a message from God unto thee."*

As he began to open up his subject an awed silence settled upon the congregation. The man spake as none other had spoken to them before. There was a power, a vigour, a forcefulness in every sentence from which they could not escape.

Sobered, impressed, subdued, the people left the House of God that day to talk over what they had heard, for that sermon became a topic of conversation for long afterwards, and that day was never forgotten by many who sat in that old church and listened to the new curate.

Thus entered into his ministry at Rowley Regis, George Barrs; and in that ramshackle church, in that polluted parish, a spiritual revolution began which was to prove a blessing throughout the ministry of this servant of God, and for more than a century after his home-call. For forty years he laboured in this parish, spending every atom of his strength in an inspired purpose which, under the blessing of God, effected a change in the whole parish, rooting out abuses, restoring law and order, raising the moral status of the people, and building up believers in the things of God.

Every servant of God has his weaknesses, for at best they are but men, and George Barrs was not exempt from the common experience. In his case, it was a lack of Christian charity which revealed itself in frequent denunciation in no uncertain terms of the ordinance of "believers' baptism." At the time there were few, if any, Baptists in his parish, and his hearers knew nothing of the question, but such violent opposition from such

a man of God aroused a spirit of enquiry, and many began to search the Scriptures to see if these things were so. Their minister was a warm advocate for Scripture searching, and they felt the value of following his instructions. But the more they searched, the more they discovered “believers’ baptism” in the Bible. Among these searchers were two men in particular, who had been blessed under the ministry of Mr Barrs. They were Daniel Matthews and Joseph Smith, both of whom became founders and pastors of Strict Baptist churches. These men, and many others, were not only led to search the Scriptures when Mr Barrs preached against baptism by immersion, but they were led, both into the meaning of the ordinance and obedience to the revelation of the Word.

Therefore, strange though it may seem, the violent opposition of Mr Barrs was the very means used by the Spirit of God to raise more Strict Baptist churches in the parish of Rowley than in any other parish in the kingdom.

(To be continued)

The Strict Baptist Chapels of England

QUESTION: Which is the fourth commandment?

ANSWER: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

(Exodus 20. 8 -11, Deuteronomy 5. 12-15)

Jesus had a right to lay down His own life (John 10. 18).
In civil law, it is not permitted for one man to die for another.

J. Gill

THE POOR PRIEST TURNED PRINTER (2)

At this time there lived in London a wealthy merchant, named Monmouth, who had been taught the truth through reading the books of the Reformers in Germany. He was a kind friend to Tyndale, and gave him a room in his house where the good priest used to sit, night and day, busy with his pen and Latin Bible. But these were times of danger to those who truly feared God; Tyndale, therefore, well supplied with money by his liberal patron, set sail over the North Sea, and went to the great city of Hamburg. Then removing to Cologne, he went on in translating and printing the New Testament until ten sheets were done.

In this state of things, an informant found out what he was doing. He heard that a learned Englishman was in the city, and that some printers had been heard to say that soon all England would become Protestant. This papist thought he would find out what all this boasting meant. So with great cunning he made friends with the printers, and invited them to his house. Here he gave them much wine, and in the midst of their mirth they made known the secret, that some hundreds of copies of the New Testament in English were in the press, which were to be secretly carried over the seas by merchants. He then had the printer's house surrounded by officers, and the press seized; but not before Tyndale, warned of the danger, ran to the rescue of his printed sheets, which he threw into a boat, and pushed his way from the shore. Sailing up the river Rhine he soon came to a safer place of labour.

After great pains, and cost, and toil, the last sheet of the New Testament was ready. Fifteen hundred copies were printed – a large edition in those days; and now the Bread of Life seemed prepared for the people of his own dear native land. English merchants took charge of the books, and carried them to England with articles of commerce. The precious volume was packed in bales, and sent to London, Norwich, and Oxford. There they were readily bought by the rich and poor – though the latter had much difficulty in getting enough money to

secure the holy Word. Soon they were found spread over the land, and many souls rejoiced in the Gospels and Epistles, which for the first time were held in their hands, and now cherished in their hearts.

Cardinal Wolsey was at this time the chief person in all matters of Church and State. When he was told that the printed books were coming fast to England, he was filled with alarm and anger. He soon sent out orders to make a diligent search among the merchants of London and the students of Oxford for the forbidden work. Among the latter, some of those who were found to have it were thrust into a dungeon, where four of them soon died. Others were made to carry faggots of wood and with them to kindle a fire into which their own hands had to cast the books. Several baskets full of Tyndale's Testaments were collected in London, for even a more public display of Romish wrath. The Cardinal one day took his place in front of St. Paul's, attended by thirty-six abbots, learned priors, and bishops, with a host of priests and officers around him, and the baskets and their contents were brought, and the whole consumed by the flames before their eyes.

But the hope of burning the Word of God out of the land was all in vain. The printer priest kept working off more copies, and merchants took them across the seas hidden in the corn which was carried to England at a time when great scarcity was felt. Thus bread to feed the body and the Bread of Life for the soul came in the same ships and were rapidly sent through the land.

(To be concluded)

Philip Henry, the son of Matthew Henry, the well-known commentator on the Word of God, was once addressing a newly-married couple. He said: "It is customary for you to be wished happiness in your life together, but I wish you holiness, because that alone will bring real and lasting happiness."

A WONDERFUL ANSWER TO PRAYER

At the border of Silesia, the steep mountain peaks rise majestically on high. Wildly the little streams find their course, rushing through the valleys below in this beautiful landscape. In many an old narrative, more than one event is mentioned as having taken place in this region, but truth and fiction are not easy to separate here. The following narrative, however, is historical.

If we looked carefully at a map of the beginning of the nineteenth century, we would soon find the Glatzer valley in Silesia, through which the Neisse River flows in the direction of the Oder River. In this valley, in the midst of these rocky mountains, there once stood a long time ago a very strong Prussian fortress, Glatz. This stronghold was considered impregnable by every militarist. Many obstacles were contributing factors in this respect, and they had made good use thereof. The valley itself was totally secluded from the outside world. Woe unto the prisoner who was locked up inside this fortress. To escape was impossible. Thick walls and iron bolts separated him completely from the outside world, so that this fortress-prison really was a grave in which he was buried alive. All of his surroundings shouted to him that there was no hope for him any more: no future.

Now then, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, a man was locked up in this prison, and his case was hopeless indeed. He was condemned by the king of Prussia, Frederick III, to a life-long imprisonment. This man, Colonel Meuerhoff, had a long record of crimes. The king had shown much patience with regard to this man, but when he yet committed treason against his king and country in addition to all his other offences, the king considered the measure to be full. He thereupon condemned the unfaithful officer to be locked up for the rest of his life.

Already for many years the man had sighed in his grisly cell. Darkness surrounded him, and it was dark in his heart. Not a single beam lightened up his dark existence. The prisoners in

our time have it far better in our land. Not that we would have back again those wretched conditions as they existed in those olden times; but in the satisfaction of justice there yet remains a place for charity.

The past was for this man just as hopeless as the future. Only death could put an end to the monotonous train of days and weeks, months and years, which he had already spent in that place and would yet have to spend there. And then? But for the eternal future the man willingly closed his eyes. Surely, there laid a Bible in his cell, the only Book he was allowed to read; but obstinately he refused to take even one glance into it. He placed the Book in a corner of his cell so that he would not be able to see it.

As months grew into years, however, the solitude became so depressing that he finally took the Bible, although with repugnance, and began to read it ... solely to get rid of his weariness, as was his intention. He read with a heart full of bitterness against God and man, against his lot and life; but the Lord, who has all things in His hand, can break the hardest heart and make it melt. Behold, while the unhappy man was reading the Word of God again, the Lord touched his heart. He started to read, gnashing his teeth and mocking intentionally with what he read, but God's hand would become too strong for him.

It was on a rough and stormy evening in the month of November. The wind howled over the mountains and roared about the walls of the fortress. The rain fell down in torrents. The swelling water of the Neisse rushed wildly along, foaming over its rocky bed. Even within the thick, heavy walls the violence of the elements could be heard. The prisoner, who had once been a colonel in the army of his king, had cast himself again on his hard bed. But sleep, which so often had brought him the temporary relief of being oblivious to all, was now far from his eyes. The storm outside the prison corresponded to the tumult in his heart. There it stormed yet harder. His whole life, which he had spent in wickedness, was

brought before his spirit. Long forgotten crimes accused him. How greatly he had sinned. He had left God, trampled upon his bringing up. Hearing his sentence before the judges some years ago was only child's-play compared with what he now had to experience – to be summoned before the heavenly Judge. Here in this cell was the judicial majesty of God: a holy God, a righteous God. Where could an end be found to his tremendous guilt before the tribunal of this God? Nowhere, for into all eternity would it pursue him. He feels forsaken of God, and he can say nothing against it, no, he does not wish to either. He justifies God, just as the thief on the cross. God is righteous and has been so good to him; but what has he done? For the first time in his life his heart becomes soft on account of his sins, and the eyes of this hardened man are filled with tears of sincere sorrow. "It is lost, lost," he thus cries.

In his restlessness he again grasps the Bible, the Book that condemns him. He is really afraid to read it because it accuses him on every page, and yet he cannot leave off reading it. The pages of the Book fall open right at the 50th Psalm, which he begins reading till he comes to the 15th verse: "*And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.*" These words strike the prisoner so deeply that he sinks upon his knees and does what he has not done since his youth – he prays. He prays to his Judge for mercy. This Judge, who condemns and must condemn him, the sinner, because He is the holy and righteous God ... He alone can help him the villain out of his distress and fears. The Lord heard and answered this prayer, just as He heard the prayer of Manasseh, when in the prison he acknowledged that the Lord is God. While outside the prison the elements were broken loose, in his cell this man found rest after the storm of conviction and discovery. A deep and blessed peace entered his soul when the God of heaven and earth directed him, an insignificant, sinful worm, to the way to His dear Son. Oh, there was hope for him! It was possible for him to be saved and to be reconciled with God through Christ

Jesus! What joy there was in that gloomy cell! A great sinner could be saved! Whereas no one else could enter that place to comfort him, yet there it pleased the Lord to come to this poor wretch. But the wonder will yet become greater....

In that same night another man could not find sleep. In his palace at Berlin, King Frederick III tossed restlessly about upon his royal bed. Terrible pains troubled him and kept sleep from his eyes. And now those pains become so unbearable that the king prays to God for deliverance. He beseeches and begs the Lord to grant him some sleep, even if it would only be for an hour. And behold, this prayer is also graciously answered. The king awakes, refreshed, and without pain. Immediately he remembers his prayer to God and perceives the answer. This is a wonder for him, and sitting at the table he says to the queen: "Louise, God has been good to me. How gladly I would show Him my thankfulness! Who in my kingdom do you think has offended me the greatest? Whoever he is, he will receive a pardon and be restored in my favour."

Queen Louise immediately replied: "No one has offended you so much as Colonel Meuerhoff, who is imprisoned at Glatz." "That is right," said the king. "I am of that opinion also. He shall soon have his liberty."

And before evening came, a courier was already on his way to Glatz in Silesia to proclaim liberty to the prisoner. When some time later the king heard what the Lord had done for this man, he restored him to his former official position and he never had a more faithful servant.

Yea, the Lord is a wonderful God, great of counsel and mighty of deed, and full of mercy and loving-kindness for poor and lost sinners in themselves.

"O God, most holy are Thy ways,
And who like Thee deserves my praise?
Thy outstretched arm Thy people saved,
Tho' sore distressed and long enslaved."

Selected

*BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES***CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (VII)**

In Genesis chapter 22 we have the account of the trial of Abraham's faith when God commanded him to take his only son, whom he had waited so long for, and whom he loved with all his heart. 'Take him and offer him as a sacrifice unto Me.' What a tremendous trial of his faith. All the promises of God to Abraham were bound up in this child.

The first thing we must notice is Abraham's obedience in verse 3: he "*rose up early*." What an example for us to follow! It was such a tremendous thing, yet immediately he goes forth. Secondly, the strength of his faith in verse 5: he tells the young men that they would come again. In Hebrews 11 we are told that Abraham believed that God could raise him from the dead. Abraham had proved that with God nothing is impossible. Again, in verse 8 he tells Isaac that God would provide Himself a lamb for a sacrifice. Abraham had to bind his son, lay him on the altar and then the Lord spoke; then the Lord appeared. Abraham turned and saw a ram caught by his horns in a thicket. Isaac was released and the ram was sacrificed.

The Lord Jesus said that Abraham saw My day and rejoiced. This narrative is one of the most beautiful of all the types of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. Isaac bound hand and foot represents the church of God bound in terrible bondage under the holy law and its awful curses, ready and waiting to be destroyed by the burning wrath of Almighty God. The ram caught in the thicket represents our Lord Jesus Christ who is bound by His eternal covenant engagements with His holy Father to redeem His church: His precious bride. So Isaac, the church, is released from all law charges and set free through the wonderful redeeming work of Jesus Christ: 'the Ram caught in the thicket.'

How the Lord showed His servant the wonderful glory of His grace in the way He would deliver His people from the curse and condemnation of the law and completely set them free through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Another aspect of this narrative is that we see in the journey of Abraham and Isaac, a picture of the eternal Father and the eternal Son walking through the corridors of eternity until they come to Mount Moriah: Jerusalem, and there the eternal Son offers His holy sacrifice, which the eternal Father receives as the ransom price to deliver His church from all her sins, yea from death itself. *“For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”*

Mount Moriah is where Abraham was directed to go; it is also where the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite was, where David built an altar and stayed the plague from Israel (2 Samuel 24. 18-15). It was the site where the Temple was built. Without (outside) Jerusalem’s walls is where Jesus was crucified. What a momentous place in the eternal counsels of the Lord Jehovah. It was here that Abraham built an altar and called the name of it Jehovah Jireh: the Lord will provide. Oh how He has so gloriously provided for His people in the sacrifice of Christ: a feast of fat things. *“He has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”* Another meaning of Jehovah Jireh is: *“In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.”*

In this glorious mount, God and sinners were reconciled, peace was made between God and man. As Dr Krumacher puts it in his *‘Suffering Saviour’*: “It was a place of naked justice: a barren arid place where no mercy could be found, where the condemned criminal was taken to be executed. So the holy, innocent Lord Jesus was taken to this place of condemnation, to be condemned for His people, and when those precious drops of blood pour upon that arid ground, it has since become the most verdant green pasture in the whole world, where poor, helpless, lost sinners find mercy and grace in that precious Saviour.

It is our prayer, dear reader, that you too may be led of the Holy Spirit to these rich pastures of gospel grace in Jesus Christ.

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about GIDEON. Younger children need only do five questions. References are to the book of Judges. 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. What was Gideon doing when the angel of the Lord appeared to him, and why? (6. 11)
2. Gideon brought an offering and set it before the angel, who touched it with the end of his staff. What happened? (6. 21)
3. Gideon heard the telling of a dream which encouraged him. What, in the dream, "tumbled into the host of Midian," hit a tent and overturned it? (7. 13)
4. What did Gideon give to the men who went to fight against the Midianites? (7. 16)
5. How many of the Midianites fell (were killed) in the battles which followed? (8. 10)
6. What was the name of the altar that Gideon built unto the LORD, and what does it mean? (Hint: see the margin in a reference Bible) (6)
7. How many men were gathered to Gideon when he sent messengers throughout Israel? How many was he left with to go against the Midianites? (7)
8. Gideon ruled well and there was peace for forty years, but what did he do which was "a snare unto Gideon, and to his house"? (8)
9. What took place in Israel "as soon as Gideon was dead"? (8)
10. How many sons did Gideon have and what happened to his family soon after his death? What lessons do you think there are to be learned from this?

ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS

1. David.
2. He slew a lion in a pit.
3. "Your adversary, the devil."
4. Solomon.
5. King Darius.

6. A slothful man. (Proverbs 22. 13)
7. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." (Judges 14. 14)
8. Paul. (2 Timothy 4. 17)
9. He leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. (Amos 5. 19)
10. Revelation 5. 5-6

Contributed

FOUR "T'S" TO WATCH!

There are four "T's" too apt to run
'Tis best to set a watch upon:

O watch your *thoughts*; they ramble oft,
They run aground, they soar aloft,
Oft when alone, they take their wings
And light upon forbidden things.

Your *temper* watch, of one you have
Think well, speak slow, if strife you'd save.
The one who rules their temper best
Soon has control of all the rest.

O watch your *tongue* for many tell
Of slips they've had, O learn it well.
Know when to speak, yet be content
When silence is most eloquent.

O watch your *time*, my dear young friends,
Life with its years, will soon have fled.
Time lost, ne'er found, for who can say
He's overtaken yesterday?

If ye who read would watch each "T"
The God of Truth must strengthen thee.
Herbert Dawson (Slightly adapted)

The Friendly Companion



“For Thou wilt light my candle:
the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.”
Psalm 18. 28.

August 2015

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

I wonder how many of our readers have a temper! All of us, however placid we may be for the most part, have to realise that sometimes there rises up within us hot feelings which, unless restrained, become hasty words; and often unwise actions, which are looked back on in regret, leave a stain on our conscience which needs washing away.

Some of the most godly men in Scripture have had to battle with a hot temper, and their battles are left on record to show us that we all need keeping in this respect.

Moses, although the meekest man of his generation, lost his temper and smote the rock, rather than speak to it, as God had commanded him. He said: *"Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?"* For this loss of temper, Moses was not permitted to lead the Children of Israel into the Promised Land of Canaan.

David, being provoked by Nabal's great unkindness, would have slain him and all the males of his family, had not Abigail stepped in with wise advice, leaving the Lord to deal with her husband.

Through ill-temper, Naaman almost missed the cure God had ordained at Jordan. His wise servants, however, knew how to pacify their hasty master!

Job, renowned for his patience, at one time turned on his three friends, saying: *"Miserable comforters are ye all."*

Peter, being confronted three times as he stood at the back of the Judgment Hall where Christ was being examined, began to swear and to curse, denying that he had anything to do with Jesus Christ of Nazareth. It was the reproachful look of Christ which brought him to his senses and he went out and wept bitterly.

All of these and other examples show us that if these eminently godly men could not control their temper when left to themselves, how much more should we be watchful of our own spirit. Twice in the New Testament Paul exhorts in the

epistles: *"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."* If that is so, then we will walk in the truth of the words of Peter, who, when speaking of Christ's example said: *"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously"* (1 Peter 2. 22-23).

Sadly there is that within us which, unless kept, would demand *"an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."* However, Paul tells us that, *"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."*

The following true instance illustrates very powerfully the point:

In the early 19th Century, a godly man and his wife lived in a rented farmhouse. His landlord was of a very quick temper. One day a dispute arose between them, and during a heated discussion, the landlord said he would have the man and his wife out of the farmhouse and would fight him in the courts if necessary to achieve this end. The godly man said that he would fight him all the way, too, but on his knees! The landlord was mortally offended thinking that the tenant was being insulting. He stormed out of the house and soon met a fellow farmer, to whom he told of the insult he had received. This man was somewhat wiser than the landlord. He advised him on no account to take the tenant to court because he was going to make it a matter of prayer, and if Almighty God took up the case of the tenant, there was no way that the landlord could win! At this, the landlord backed down and in a very different spirit went back to the tenant and assured him that he would take the matter no further.

How needful is the prayer of the psalmist: *"Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips."*

May we each take heed.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture on the front of our magazine this month is a special candlestick. In our day, unless there is a power cut, candles are only ornamental, but to our forefathers they were an essential part of daily life, especially in the winter when the days were short.

To the Jewish people, the seven-branched candlestick in the tabernacle or temple was one of the most sacred objects. It was a token of God's presence and was always meant to be kept alight and not be extinguished.

The Bible has several lessons for us to learn from candles.

Firstly, if a candle is to be of any use it needs to be lit. David tells us in Psalm 18. 28, that the LORD lit his candle. By that David meant that the LORD gave him light to know the truth and the way that he should walk. Solomon tells us in Proverbs 20. 27 that the "*spirit of man is the candle of the LORD.*" Here we are reminded that we have a conscience and when conscience is doing its duty it is like a candle showing us what is right and what is wrong. If we are wise we will not resent this examination of our hearts and lives.

Secondly, the candle needs air, particularly oxygen without which it cannot burn. If that is withheld, the flame soon goes out. It is a very solemn word in Proverbs 24. 20: "*The candle of the wicked shall be put out.*" How great is the darkness of those hearts where the Holy Spirit is not at work. Whatever light they may seem to have of natural understanding, it eventually dies and the darkness of a lost eternity follows. The foolish virgins were of this same character.

Thirdly, a candle needs to be seen. The Lord Jesus Christ tells us in Matthew 5 that no sensible man who lit a candle, would then cover it over so that it could not be seen. "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father* (not glorify ourselves!) *which is in heaven.*" Paul tells us in Ephesians 5 that God's children were once in great darkness of sin and unbelief but now having

been given the true light from heaven they should walk as children of light.

Fourthly, in heaven there is neither need of a candle, nor indeed the light of the sun, nor moon, nor stars because the only light in heaven is the Lord Jesus Christ and no other is needed. *"The Lamb is the light thereof."*

"In the heavenly country bright
Need they no created light;
Thou its light, its joy, its crown,
Thou its sun, which goes not down;
There for ever may we sing
Hallelujahs to our King."

William Chatterton Dix

"A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE"

Scotland has had many outstanding men of truth in the Church of Christ. One of these men was a Mr Guthrie.

One evening, he was travelling home on horseback very late, when he became lost. He laid the reins on his horse's back and committing his way to the Lord, let the horse take its own way, asking his God to direct the animal. Eventually he arrived at the door of an isolated house where he asked and received permission to sit by the fire until the morning.

He noticed that a Roman Catholic priest was administering, what they call extreme unction, to a dying woman, the wife of the farmer. In this, the priest purports wrongly to be feeding the person with the literal physical body and blood of Christ, in the bread and wine.

When the priest had gone, Mr Guthrie quietly went to the dying woman and asked if she now had peace of conscience after receiving the bread and wine from the priest, to which she replied that she was not at ease at all, rather the reverse.

He then spoke of salvation through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which testimony the Lord so blessed, that she not long after died triumphing in the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour.

Soon after, as the morning broke, Mr Guthrie mounted his horse. When eventually he arrived home, he told his wife that he had seen a great sight. "I came," said he, "to a farmhouse, where I found a woman in a state of nature; I saw her in a state of grace; and left her in a state of glory."

"MINE'S A RELIGION FOR ALL WEATHERS"

There was a fishing village on the coast of Cornwall, where the people were very poor, but God-fearing. One year they were sorely tried. The winds were contrary, and for nearly a month they could not put to sea. At last, one Lord's Day morning the wind changed, and some of the men, whose faith was weak, went out towards the beach, the women and children looking on sadly, many saying with sighs: "I'm sorry it is Sunday, but if we were not so poor"

"But if!" said a sturdy fisherman, starting up and speaking aloud: "Surely, neighbours, your buts and ifs do break God's law."

The people gathered around him and he added: "Mine's a religion for all weathers, fair wind and foul. *'This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments'; 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.'* That's the law, friends. And our Lord came not to break, but to fulfil the law. True, we are poor; what of that? Better poor and have God's smile, than rich and have His frown. Go you, that dare; but I never knew any good come of religion that changed with the wind."

These words in season stayed the purpose of the rest. They went home and made ready for the house of God, and spent the day in praise and prayer. In the evening, just when they would have been returning, a sudden storm sprung up, that raged terribly for two days. After the tempest came settled weather, and the pilchard fishery was so rich and abundant, that there was soon no complaining in the village. Here was religion for all weather. Remember the words: "*Trust in the LORD and do good ... and verily thou shalt be fed.*"

Selected

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**DAVID FLEES**

Saul became more and more jealous of David. He told his son Jonathan and his servants to kill David. But Jonathan was a friend of David. He warned him to hide in a secret place.

Then Jonathan spoke good things about David to his father. He reminded him that David had saved Israel when he slew Goliath. Saul listened to Jonathan and David was brought back to his place near the king.

After some time there was war again with the Philistines. David went out to fight them and they fled from him. Saul was jealous of David's success. The evil spirit came upon him again. As David played the harp, Saul threw his javelin at him. David jumped aside and the javelin went into the wall. David fled.

Saul sent men to David's house to slay him in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, heard of it. She let him down through a window at night and he escaped. Then David fled to Samuel the prophet. He told Samuel all that Saul had done to him.

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Saul tell Jonathan and his servants to do?
2. Who helped David escape through a window?
3. To whom did David flee?

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. A javelin.
2. The LORD.
3. Saul.
Contributed

“So
David
fled, and
escaped ...”
1 Samuel
19. 18.

BIBLE LESSONS

THE FIRST DEACONS

The high priest and Jewish rulers looked upon the apostles with burning anger and scorn. Their only thought was how to get rid of them. With the apostles standing in their midst, they discussed how they might kill them. It must have seemed to the apostles that death was very near. Where could deliverance come from now?

Suddenly an old Pharisee stood up and commanded the officers to take the apostles out of the room. As he began to speak, the Jewish rulers became very quiet and their eyes were fixed on him. He was an eminent man, being a doctor of the law and a teacher of their strictest religious leaders. His name was Gamaliel, and his counsel was greatly esteemed by all the Jews.

Gamaliel warned them to take heed what they intended to do to the apostles. He told them of certain men who boasted that they were some great person and thus drew a multitude of men after them. After the death of these men, their followers were scattered. He added: *"Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest ... ye be found even to fight against God."*

The chief priest and Jewish rulers agreed with Gamaliel's advice. Although they agreed not to kill the apostles, they commanded the officers to beat them with whips. Then they sent the apostles away with a solemn warning not to speak in the name of Jesus.

Were the disciples discouraged when they left the Jewish leaders? Did they complain about the rough treatment they had received? Oh, no. They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus. Would they obey the Jewish rulers and no longer speak of Jesus? The Bible tells us that every day in the temple and in their houses: *"They ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."*

Their preaching was not in vain, for God abundantly blessed His Word. The number of disciples (believers) multiplied.

They were exceedingly busy days for the apostles. Their chief work was to preach the Word of God. They also visited those that were sick and guided the growing church. Lastly, they must see to the needs of the poor among them.

As the church grew, the Grecian Jews felt that their widows had been neglected in their daily needs. The apostles quickly realised that they could no longer do justice to the ministry of the Word and also looking out for the material needs of the people.

They called for the believers to come together for a special meeting. The apostles told the people that it was not right for them to leave off preaching to take care of the poor among them. They exhorted the people to look out from among them seven men to serve the poor in their needs.

They were not to choose just anybody for this work. The apostles realised that this was a very important part of the church's ministry. Thus they set up very important qualifications for those whom the church would appoint. Those appointed must be: "... *men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.*" Even today when any church would appoint a man to this work, they should be guided by these qualifications.

Those early believers were pleased with the apostles' counsel. They chose Stephen, who was full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and six other men. These seven were set before the apostles, who approved them and prayed for them. They are thought to be the first deacons in the church of God. What a standard for any who hold this office!

You can read about this in Acts chapter 5 verses 33 to 42 and chapter 6 verses 1 to 6.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who stood up to stop the Jewish leaders from killing the apostles?
2. What did he say would happen if the apostles' work was of men? (5 words)
3. What did he say they would be doing if it was of God?

4. Who was the first man appointed to serve in the office of deacon?
5. What does the Bible say he was full of? (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. Peter's shadow passing over them.
2. Arrested them and put them in prison.
3. Opened the prison doors and led the apostles out.
4. "We ought to obey God rather than men."
5. They hardened their hearts.

G. L. TenBroeke

"I HAVE A MESSAGE FROM GOD UNTO THEE" (2)

When Daniel Matthews became convinced of the Scriptural character of the ordinance of believers' baptism, he began to look around for a Baptist community with which he could associate, but all he could find in Rowley was a small General Baptist church where the teaching was an unhappy mixture of faith and works, far inferior to the gracious ministry to be found in the Parish Church. He, therefore, looked further afield, and would sometimes walk to Birmingham to hear Mr Fowler at Bartholomew Street Chapel, but there he was little better off, since Mr Fowler was not a Baptist.

Added to his troubles were many exercises concerning entering into the ministry, and, no doubt with these thoughts pressing on his heart, he had a dream one night which deeply impressed him. He thought he was preaching in the little General Baptist chapel at Rowley when he saw the congregation in a state of confusion, some going out and some coming in. When the service was finished a man locked the door of the chapel and gave the key to Mr Matthews.

Some weeks after this dream, he started out one Sunday morning to walk to Birmingham, but somehow felt impressed

to turn back and go into the General Baptist meeting: "To see," he said, "if they had altered." After some hesitation he went into the chapel and sat down. The time to commence the service arrived, but no minister appeared. Then, one of the leading men approached Mr Matthews, and asked him if he would speak to them, seeing the minister had not come, but he refused. After a while they came again, and pressed him very much to speak to them. At last he consented, and went into the pulpit. Taking for his text Proverbs 16. 1, he began to show to them the fallen and ruined condition of man and his need of a new birth. His words produced an extraordinary effect; soon the whole congregation was in a state of confusion, and many were going out, just as he had seen them in his dream. He was about to cease speaking when a little dwarf woman named Betty Mountford, stamped on the floor with her pattens and stick, and called out: "Never moind, Mon! Go on, Go on."

As was to be expected, this was the first and last time that Mr Matthews was asked to speak to the General Baptists, yet, in that same building he preached the Word of Life for over twenty-five years, before the erection of the present chapel. The place had been rented by the General Baptists, but the venture was not successful, and the place was therefore closed down. When the key was returned to the owner he immediately sent word to Mr Matthews that he might have the chapel if he wished, so Mr Matthews secured the key and began his ministry in 1828.

But it was one thing to secure the key of the chapel, and quite another to carry on services there. The local opposition was rowdy and threatening, and the preacher's journey to and from the chapel was often through a shower of missiles, mud, stones, and pieces of brick, hurled at him by the hooligans of the village. On one occasion, an attempt was made to murder him by laying a heavy piece of stone across the joists in the roof above the pulpit, so arranged that by its weight it would break

through the ceiling during the service and crush the preacher. But by the mercy of God the stone did not fall while he was in the pulpit, but at the close of the service as he stepped down, the ceiling gave way, and the stone fell right into the pulpit, crashing through the floor.

Ultimately Mr Matthews purchased the chapel, and in 1849 put it in trust for a Strict Baptist church. Later, with increasing congregations, the need for larger premises was urgent, and steps were taken in 1876 toward the erection of the chapel at Bell End, the old chapel being sold for commercial purposes.

During his ministry, Mr Matthews also opened a chapel at Willenhall, where he conducted Sunday evening services. As a minister, Mr Matthews stood isolated and alone; he never mixed with other people, even in his own denomination, nor did he go elsewhere to preach. For nearly sixty years he preached at Rowley, and forty-seven years at Willenhall, and never invited another minister to preach in his pulpit. The isolationism took deep root in the minds of the people, for after the pastor's death no preaching services were held at Willenhall. The pulpit was left empty and the people simply met for praise and prayer. Rowley, however, was not content to remain in a pastorless state, and before the year was out, called Alfred Dye to succeed Mr Matthews. Willenhall, on the contrary, kept the pulpit untenanted for nearly fifty years, and maintained a congregation without the preached Word until comparatively recent times.

Alfred Dye, like his predecessor, was an exceptional character, but was known in a far wider circle than Mr Matthews. He continued at Rowley until his resignation in 1923.

Ralph Chambers

QUESTION: Which is the fifth commandment?

ANSWER: "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."
(Exodus 20. 12; Deuteronomy 5. 16)

JOHN BUNYAN'S FLUTE

On November 30th, 1628, a boy was born in a humble cottage, five miles from Bedford, in the village of Elstow, noted for its ancient Moot Hall and the quaint church with a tower separate from the church itself. The little babe was named John, and as soon as he was old enough he would accompany his father around the markets of the surrounding villages plying his trade as a tinker: that is, a person who sold and mended pots and pans for a living.

In 1644 John's mother died, by which time John had reached sixteen and had become the ringleader of ungodliness in Elstow. Shortly after this, John left home to fight under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell against King Charles I. As God had other purposes for him, he returned to his home when he was eighteen, unharmed from this campaign.

At this time he fell in love with a young Christian lady, who was the daughter of a godly father. John says later that when they were married, they "were as poor as poor could be, not having as much as a dish or spoon betwixt them." His wife endeavoured to convert John by reading to him out of two books: "*The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*" and "*The Practice of Piety*." The cottage in which they lived is still standing in Elstow.

It was now that the Lord began to teach John the way of salvation. He had to leave his ungodly companions; his bell ringing; and his favourite sport, tip-cat (rather like the game of rounders). Now he felt compelled to remember the command of God to keep the Sabbath Day holy. At first he laboured hard to find salvation by his own righteousness, but would so easily lapse into sin that he became very despondent. It was when the cross of Christ was revealed to him that he saw that it is by grace and not by works. He says: "One day as I was passing in the field, this sentence fell upon my soul: 'Thy righteousness is in heaven,' and I saw it was not that my good frame of heart made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse, for my righteousness was Jesus Christ

Himself, *'the same yesterday, and today and for ever.'*”

John was about twenty five when this mighty change took place, and he was shortly afterwards baptised and received into membership at the Baptist Church where Mr John Gifford was pastor. He had been greatly used of God in John's case.

Not long after, we find him living in Bedford and there his gift for the ministry was recognised by the church and the “tinker” began his ministry. Sadly when John was only thirty-one, his dear wife died, leaving him with four little ones, the eldest of whom was Mary who was totally blind.

For five years John preached without hindrance but then under the reign of Charles II he was arrested for “unlawful preaching” as he had not been ordained by the Church of England. At that time every one was expected to attend the parish church, and non-conformist ministers were looked upon by the state as upstarts and dangerous persons.

For twelve long years John languished in prison, steadfastly refusing to be released if that meant he had to promise not to preach again. His second wife was left to attend to the family as the children grew up. Whilst in prison he made tag laces which his blind daughter Mary would sell in Bedford to raise money for the family. His wife made several valiant attempts to have him honourably released but none of these succeeded during that time. His jailor was a lenient man who had a secret sympathy for John and often let him slip out at night to preach, trusting him to return.

It is well known that John Bunyan wrote *“Pilgrims Progress”* whilst in prison, but something else is not so well known. To while away the long hours in his cell, John with great skill and patience, fashioned a flute out of one of the rails on his prison chair. In his lonely hours he would while away the time by playing the tunes of well-loved hymns that he had been used to singing at his church in Bedford. The jailor often heard these musical sounds but was never able to find out from where they came, because as soon as John could hear the footsteps of the

jailor he would slip the “flute” back into its rightful place as a rail on his chair.

In the year 1885, a person by the name of McCurry wrote a poem on this incident in John Bunyan’s life. You will find this poem on the back cover of this magazine.

In 1672 release came at last as the king annulled all the punitive statutes against non-conformists. It was God’s hour of deliverance. After his release John Bunyan wrote, among other things, the second part of *Pilgrims Progress*, and also *The Holy War*.

In 1690 he was taken with a fever in London after getting soaked in his journey, and at last from there entered the gate of the Celestial City of which he wrote so prophetically.

Adapted

PLANTS COULD HOLD KEY TO TACKLING DROUGHT

Mist-collecting plants may hold the key to tackling the world’s water shortages, a study suggests. Plants living in arid, mountainous and humid regions often rely on their leaves to obtain the moisture they need for survival, by pulling mist out of the air. By studying plants with tiny conical “hairs” or microfibres on the surface of their leaves, a team of researchers in Japan has discovered how they do it.

The study, published in *Applied Physics Letters*, may help in the development of technology to pull water from the air. Scientists from Shinshu University examined the *Lychnis sieboldii* and discovered that microfibres appear to be responsible for both water storage and release. Water stored in wet conditions gets released on to the leaf when needed. In a wet state, the hairs become cone-shaped immediately after a water droplet adheres to it. After drying, the cone shapes shifted into a perpendicularly twisted structure at a 90-degree angle.

Professor Shigeru Yamanaka said: “These plants give us great ideas worth mimicking. Advanced fibre technology can be used to ‘replicate’ the plant hair’s fibre ‘net structure.’”

Daily Telegraph 31 March 2015

THE POOR PRIEST TURNED PRINTER (3)

Decrees were issued against the possession of the New Testament: the seaports and ships were strictly watched; the warehouses and houses were searched, but still the blessed books arrived. Sometimes even Jews brought them over the seas; they came in pedlars' packs, and in sacks of corn – now in one way and then in another. At length, the Bishop of London hit upon a clever and cunning plan, as he thought, of putting a stop to the arrival of these books. He supposed that if every copy could be bought up in the place where they were printed, the work would soon be at an end. A London merchant was engaged to do this business. "Do your diligence to get them," said the Bishop, "and I will pay for them whatsoever they cost you. I intend to burn them all at St. Paul's Cross." The merchant at once crossed the seas, and offered to buy up all the stock in hand. The bargain was soon made – the Bishop had the books, the merchant the thanks, and Tyndale the money.

A few days after the books were safely in the charge of the Bishop, a number of people were seen making their way along Cheapside and up Ludgate Hill. It was reported that there was to be a great sentence passed, to be followed by an execution. As they came to St. Paul's Cross, a large fire was seen sending up clouds of smoke high above the housetops. And now the Bishop's officers came with the poor prisoners – the Testaments, which were cast one by one into the flames. And when all was over, many in that crowd could not but think how wicked and how shameful it was thus to burn God's holy Book.

In a little time, the Bishop found that Testaments were still brought to England. So, sending for the merchant, he cried: "How is this, Sir? Did you not promise and assure me that you had bought them all?" "Yes," was the reply, "I bought all that then were to be had, but I perceive they have made more since, and it will never be better so long as they have the letters and the stamps; therefore it were best for your lordship to buy the stamps, too, and then you are sure." The Bishop only smiled at this answer, for he thought that if he parted with

more money, other stamps would be bought with it, and he should only serve to aid the cause he wished to crush.

Finding how vain were all attempts to stop the circulation of the New Testaments, the next plan was to secure their author. Spies were sent over to decoy him to England. Though ready to suffer anything in his heavenly Master's work, he would not willingly throw himself into danger. But while quietly pursuing his labour beneath the hospitable roof of an English friend named Payntz, in the city of Antwerp, two 'wolves in sheep's clothing' came to the house – one in the disguise of a merchant; the other, a monk, dressed as his servant. They pretended great interest in the doctrines of the Bible Christians, and were soon welcomed to their society. But Phillips – for that was the name of the pretended merchant – came to watch Tyndale, and, if possible, to seize him. One day, when Payntz went some miles distant on business, a snare was laid for the noble reformer. Phillips called on Tyndale to borrow forty shillings, under the excuse that he had lost his purse on the road. They then walked out together, when Tyndale was arrested, carried off to a castle eight miles from Antwerp, and there put into a close dungeon.

Once in the power of his enemies, nothing could save him from their hatred. In October 1536, he was condemned as a heretic, and led forth to die. On being fastened to the stake, his last words were: "Lord, open the eyes of the king of England." His prayer was heard; for, before three years had passed away, King Henry of England gave his royal assent to the circulation of the Bible, in the native tongue, throughout the kingdom.

Thus perished this noble man and one of England's best reformers: as someone has said of him: "In putting the New Testament into the hand of Englishmen, he gave them the charter of salvation, the book of eternal life; while his own history affords a beautiful example of its purifying and saving power, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit."

Selected

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (VIII)**

In Genesis 24, we have the record of Abraham sending his faithful servant Eliezer. He had been Abraham's servant for many years, and all things under Abraham were in his hands. From this chapter we can discern that Eliezer was a godly man of faith. When he comes on his long journey to the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia, he reaches the well of water outside the city and asks the LORD for a sign. He asked that the damsel (young woman) who was to be Isaac's wife would come to the well; would offer to draw water for Eliezer; then offer to draw water for the camels.

While he was still speaking in prayer, Rebekah came and the things requested were all fulfilled. It reminds us of that precious word to the Lord's seeking people: *"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear"* (Isaiah 65. 24). My dear young friends, we worship the same Almighty God, so keep looking, keep watching, keep waiting on this great God.

What I particularly wanted to draw your attention to, was the following verses that reveal to us that Eliezer was a man of faith. Genesis 24. 26-27: *"And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD. And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of His mercy and His truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."*

If we look at this narrative in a spiritual light, we see Rebekah as a type of a coming sinner, enlightened by the Holy Spirit to their need as a sinner, and fleeing to Jesus Christ the only Saviour of sinners. After Eliezer had related to Bethuel and Laban his mission to fetch a wife for Isaac, and the Lord's remarkable leading and meeting with Rebekah at the well, he gave her expensive presents. So the Lord Jesus does to His people. By His Spirit He gives faith and love, which are precious ornaments of grace that fill His people with *"joy and peace in believing."*

Then we have the question put to Rebekah: *"And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go"* (Genesis 24. 58). What a sacred word it is, when, by His Spirit, the Lord breathes it into the heart of a poor sinner. In this way, our gracious Father draws that poor sinner to Christ, making Him so precious to them; then they say: *"I will go."* In Psalm 110 we read of the children of God: *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power"* (Psalm 110. 3). The spouse of Christ in Solomon's Song sees such a beauty and loveliness in her precious Redeemer, she says: *"His mouth is most sweet: yea, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."* (Song of Solomon 5. 16).

When Eliezer brings Rebekah to Isaac, we read in Genesis 24. 65-67: *"For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."* May the Lord be pleased to bring you dear young friends into loving union and communion with Jesus Christ. Then you will prove those sacred words of the apostle in Romans 8. 1-3: *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* My dear young friends, it is only as you may be brought into loving union and communion with Jesus Christ, that you find safety and security for time and eternity.

May the Lord lead you to a husband or wife, one that fears God, so you can walk together in union and communion with each other. The same God that brought Rebekah to Isaac, and

Ruth to Boaz, can do the same today. May you be able, prayerfully, to lay these things before the Lord as Abraham's servant did, and watch the unfolding of His will and purpose concerning you. Remember the clear counsel of God's Holy Word in 2 Corinthians 6. 14-16: *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."*

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about BETTER THINGS. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 11 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. What is better than laughter and why? (Ecclesiastes 7. 3)
2. What is better than to be "proud in spirit"? (Ecclesiastes 7. 8)
3. Who said, "Am not I better to thee than ten sons?"? (1 Samuel 1. 8)
4. "Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly...." Better than what? (Proverbs 16. 19)
5. What is better than "to put confidence in man"? (Psalm 118. 8)
6. What did Peter say "is better, if the will of God be so"? (1 Peter 3)
7. "He that is slow to anger is better than...." Complete the sentence. (Proverbs 16)
8. How should we, "in lowliness of mind" esteem each other? (Philippians 2)
9. The Apostle Paul described himself "in a strait betwixt two." What were the two things and which was "far better"? (Philippians 1)

10. "Better" is often spoken of as the keyword of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Write down three things which are said in this epistle to be "better."
11. Which two Old Testament prophets were so troubled that they (wrongly) thought it would be better to die than to live?

ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. Gideon was threshing wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites.
2. Fire arose up out of the rock and consumed the offering. The angel then departed from Gideon.
3. "A cake of barley bread."
4. A trumpet, an empty pitcher and a lamp put within the pitcher.
5. 120,000.
6. 'Jehovah-shalom'. The LORD send peace. (Judges 6. 24)
7. 32,000. 300. (Judges 7. 3; 7. 7)
8. Gideon built an ephod from the golden earrings taken from the Midianites. (Judges 8. 24-27)
9. The children of Israel turned again unto idols and made Baal-berith their god. (Judges 8. 33)
10. Gideon had 70 sons from many wives and another son, Abimelech by a concubine. After Gideon's death Abimelech killed all but Jotham, the youngest of his step-brothers. We should learn from this of the dangers when a man has more than one wife, and of the sin when children are begotten out of wedlock. (Judges 8. 30-31; 9. 5)

Contributed

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from OLIVER ALDERMAN and JONATHAN NEELS.

A kind reader has rightly pointed out that the Philip Henry referred to in the July *Friendly Companion* was the father of Matthew Henry: not his son.

Editor

JOHN BUNYAN'S FLUTE

“When Bunyan in his weary prison sighed,
The sights and sounds of cheerful day denied,
The legend says, he once in careless whim
Took from his chair that filled the corner dim
A little rail; and lo, he deftly made
A rustic flute, his loneliness to aid;
And oft as evening gloom around him fell,
And shadows slanted in the dark’ning cell,
When visions of his wife or daughter blind
Sore tried his faith, and tempted thoughts unkind,
The rail, removed from its retreat would be,
With some sweet strain to make Apollyon flee;
Then hope her pinions would again expand,
And Doubting Castle change to Beulah Land:
But whence the sounds that marked each day’s decline
The list’ning janitor could ne’er divine.
Oft as he tried their hidden source to trace,
He tried in vain – the rail was in its place!
In bondage here, by sin and sorrow tried,
We, too, as Zion’s children must abide;
But, oh, desponding one, forlorn and sad,
Is there no “Way” to make the journey glad?
Say, did the Father for His child design
A life of care, a precious life like thine?
Behold in every blade of grass that blows,
In every stream that wakes the vales’ repose,
In yonder sparrow flying to its nest,
A theme for music in a thoughtful breast;
With voice in common, one and all declare
Themselves the object of the Father’s care:
Learn thou the lesson, and thy joyful guise
Shall men behold and praise with wond’ring eyes.”

McCurry

The Friendly Companion



“Except the LORD build the house,
they labour in vain that build it:
except the LORD keep the city,
the watchman waketh but in vain.”
(Psalm 127. 1)

September 2015

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

All of us like to be thought well of by those who know us, and on the other hand we can be very upset if there are those who do not! But the Lord Jesus Christ tells us: *"Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!"* (Luke 6. 26). Why did He say that?

Firstly, because Jesus knew how fickle people can be. He knew that a day was soon to come when the crowds would cry: *"Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest"* (Matthew 21. 9). Within a week how different would be the cry! *"Crucify Him"* (Mark 15. 13). Mr Leonard Broome, the late pastor of Southampton, gave some wholesome advice to a young pastor many years ago. He said: "The people who at first seem to welcome you with open arms may not be the ones who prove to be your truest friends. Prove them first!"

Secondly, Jesus knew that, unlike Himself, we are soon lifted up with pride! To be loved and praised by everyone is not good for us. Solomon tells us: *"It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory"* (Proverbs 25. 27). God wisely has often left His children with a thorn in the flesh in this respect. David had the opposition of Saul; Gideon had those who were jealous of his success; Paul tells us that he had many adversaries. God knows how to hide pride from man.

Thirdly, we should examine ourselves when everyone speaks well of us. Are we being "two faced"? Are we being faithful to those to whom we speak? Solomon tells us to beware of the flatterer and that: *"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful"* (Proverbs 27. 6).

Fourthly, Solomon tells us: *"In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him"* (Ecclesiastes 7. 14). How quickly can our circumstances change in this respect! The Book of Job begins with such a pleasant picture of a God-fearing man, at peace with his Lord and those around him. How soon this

changed when, later, Job complained of those whom he called miserable comforters!

Fifthly, and probably the most important reason if we are truly following the meek and lowly Jesus, we must expect, in some measure, to walk as He did. He said: *"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you"* (John 15. 18). He also said: *"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake"* (Note: it is when they speak **falsely** against us, not when we bring trouble on ourselves by ungodly behaviour!). *"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you"* (Matthew 5. 11, 12). The apostles counted it a privilege to be hated and beaten for Christ's sake, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles. This can only be so, when we are given the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ so to do.

It may be that one of our readers is passing through a time of opposition because of their love to Christ and His people. May such be enabled to: *"Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds"* (Hebrews 12. 3).

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

JOHN BUNYAN

It was the custom in former times of war to allot various duties on the battlefield by drawing the names out of a hat. At the siege of Leicester in 1645, John Bunyan was drawn out to stand as a sentinel. However, a fellow-soldier from the same company asked him to swap places, to which John consented. During the ensuing battle, this soldier was shot and killed! So John was spared, later to write *Pilgrim's Progress*, which probably next to the Bible has been used more than any other book in history.

How true are Solomon's words in Proverbs 16. 33! *"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD."*

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Our front cover shows a text on the wall of a chapel cottage in Norfolk, kindly sent in by a visitor from the USA, which was taken during a vacation in England. The text: Ezra 8. 18, says: *"And by the good hand of our God upon us...."* Evidently the builder of the chapel and the adjoining house recognised that what had been accomplished was so by the Lord's gracious help. So we read: *"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it"* (Psalm 127. 1). How important it is to know that we have the Lord with us in our steps and enterprises. Jesus said that if a man wanted to build a tower, if he was wise he would sit down first and see if he had enough money to finish it. When God is with us in a matter, then we can be sure we will lack nothing that is necessary. His hand will provide for us.

Another remarkable instance of the power of God's good hand is in the history we have of Elijah. After the Lord had sent rain again after the three years and six months of drought, we read that the hand of the Lord was on Elijah and he ran in front of Ahab's chariot from Carmel to Jezreel. This is a journey of seventeen miles – a real marathon! Bearing in mind that chariot horses could run up to forty miles an hour, it was only the supernatural strength given to Elijah which gave him the ability to run so fast for so long a stretch.

How often did the hand of the Lord Jesus bring help! He laid His hand on the woman bowed down with a spirit of infirmity and she immediately stood upright. His hand caught Peter as he began to sink. His hands divided the five loaves and two fishes to feed the five thousand. After His resurrection He showed the disciples His hands and His feet, bearing the marks of His crucifixion, and also giving them the proof of the pardon of their sins.

May we know this good hand upon us, both in our daily needs but especially in the more important needs of our soul and salvation.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**JONATHAN WARNS DAVID**

David came to his friend Jonathan. He asked why King Saul, his father, wanted to kill him. Jonathan did not think that was true, but he promised to help David. He would find out if it was safe for David to stay or if he should go away.

The next day was a special feast. Usually David sat down with the king, but this time he would stay away. If Saul was very angry that David did not come, it meant he wanted to harm him. Jonathan would give a secret message to warn David.

After three days David hid in a field, Jonathan went into the field to shoot arrows. He took a little boy along to bring the arrows back. As the boy ran, Jonathan shot an arrow far past him. Then he shouted: "*Make speed, haste, stay not.*" This was a secret message to David that he must go away quickly. Then Jonathan gave his bow and arrows to the boy to carry back to the city. After the boy was gone, David came out of his hiding place. Jonathan and David wept together, for they knew David must go far away. They promised to always be kind to each other and to their families.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who promised to help David?
2. What would he give to warn David? (3 words)
3. Where did David hide? (3 words)

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.

Contributed

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

1. Kill David.
2. Michal.
3. Samuel.

“... *the*
LORD be
between
thee and me
for ever.”
1 Samuel
20. 23.

BIBLE LESSONS**STEPHEN - A MIGHTY WITNESS FOR GOD**

The first deacon the church appointed proved to be worthy of the honour placed on him. As he visited the people to help with their material needs, he found many were very ill and afflicted with all manner of sicknesses. The Bible tells us: *"Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."* More than that, he sought to encourage them by telling them of the riches found in Christ to bless impoverished souls. O how he cared for their every need.

Stephen was not ashamed of the Lord Jesus. Stephen preached to the people, telling them that all the daily sacrifices, which Israel had kept from the time of Moses, were no longer needed. These sacrifices pointed to the Messiah that was to come. Jesus, the Messiah, had indeed come and was the answer to every sacrifice the Jews made.

Stephen warned the people that God's judgments would soon fall upon them and the temple itself would be destroyed. In one of the synagogues a number of foreign Jews (who lived outside the borders of Israel) began to dispute with Stephen. His teaching would overthrow their whole system and way of worship.

The Bible tells us: *"They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake."* How was one man able to answer so as to silence a multitude of men? The secret was that the Holy Ghost taught Stephen.

The Jews in the synagogue were filled with rage and stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes. They all came upon Stephen and brought him to their great council. They set up false witnesses who said he had spoken dreadful oaths against the temple and the law.

What a lonely figure Stephen must have appeared as he stood before the high priest and the Sanhedrin. How intimidating everything must have seemed! The Bible does not tell us that any of his fellow believers were in the room. Perhaps Stephen experienced what Paul wrote to Timothy

many years later: *“At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: ... Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me.”*

All the men of the council looked steadfastly at Stephen, no doubt with a great measure of contempt. However, the Lord gave witness that He was with him. As the council looked at Stephen, they saw his face shine with heavenly light like the face of an angel. We wonder if they recalled how the face of Moses shone when he spoke to the Israelites on the behalf of God. Most likely Stephen himself was unaware of it.

The high priest broke the silence by asking Stephen if the charges brought against him were true.

The Lord had told His disciples that the days would come when they would be brought before kings and rulers. They were not to pre-meditate what they would say, but it would be given them in that hour.

With great grace Stephen began his address. What respect he showed to those who sat on the council! He said: *“Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken:”* He reminded them how God appeared to their father Abraham and called him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and brought him into the land of Canaan. Even though it was a long address, those on the council listened intently. Although they knew the history of their forefathers so well, they could not perceive how Stephen would use that very history to condemn them in all their actions.

How often we may read the Bible accounts and fail to see how much they point at us.

You can read about this in Acts chapter 6 verses 7 to 15 and chapter 7 verses 1 to 5.

QUESTIONS:

1. With what was Stephen full? (3 words)
2. What did Stephen perform among the people? (4 words)
3. What could not the Jews in the synagogue resist? (9 words)
4. What kind of witnesses did the Jews set up against Stephen?
5. How did Stephen's face appear to the men on the council? (6 words)

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. Gamaliel. | 2. It will come to nought. |
| 3. Fighting against God. | 4. Stephen. |
| 5. Faith and of the Holy Ghost. | |

G. L. TenBroeke

“MY SON, IF SINNERS ENTICE THEE, CONSENT THOU NOT.”

Many years ago when attending Sunday school was far more common than, sadly, it is today, several boys were supposed to be on their way at the appointed time.

One of them suggested that instead of going to Sunday school, they should spend the afternoon playing amongst themselves: disobeying their parents and also breaking the fourth commandment, which commands the Sabbath Day to be kept holy.

One boy resolutely refused to join in despite many powerful arguments from his friends and some boyish banter, but others mocked him for not joining in. When the matter came to light that he had refused to join in with his mates, he was closely questioned as to why he would not yield: to which he replied: “It says in my Bible: *‘My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not’* (Proverbs 1. 10).”

Selected

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from AUSTIN CHRISTIAN and SCOTT EASTERHOFF.

A kind reader has rightly pointed out that John Bunyan, referred to in the August *Friendly Companion*, died in the year 1688 and not 1690. We have also learned that in recent years the cottage in Elstow has been demolished.

A HARD QUESTION

Jotham, one of Gideon's sons, spoke a parable in which he said: "*And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?*" How can God be cheered by wine?

Learning, although good in itself, is not sufficient to enlighten or feed the mind. The mind, by nature, is surrounded with thick darkness, beyond which it cannot penetrate till a heavenly light disperses the gloom with which it is surrounded – a gloom which the genius, or wisdom, or power of man can never dispel. We have a striking proof of this in an interesting discussion which took place between Charles II and his royal Consort, in company with the Earl of Rochester and Dr S., the Royal Chaplain:

The King was in conversation with the Earl of Rochester, Dr S. his chaplain, Queen Catherine and some of the Ministers of State. After having discoursed for some time on the affairs of Government, he suddenly cried out: "Let our thoughts be unbent from the cares of State, and give us a generous glass of wine, which cheereth God and man, as the Scripture saith."

The Queen, hearing the King talk of wine cheering God and quoting Scripture for it, was surprised, observing that in her humble opinion it was not less than blasphemy, for, says she: "God is an eternal, infinite, unchangeable Being, a pure Spirit, and so hath neither parts nor passions, and consequently cannot be cheered."

"Well," says the King, "I am not prepared to turn to chapter and verse, but I am sure I have met with it in my Scripture reading."

The chaplain was asked if he knew such a part in Scripture as: "*Wine ... cheereth God and man.*" He gave his opinion on the Queen's side of the argument.

Rochester, thinking the King was in the right, went out and asked privately if any could be brought who was well versed in the Bible, to decide the controversy. He was told of one, David, a Scottish cook, who had always a Bible about him, and every spare minute was reading it, and if such a part was there

he was sure he could tell. Rochester, wanting to embarrass the chaplain, and throw the conquest on the King's side, went down into the kitchen, talked with the cook, and asked him: "Do you know of any such place in Scripture as wine cheering God and man?"

David told his Lordship that he knew the place, and could easily turn to it. "Very well," said the Earl, "put on a clean apron. I shall send for you before his Majesty, by and by."

Rochester returned to the room where the conversation was still warmly pursued by her Majesty. She observed how inconsistent it was with the nature of the divine Being, that He should be cheered. The Earl perceiving this, begged leave of his Majesty to make a motion. "For what?" asks the King. "Why," replied the Earl, "to permit your cook to be sent for, who, I understand, is always reading his Bible, and if there be such a place in the Scripture, he will turn to it directly."

"Well," says the King, "such a man as this we want; send for him immediately."

When the cook came, the King very freely asked him if he knew of such a place in Scripture as wine cheering God and man. David, with a low bow, replied that he did, and turning to Judges 9. 13 read: "*And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man*"

The text being produced, the Queen humbly asked pardon for talking so freely to his Majesty; hoped what she had said would not raise his resentment against her, for she was not prepared to "*bear the king's wrath* [which] *is as the roaring of a lion.*" The chaplain blushed to think a Scottish cook could turn to a place of Scripture of which his great genius had not the least remembrance.

Rochester begged leave to ask the chaplain if he could unravel the mystery that lay in those words: "... *wine, which cheereth God and man.*" But here the great man was silent: he had no more light in his understanding to expound the text, than he had strength in his memory to turn to it.

Rochester said to the cook: "Honest friend, you have done well in producing chapter and verse to his Majesty, but can you expound the meaning of it, and show how it cheers God, and how man?"

The cook replied: "If his Majesty be pleased to hear me, I have this to offer. How much wine cheereth man, your Lordship knows, and that it cheers God, I beg leave to observe that in the Old Testament dispensation there were meat-offerings and drink-offerings. Now in those drink-offerings there was wine: this wine was typical of the blood of the Mediator: by a metaphor it is said to cheer God as He was pleased in the way of salvation He had found out, in that His justice was satisfied; His mercy displayed; His grace made triumphant; His perfections harmonised; the sinner saved, and God in Christ glorified."

The King was agreeably surprised at this elegant exposition, and Rochester did not spare to praise the evangelical turn that the cook had given to the text. Rochester said: "May it please your Majesty: your chaplain may be a man of exalted genius; he may have fine abstracted ideas of philosophy; he may dress Hebrew Roots elegantly, and garnish them out with great politeness to please a fine taste in criticism, but where is his evangelical turn upon a text? Where is his knowledge in the Old and New Testament dispensation? Where is the glory that he gives to the Redeemer of the world, and the glaring daylight that shines through the poor cook's exposition? With submission to your Majesty, I beg leave to make one other motion." "What's that?" asks the King. "Why, that your Majesty would be graciously pleased to make your chaplain your cook, and your cook your chaplain!"

Contributed

QUESTION: Which is the sixth commandment?

ANSWER: "Thou shalt not kill."

(Exodus 20. 13; Deuteronomy 5. 17)

THE LITTLE FIRE

Many of you have read the story of the Great Fire of London – it is the same as the story of the Little Fire. The Great Fire was once a little fire, and a good useful little fire in a baker's shop, as long as it stayed where it was put and only burned what it was meant to burn. Directly the little fire began to take its own way, it did a great deal of mischief, and was a dreadfully bad fire. It burnt down the baker's shop, and house, and the next house, and on and on down the street.

No one could manage the little fire, or put it out. London was soon in a most fearful blaze – street after street caught alight. Never had there been such a night of terror in England! The little fire turned thousands of people out of their homes. Strong men and old feeble men were driven first one way and then another, not knowing where to go for safety. Mothers, dear little children and tiny babies were all hurried out in hot haste into the burning streets, and everywhere they went seemed like a furnace. The air was unbearable; it was so heated and suffocating. The sky was full of smoke and glare.

The little fire, when it was doing its duty, was quiet and well-behaved. When it put London into a blaze the noise was awful. At one time there were ten thousand houses alight. The crackling of wood, the roar of flames, the tumbling down of church towers and high buildings, with fearful crashing and smashing, was like perpetual thunder. The falling of roofs, and chimney pots, and gutters, and glass, was mixed with the shrieks of frightened women and the screams of children.

Whoever would have thought a little fire could do such terrible damage and spread such a terrible distance – nearly two miles one way and one mile the other. Just think of it, children – the little fire that burned on until it had destroyed more than four hundred whole streets. It burned down thirteen thousand houses altogether, eighty-nine churches, and many libraries and public buildings. *“Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!”*

When you go to London, look out for the Monument: it is

very near London Bridge, on the Middlesex side of the River Thames. The Monument stands on the very spot where the little fire began to be a great fire.

Dear little ones, have you ever thought about the beginning of sin? It began in just one place like the little fire, and then spread all over the wide world. Sin began in the beautiful Garden of Eden with Eve listening to the tempter. That was the first sin; and pride and disobedience to God followed. Sin quickly touched Adam. It burned up all Adam and Eve's goodness and purity, and turned them out of their beautiful home and garden. It has gone on spreading, and burning everyone who has ever been born. It burns people's consciences like "a hot iron." Sin is an everlasting fire, it destroys bodies and souls.

God in His great mercy and love has provided a Fire-escape – a Way of escape from sin – a Way that leads into everlasting life. This Way is marked out for us by the precious blood of the Atonement, which can wash out all the stains that sin has burned in. If we are truly wise, we will take our sin-stained souls to the Lord Jesus, and ask Him to wash them whiter than snow. We will ask Him to save us from the eternal fire, and make us fit to live with Him in glory.

"Thou art the Way; to Thee alone
From sin and death we flee;
And he who would the Father seek,
Must seek Him, Lord, by Thee."

Little Gleaner

EPITAPH IN ALDERSHOT CEMETERY

'Tis not for man to trifle, life is brief;
Our age is but the falling of the leaf,
Not many lives, but only one have we,
How sacred should that one life to us be.

“THE ANTS ARE A PEOPLE” (1)

“Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.”

(Proverbs 6. 6)

“The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer.” (Proverbs 30. 25)

To introduce, means to bring into the presence of, to make known and cause to become acquainted. Sometimes a person is introduced to another, by words like these: “Mr Brown, meet Mr Johnson.” These men meet, shake hands and look each other in the face, and say: “I am glad to meet you,” or, “I am glad to know you,” and so become acquainted.

We want to introduce, not any person, but “a people,” called ants. We want you to become so well-acquainted with them, their ways, courtesies and principles that you will say: “I am glad to know the ants.”

The ants belong to the insect family. There are hundreds of different insects in the world, but none are more interesting to study than the ants. Though they are very little, they are a part of God’s great creation. They were made by the Lord on the sixth day of creation week. Only the Lord could make an ant and put within it the wisdom and strength which an ant possesses.

Man also was created on the sixth day. Therefore, the ants and man were made on the same day. Men and women are called “people.” The ants are also called “a people.” These are the only two classes of creatures that are called “people” in the Bible. This discovery was made by Solomon, the wisest of men.

All through the Bible, people are presented under various figures: the good people as sheep, cattle, lions, eagles, etc. Sinners are presented under the figures of goats, swine, dogs, donkeys, vultures, etc. It is of interest to know that none of the lower creatures are called “people,” except the ants.

The ants are mentioned only two times in the Bible, each time by Solomon and each time in the Book of Proverbs. First, we read: *“Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways,*

and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest" (Proverbs 6. 6-8). The next time we read of the ants is in Proverbs 30. 25: "*The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer.*" Little is said concerning these little creatures, but there is much in what is said.

The Lord gave Solomon great wisdom, so that he was wiser than all men. He wrote one thousand and five songs and spoke three thousand proverbs. He also spoke of trees, shrubs and vines; of beast, fowl, creeping things and fish. Not much of this information, however, is recorded in the Bible, but a little is written concerning the ants. If all Solomon knew concerning ants had been written in a book, it would be very interesting indeed to read. No doubt, many facts would be revealed of which we know nothing.

The one outstanding feature of the ants is their industry. Most creatures carelessly and idly spend their lives only propagating their kind. Not so the ant. It is an indisputable fact that of all creatures, not excepting the bees, the most industrious are the ants. They work from morning to night and often through the night.

The ants are a people, as we have seen. It may seem hard at first to realise that these tiny creatures which live in the ground, old buildings and trees, are "a people," but this is what the Bible plainly says. In the lessons that follow, we will consider the ants as such, and in doing so I am sure that we will learn many valuable lessons. These lessons under God's teaching should cause us to be better people, better Christians, make Christian living more important and Christian work a greater pleasure. With these points in view, these little lessons from little creatures for little people are prayerfully set forth.

(To be continued)

Joshua Stauffer

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (IX)**

In Genesis chapter 28 we have the record of Jacob, the younger son of Isaac and Rebekah, leaving home to find a wife from the kindred of his mother in Pandan-aram. The normal way was that the eldest son would inherit his father's estate, but in the providence of God and according to the word of the Lord it was Jacob, not Esau, that inherited the blessing from Isaac.

Firstly, in Genesis 26, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, or as the Scripture declares: *"Esau despised his birthright."*

Secondly, in Genesis 27, Rebekah and Jacob conspired to deceive his father, Isaac, when Isaac was old and blind: so Jacob was given the blessing. 'Jacob,' means deceiver. How true this name was, and he had to solemnly prove in his life, 'as ye sow, so shall ye reap.' For the twenty years that Jacob was with his father-in-law, his wages were changed ten times.

We can trace the overruling providence of God in the life of Jacob. This does not in any way give excuse or licence for Jacob's sin in deceiving his father. *"Shall we ... sin, that grace may abound? God forbid."*

When Rebekah was expecting Esau and Jacob, the LORD spoke to her concerning the twin boys in her womb. *"And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger"* (Genesis 25. 23). We read in Malachi 1. 2-3: *"Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau."* How awful and solemn is divine sovereignty in salvation. The Apostle Paul takes up this very point in Romans 9. 10-16: *"And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall*

we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

The Lord Jesus in His beautiful prayer reveals to us divine election to everlasting life. John 17. 1-3: *"Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."* (We have digressed rather from our subject but trust it has been instructive.)

Jacob leaves home and journeys toward Padan-aram. On the first night the LORD reveals Himself to Jacob at Bethel. It is called Bethel because of the LORD appearing there to Jacob. Bethel means, 'the house of God.' In the vision, Jacob saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending. This ladder represents Jesus Christ. The angels are heavenly messengers sent by God to minister to those that are the heirs of salvation and we are instructed in 1 Timothy 2. 5-6: *"For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."*

Jacob was all alone and the LORD revealed Himself to him. As far as we can see, this is the first time that the LORD made Himself known unto Jacob, fulfilling that precious word in Ephesians 2. 1: *"And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."* My dear beloved friends, this divine act of grace is accomplished by the Holy Spirit in the heart of every chosen vessel of mercy. As Jesus Himself said to Nicodemus: *"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"* (John 3. 5). Have you been given spiritual life? You will never enter the kingdom of God without this. This is what Jacob received at Bethel. Above that ladder was

the LORD, showing to Jacob that He was watching over him and giving to him the promise that was first given to his grandfather, Abraham, and then to his father, Isaac. *"And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed"* (Genesis 28. 14). This is the sacred promise of the Messiah, Christ Jesus, not just to the Hebrews but to all the families of the earth: Jew and Gentile.

The LORD also promised Jacob that He would be with him: *"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of"* (Genesis 28. 15). How many times Jacob had to plead this promise in the many, many trials that were to overtake him! It was twenty years before Jacob returned to Bethel, and all through his earthly pilgrimage he proved this sacred promise true. When he returned, his brother Esau came to meet him with four hundred men. This is recorded in Genesis 32, and after sending his flocks, servants and herds before him we read: *"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a Man with him until the breaking of the day. And when He saw that He prevailed not against him, He touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with Him. And He said, Let Me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me. And He said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed"* (Genesis 32. 24-28). The man that wrestled with Jacob is none other than Jesus Christ: He brought him down to nothing and then blessed him. This is confirmed by the prophet that this was not just any Man, but the LORD of hosts: *"He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: yea, he had power over the Angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto Him: He found him in Beth-el, and there He spake with us; even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD is his memorial"* (Hosea 12. 3-5).

J. R. Rutt

SIR ISAAC NEWTON

Sir Isaac Newton, though a genius in his field of science, was very humble. Not long before he died he said: "I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself, I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting himself in now and then finding a smoother pebble, or a prettier shell than ordinary, while a great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about DAVID'S EARLY LIFE. 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. What was David's occupation while he was young? (1 Samuel 16. 11-13)
2. What could David do well, which was the reason that he was first brought before King Saul? (1 Samuel 16. 14-23)
3. From what did God deliver David, which encouraged him to go against Goliath? (1 Samuel 17. 34-37)
4. David had to escape for his life, but what did Michal, his wife, do to try and hide the fact? (1 Samuel 19. 13)
5. Saul wanted to kill David, but what did David take from Saul while he was asleep, to show he had no such evil intention against him? (1 Samuel 26. 11-12)
6. What first made Saul jealous of David? (1 Samuel 18)
7. Who prevented David taking revenge when spurned by "a son of Belial," and later became David's wife? (1 Samuel 25)
8. "And David was greatly distressed." (1 Samuel 30). What caused David's distress, and what did he do?
9. Jonathan deliberately shot three arrows beyond a mark. What did this mean to David? (1 Samuel 20)
10. Several times we read, "And David behaved himself wisely", but sadly it was not always so. Give one or more examples from 1 Samuel 20 & 21 where David was not acting wisely.

ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

1. "Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better."
2. "The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit."
3. Elkanah.
4. "...than to divide the spoil with the proud."
5. "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."
6. "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing." (1 Peter 3. 17)
7. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Proverbs 16. 32)
8. Better than ourselves. (Philippians 2. 3)
9. "To abide in the flesh" and "To depart, and to be with Christ", the latter being "far better". (Philippians 1. 23-24)
10. Christ better than angels (1. 4). Better hope (7. 19). Better testament (7. 22). Better covenant (8. 6). Better promises (8. 6). Better sacrifices (9. 23). Better and enduring substance in heaven (10. 34). Better country (11. 16). Better resurrection (11. 35). Blood speaking better things than that of Abel (12. 24).
11. Elijah (1 Kings 19. 14). Jonah (Jonah 4. 8).

Contributed

LIST OF NAMES

The following young people have answered questions during the months January – June 2015. The total number is 241, for which we would thank God.

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

Ellie and Matthew Baker; Katie and Tommy Baker; Anna and Jethro Baldwin-Jones; Daisy, Josiah, Lily, Noah and Poppy Barker; Kate Barnett; Daniel and Leah Boulton; Abigail, Daniel, Joshua and Samuel Broome; Jemima, Josiah, Kezia, Phebe and Tabitha Burden; Emily Buss; Jennifer and Sophie Buss.

Bethany, Elizabeth and Victoria Chapman; Anna-Louise, Isaac and Sophie Clark; Samuel Cooper; Sebastian Cooper; Alice, Beth, Charlotte, Isaac, Katy and William Cottingham; Annie and Lucy Cottingham; Freddie, Isobel and Oliver Cottingham; Nancy and Owen Cottingham; Alicia and

Emma Cottington; James, Rebecca and Thomas Crowter; Daniel, Elsie, Esther, Kate and Penny Crowter.

Harry Dadswell; Louise Dadswell; Nicholas De Vogel; Noah de Voogd.

Ruby Field.

Abigail, Cornelia, and Luke Hayden; Katharine Hills; Caitie and Samuel Hindess; T. Hughes, Caleb and Joseph Hydon.

Joshua Ince; Joshua Izzard.

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

Helen Kerley; Henry and Jemima Kerley; Joshua Kerley; Annabel Kinderman.

Aiden, Joel and Megan Lucas.

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

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

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

Eddie, Jessica and Oliver Raymond; Alexander Rayner; James Rice; Susanna Risbridger; Andrew, Daniel and Joseph Rosier; Chloe, Isabella and John Rosier; Freya and Tobias Rosier.

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

Harry, James, Jemima and Phebe Tarbin; Elizabeth Topping.

William Warren; Alec, Emma and Joshua Wigley; Chloe, Jonny and Lydia Wilkins; Bethany, Caleb, Francesca, Jemima and Nathanael Wiltshire; Abigail, Joseph, Kate, Lucy, Matthias and Polly Woodhams; Ellen, George, Jessica, Naomi and Thomas Woodhams; Maisie and Rosanna Woodhams.

Overseas Names:

Sophie Bruere, Austin Christian; Scott Easterhoff; Calvin and Dennis Glass; Jarrod Greyn; Kilee Greyn; Montanalee Greyn; Daniella Kaat; Jared Klop; Brennan and Cayley Knibbe; Isaac Knol; Luke Linna; Lydia, Rachel and Shelley Mol; Heidi, Kevin and Mariah Muis; Paul Nowlan; Emily Quist; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Abigail, Bethany and Kaitlyn Teunissen; Danielle Van Vugt; Jonathan, Laura and Rebekah Wesdyk; Tyler White; Carissda, Carolyn, Hannah, Janna and Leah Ymker.

“THERE’S SOMEBODY LOOKING”

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

“Throw us an apple,” the children cried;
“There’s somebody looking,” the man replied.
“No,” said a boy, “there is no one near,
You can throw us an apple and never fear.”

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

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

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

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

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

M. A. Chaplin

The Friendly Companion



Fort George, Highland, Scotland

“Walk about Zion, and go round about her:
tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks,
consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation
following. For this God is our God for ever and ever:
He will be our Guide even unto death.”
(Psalm 48. 12-14)

October 2015

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OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

I expect each of us at one time or another has found it hard to say “no” when we should have done so. Did you know that one of the good kings of Judah had the reputation of being “the king who could not say no”? His name was Jehoshaphat. He had the fear of God in his heart but also this bad habit of not wishing to offend, even the ungodly, because he was afraid to say “no.”

He made three bad decisions in his otherwise upright life.

Firstly, Jehoshaphat married an ungodly woman, the daughter of Ahab, king of neighbouring Israel. No doubt, he thought that as a king he needed a royal bride, but she did not fear God. God tells us not to be “unequally yoked together” in choosing a wife or husband. Those who have not followed God’s way in this have often found much trouble in their home and family. Jehoshaphat should have said “no” when this was first proposed. No doubt, his wife badly influenced him in some of his decisions as king.

Secondly, no doubt because he was now Ahab’s son-in-law, he found it hard to resist a suggestion from Ahab that they should form a military alliance and go to war with him against a common enemy. You can read in 2 Chronicles 18 how he almost lost his life in so doing, in the battle in which Ahab was slain by the arrow from a bow drawn at a venture.

Thirdly, after all this Jehoshaphat did yet another foolish thing. He joined his navy with the next king over Israel, Ahaziah, who the Bible tells us did very wickedly. We then read how the Lord sent a prophet to him with a strong reproof, and as a consequence the ships in his navy were broken, probably by some fierce tempest sent by God.

So we see how in his marriage, as well as in the army and navy, he found it hard to say “no.” What a great deal of trouble he would have saved himself had he trusted wholeheartedly in his God. Thankfully we can read in 2 Chronicles 20 how he did just that, and without him needing to fire one arrow the Lord

caused the destruction of an entire army in answer to his prayer in the Temple.

In the Bible we do read of those who did say “no,” and the Lord stood by them. Men like Daniel, who would not stop praying when commanded to do so; Joseph, who would not heed the temptations Potiphar’s wife put before him; Nehemiah, who was so disgusted at the covetous example of the priests in Jerusalem, resolved not to follow their example saying: “... *so did not I, because of the fear of God.*”

May God give us and may we seek such grace also.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The Soldier of Fort George (1)

When Luke Heywood was a soldier at Fort George, the Fort was a very different place to what it is nowadays. Stretched along the shore just below the Fort were rows of stalls that served as a meat market for the soldiers and their families, and the ferry-boat plied its course between the Fort and the Black Isle on the further side of the Firth. As Hector McPhail, Minister of the church at Resolis on the Black Isle, waited for the ferry to arrive to carry him and his white pony back to the other side, Luke Heywood, a soldier from the Fort, approached the market and stopped to buy some meat from the stall at which the Resolis Minister was waiting.

“How much for a quarter of mutton?” he asked the keeper of the stall. When told the price, the soldier cut loose with a string of oaths and blasphemies that cut through the air. He finished up by saying that he would sooner see his soul in hell than pay the price that the butcher was asking. After some argument, however, the price was paid and the soldier turned away from the stall with his purchase.

“A fine day, soldier,” said Mr McPhail, who was now determined that he must speak to this man.

“A fine day, sir,” replied the soldier.

"That seems a fine bit of mutton you've got there."

"So it is, sir," said the soldier, "and cheap, too."

"What did you give for it, may I ask?"

The man told the price.

"Oh, my friend, you have given more than that," said the Minister.

"No, sir, I gave no more. There's the man I bought it from, and he can tell you what it cost."

"Pardon me, my friend," said the older man, "you have given your immortal soul for it! You prayed that God would damn your soul if you gave the very price that you have just named, and now you have given it, and what is to become of you?"

As Hector McPhail stepped onto the ferry, Luke Heywood made his way back to his army billet. The Minister's words were still ringing in his ears: "You have given your immortal soul for it, and now what is to become of you?" The words grew louder in Luke Heywood's mind until they drove him right out of the barracks and back to the water's edge again.

"Where is that man that spoke to me?" he asked the butcher.

"Oh, you mean Mr McPhail," said the butcher, "he is the Minister at Resolis, and you will have to go far enough before you catch him, for he has crossed more than an hour ago."

But no distance would be too great for Luke Heywood at this particular time in his life, for those words had shown him that he had damned his soul indeed, and now, as the Minister had said: "What was to become of him?"

The words remained with him on what seemed to be an endless crossing on that small ferry-boat; and they didn't leave him over nine miles of bracken and moor that then separated him from the Minister's home at Resolis. It was a short distance to travel, however, for all the peace of mind that Luke Heywood received at the end. For two whole days he stayed with the man who had awakened him out of his sleep of death, and as the way to peace with God and salvation for his soul was gradually explained to him, Luke Heywood saw that the

God who would, indeed, have condemned his soul to hell, would now save his soul for heaven, who calls upon His name and seeks His forgiveness for his many sins.

No more would the barracks and the market at Fort George ring with the blasphemies of Luke Heywood. Christ had died that he might live, and live he did to the glory of Christ's name.

"Soldier! You prayed that God might damn your soul ... and now, what is to become of you?" But the God who heard his oaths and curses, also heard his cry for forgiveness and salvation through Christ the Saviour. The same God answers such cries this very day.

Selected

CLEAN HANDS

Some time ago, two brothers were growing up in a home where the Bible was read and prayed over every day. The elder brother noticed that his younger brother kept washing his hands. Now, while it is right for cleanliness to wash our hands before eating or when they have become dirty, it seemed to the older brother that his younger brother was taking matters to an extreme! He would wash his hands at every opportunity, many times a day! At last, his curiosity got the better of him, and he asked him why he washed so many times. Look in Job 17 verse 9 for the answer he gave! *"The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that bath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."*

Taking Job's words literally, he thought that the more he washed his hands, the stronger, physically, he would become! The elder brother explained that the verse meant something other than the outward washing of our hands. He explained that if our hands were put to right uses in God's ways they would be clean, but if they are used in sinful ways then they were not clean. As sin is mixed with all that we say or do, we all need our hands cleansing, and only the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, can purely cleanse us from all sin. *"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow,"* said David, at a time when his hands had been put to sinful purposes.

The Pharisees in the days of Jesus, were very particular about the literal washing of hands. You can read in Mark 7 how particular they were: *"For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brassen vessels, and of tables."*

The Lord Jesus Christ answered them by reminding them that it was not that which is outside which defiles a man, but that which is inside: *"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts ... covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man."*

When these inward sins have dominion over us, then we are spiritually weak. But when God's grace enables us to overcome what we are by nature, then we are made strong in the spiritual sense. It is a mercy that God has provided the cleansing blood of His dear Son to cleanse truly sorry sinners from guilt and defilement. Bearing in mind the question in Psalm 24 and its answer, those who are wise will really know how essential it is to have clean hands in the best sense!

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."

These words were wonderfully fulfilled when the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven, and now with His perfectly clean hands, hands once wounded for sinners, intercedes for those who, with defiled hands, come to God by Him.

Editor

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from AMELIA BURGESS; PHEBE COLLINS; EVIE COTTINGHAM and BENJAMIN INCE.

*FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES***THE LIE OF DAVID**

When David fled from Saul, he went to the high priest named Ahimelech, who asked David why he was alone, for usually many men were with him. David told Ahimelech that the king had sent him to do secret work. That was a lie, but David did not want to say he was running away from Saul. In his haste, David had come without any weapon. He asked the high priest for one and was given the sword of Goliath. David was very hungry and Ahimelech gave him bread to eat.

Doeg, a chief herdsman of Saul, had seen David when he came to the high priest. Later he told Saul, who then sent for Ahimelech and all the priests. Saul accused them of being his enemies and helping David to escape. But they did not know he was fleeing. David was the most faithful and honoured servant of the king.

In great anger Saul commanded all the priests to be killed. His servants refused to do this wicked deed. Then Doeg slew all the priests of the LORD. One of the sons of Ahimelech escaped and ran to tell David. How sad David felt! He blamed himself for the death of the priests because of his lie.

QUESTIONS:

1. To whom did David go when he fled from Saul?
2. Who saw David?
3. Whom did Saul command to be killed? (3 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. Jonathan.
2. A secret message.
3. In a field.

*“Deliver my
soul, O LORD,
from lying
lips, and
from a
deceitful
tongue.”*
Psalm 120. 2.

BIBLE LESSONS**ISRAEL REJECTING THEIR DELIVERERS**

In the Old Testament, Job wrote: *"How forcible are right words!"* As Stephen addressed the Jewish council, he was given such words to show them their sin in resisting the Holy Ghost.

He showed how their forefathers always rejected the man whom God raised up for their salvation and deliverance. The sons of Jacob (sometimes called the Patriarchs) had behaved the same way as those who now sat before Stephen.

God had revealed through the dreams of their brother Joseph, that one day they would all bow down before him. Even his father and mother would do so. You can imagine how this stirred up the enmity of the brothers against Joseph. They sold Joseph into Egypt: *"But God was with him,"* delivered him from prison, and gave him favour in the eyes of Pharaoh, who made Joseph governor over all the land of Egypt.

At the same time, God sent a famine through all the land so that his father's household was brought to the point of starvation. Thus his brothers were forced to go down to Egypt to buy corn from Joseph their brother. At the second time Joseph revealed himself to them. Then they realised that the brother they hated so much and tried to be rid of had become their saviour.

Joseph sent them back to their father with wagons and food and such things as were needed for their families. He called for them all to come down to Egypt so he could provide for them for the rest of their days.

Stephen took up their history again, many years after the Patriarchs and Joseph had passed away and Israel had multiplied into a great nation, as God had promised Abraham. Also a new king ruled in Egypt which knew not Joseph and began to sorely oppress the people of Israel.

This, too, God had revealed to Abraham: that his descendants would be strangers in a land that was not theirs and be afflicted four hundred years. The new king also

commanded them to kill their baby sons.

Stephen reminded those on the council that at that dark time the very man whom God had chosen to lead Israel out of Egypt was born. Instead of being slain, Moses was brought up in Pharaoh's own house, being adopted by Pharaoh's daughter.

When Moses was forty years old, he went out to visit his afflicted brethren. Seeing one of them beaten by an Egyptian, he smote the Egyptian. He thought the Israelites would understand that God would use him to deliver them. Another day he reproved two of them for fighting, saying: *"Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?"* Boldly, one asked him: *"Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? Wilt thou kill me, as thou diddest the Egyptian yesterday?"*

When Moses heard that, he was afraid and fled into the land of Midian. After another forty years had passed, the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire in a bush, saying: *"... I will send thee into Egypt."* Stephen reminded those on the council that this Moses whom their fathers refused, was raised up of God to bring them out of Egypt. Even after they had come out of Egypt, they tried to thrust Moses away and return to Egypt. Further, Stephen added that their fathers told Aaron to make them gods to go before them. Thus the golden calf was made and they sacrificed unto it.

Finally, Stephen finished his address, saying: *"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye."* Your fathers persecuted and killed the prophets who spoke of the coming Messiah, and you have killed the Holy One.

Those in the room were cut to their heart. As anger and rage took hold of them, they gnashed on him with their teeth. Stephen looked away from them and up to heaven. What a sight filled his eyes! He said: *"Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."*

You can read about this in Acts chapter 7 verses 6 to 56.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who was rejected by his brethren, yet became their saviour?
2. Whom did their fathers refuse, though God had raised him up to deliver them from Egypt?
3. Whom did Stephen say they had resisted?
4. To where did Stephen lift up his eyes?
5. Who did he see and where was He standing?

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. Faith and power.
2. Great wonders and miracles.
3. The wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.
4. False witnesses.
5. Like the face of an angel.

G. L. TenBroeke

MAGGOTS

Sometimes when you pick up an apple, you will notice that a worm has made a hole which is seen on the peel. Did the worm eat into the apple from the outside, or did it eat out of the apple from within?

The answer is that the worm works from the inside to the outside. When the tree was in blossom an egg was laid in the flower, and as the apple formed and grew, so the worm was hatched in the core of the apple. As soon as it hatched, it began eating its way to the outside. This is a powerful illustration of original sin. Sin was hatched in our very being, even while the baby was in the womb of its mother. It soon shows its true colours as it grows up. This is what we call original sin. It is the root of the tree of all our corruptions.

QUESTION: Which is the seventh commandment?

ANSWER: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

(Exodus 20. 14; Deuteronomy 5. 18)

ANTS ARE LIKE PEOPLE (2)

"The ants are a people" (Proverbs 30: 25). People are distinguished from all other creatures and are so called because of their superior creation, intelligence, wisdom, manner of living and method of labour. They are well-organised and are able to understand each other. Their manner of communication, ability in providing for themselves and possessing foresight, excels that of all other creatures. For these reasons the ants are called "*a people*" because they possess like qualities. In all the natural qualities which human people possess, the ants come nearer to possessing them than any other creatures in the world. The life of the ant is superior in intelligence to that of any insect or animal.

It is claimed when it comes to carrying on civilization, construction, industry, agriculture or policy and possessing the qualities of unity, diligence and foresight, that the ants are far superior to human beings. Our natural lives on this earth and the manner of living in comparison seem but absurd, shoddy and far inferior to that of the ants. No wonder Solomon said: "*Go to the ant.*" In doing so, man will learn many lessons for time and eternity.

Men are called "people"; the ants are called "people."

Men live in colonies and cities; the ants do the same.

Men have foresight, make plans and lay up for the future, but in this we have nothing over the ants.

Men carry on agriculture, plant seeds, cultivate crops, harvest and store up food and grain. All of these things are done by the ants.

Men build cities and in some they construct sky-scrapers, making several storeys underground and many above the ground, but even in this they do nothing new, for the ants do the same.

Men possess servants, house and feed them; the ants do the same.

Men have cows, milk them, herd their cattle, feed them well and raise more, but strange to say, in this they do no better

than the ants.

Men wash, brush and comb; the ants do also and that many times every day, for they are very particular in being clean.

When one man is not able to do some work, he solicits the help of others to get it done and sometimes he cannot get the help he needs. If one ant cannot accomplish what she sees is possible, she can immediately obtain all the help she solicits.

When men meet one another, they generally speak and greet each other; again we learn the ants do the same.

Men practise courtesy and good manners, but the ants are far more courteous than men.

Men have cemeteries outside their cities where they bury their dead, and the ants do, too.

People build roads and tunnels and travel in these roads; the ants also make roads, tunnels and bridges.

Men make war and subdue other tribes to be in subjection to them, and the ants do the same.

Men manifest an interest and exercise a care over animals and plants. The dealings of ants with other insects and with plants are above that of all lower creatures, and in this they are "*a people*" and like man.

These are a few ways in which ants are like people. In subsequent lessons, these points and others will be brought out in detail.

Ants live very careful lives, always do their best and seek to be a success in whatever they do. They fulfil their purpose in life very well. Many people are very careless, do not care what kind of lives they live, do not seek to be a success for this world nor the next. Many never live purposeful lives.

(To be continued)

Joshua Stauffer

QUESTION: Which is the eighth commandment?

ANSWER: "Thou shalt not steal."

(Exodus 20. 15; Deuteronomy 5. 19)

**“BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH DO HUNGER
AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS.”**

A missionary who was stationed in Madagascar, in Africa, related how one evening two men arrived at his station. They had walked one hundred miles to visit him. His first question to them was: “Have you a Bible?” to which one man replied: “We have seen it and heard it read, but we have only some of the words of David, and they do not belong to us; they belong to the whole family.” “Have you the words of David with you now?” asked the missionary.

After some hesitation one of them put his hand into his bosom and drew out a roll of cloth. This he carefully unrolled and eventually there appeared a few, tattered, well-worn leaves of the Book of Psalms. These had been read and reread, and passed from one part of the family to another until they were worn out.

The missionary could not help the tears that came to his eyes as he saw that this was the total sum of the Word of God that these two men possessed.

“Have you ever seen the words of the Lord Jesus, or John or Paul or Peter?” he asked. “Yes,” they answered, “but we have never owned them.” The missionary then brought out a New Testament, with the Book of Psalms bound up with it. “Now,” he said, “if you will give to me your few words of David, I will give you all of the words of Jesus, and John, and Paul and Peter besides.”

The men were astonished, but would not part with their own precious scraps until they were absolutely sure that the words of David were exactly the same as the ones they had grown to love so much. Being fully assured that this was the case, they willingly made the exchange, and started on their long return journey, rejoicing like those who find great spoil.

How precious was the Word of God to these men! We have the complete Word of God, Old and New Testament, at our side daily. Let us never take for granted the cost to our forefathers that we should have the Bible so freely available, and value the freedom to read it while we have it.

John Whitecross (Slightly adapted)

“EVEN HIS ENEMIES”

Many years ago, a large crowd of people was to be seen in a green field. In their midst standing right on top of a table, was a man. He looked rather like an old picture in his clergyman's black suit, cut so differently to the present day, and his old-fashioned white tie. His face was rather old, but very earnest. Some of the people in the crowd looked like pictures, too; the style of their clothes was so unlike those we now wear. What do you think all of that crowd were doing? Some had come out of curiosity; some had come with a great longing, others with heavy burdens of sin and care.

The man on top of the table was a preacher. His name was John Berridge, and he was the vicar of Everton. He was a good man, and a good preacher; and his ways pleased the Lord. And the Lord managed even his enemies.

There was nothing Berridge loved more than preaching the gospel of the grace of God to poor sinners. He not only preached in his church, but in any place under cover, or out-of-doors, where he could get a congregation to listen. Sometimes as many as four thousand people would collect to hear the preaching. Because his ways pleased God, they did not please the world. We cannot serve God and mammon.

Berridge had a great many enemies, who hated him badly, and hated his preaching. Even some of the other clergy, whose parishes were near, were very unfriendly. They were jealous of his large congregations; and they were disturbed by the plain, honest way in which he pleased God by preaching the gospel to every creature.

On the particular day about which we are telling you, when Berridge was standing on a table in the field, two of his enemies were hiding under the table. He could not see them, but God saw them. He knew their evil plans for stopping the preaching and hurting His servant; for these men meant to tip over the table, and they did not care how much they injured the preacher.

The most wonderful part of the story is that God loved these cruel men; but He hated their sinful thoughts and ways. He

loves sinners: He loves to save them from their sins through the atoning blood of His dear Son. Oh the depth of His love! While Berridge was preaching, God's Holy Spirit was at work. He softened the hard hearts under the table. He made the sinful men ashamed of their sins. He blessed the words of the good minister. Their hatred melted away, and they began to love Berridge instead. When the service was over, they crept out from their hiding-place, and confessed their cruel plan, and how sorry they were. Berridge freely forgave his enemies, and God made them to be at peace with him.

But the clergyman had more than two cruel enemies. Another day when he was preaching out-of-doors, two horrid men came with their pockets full of stones to throw at him during the service. Of course, they had to stand in a place where they could get a good aim at him – not too far off, and yet not too near. They forgot that God never made stones to be thrown at His servants. He was very angry with them for meaning to use His stones so wickedly. He soon made these two men feel very uncomfortable. The stones were very heavy in their pockets; their sins were very heavy in their hearts. Presently God made one man put his hand in his pocket, and take out a stone, and drop it down quietly on the ground. Both of these guilty men began to be very anxious to get rid of their stones. They no longer wanted to hit Berridge. God's Holy Spirit was teaching these enemies of his. Very gently they dropped down the stones one after another. When the preaching was over, they went up to the preacher and told him of their evil plan, and asked him to pray for them. Once again it was proved – *“When a man's ways please the LORD, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.”*

“Lord, wilt Thou make our ways
Obedient to Thy will;
So shall we live at peace,
Thou wilt Thy Word fulfil.

Selected

SINS OF OMISSION AND SINS OF COMMISSION

One good man explained the difference between sins of omission and sins of commission to his friends like this.

They had been sitting for some while around a log fire, which now was burning low. He said: "If we let this fire alone it will soon *go out*. If we pour water on it we would *put it out*." The first is an act of omission and the second an act of commission.

JOHN BACON

John Bacon, who lived from 1740-1799, was a famous sculptor. Some of his statues can be seen in Westminster Abbey and in St. Paul's Cathedral, among whom are those of William Pitt (Prime Minister) and Dr Johnson. He was evidently an admirer, if not a follower, of George Whitefield for he was buried at Whitefield's Tabernacle. He wrote his own epitaph, which read as follows:

What I was as an artist
seemed to me of some importance
while I lived:
but
what I really was as a believer in Christ Jesus,
is the only thing of importance
to me now

Mutius, a citizen of Rome, was noted to be of so envious and malevolent disposition that one of his colleagues, Publius, seeing him to be very sad said: "Either some great evil has happened to Mutius, or some great good to another." How we should all watch against this bitter spirit of jealousy!

ISAAC WATTS

Isaac Watts, like some of us, was quite short in height. He had, however, a dignity of face which more than counteracted any disadvantage that some may have thought that his height presented. Being in a coffee shop one day, he overheard a man say rather contemptuously: "What, is that the great Doctor Watts?" Turning round suddenly and facing the speaker he said:

"Were I so tall to reach the pole,
Or grasp the ocean with a span,
I must be measured by my soul;
The mind's the measure of the man."

We are not told what effect this had on the man, but one would hope he felt ashamed of his ungracious remark after such a rebuke.

GOD'S SCALES

In the reign of Charles 1, it was a custom of the goldsmiths to annually weigh samples of precious metals before the Privy Council. (This was a group of important people who met with the king to discuss important state business. Such a meeting still exists with our present Queen Elizabeth.)

Once they used scales with uncommon accuracy which, according to the master of the goldsmiths, would turn at the one hundredth part of a grain. Present was the Attorney General, William Noy (the chief law officer of the government) who, on hearing this, replied: "I should be loath to have all my actions weighed in these scales." James Hervey, a gracious man, who was also present heartily agreed, adding: "In relation to myself, since the balances of the sanctuary (God's scales of truth) in His hand are infinitely exact, O what need we have of the merit and righteousness of Christ, to make us both acceptable and proven in His sight!"

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES:**CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (X)**

We now want to look at Jacob's son, Joseph. He is the most beautiful type of Christ, as a character, in all the Old Testament.

1. He was the favourite of his father: Our heavenly Father said of His Son Jesus Christ: *"This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."*

2. His brethren hated him because he was loved of his father: so Jesus Christ: *"He came unto His own and His own received Him not."* *"He is despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."*

3. He was sold by his own brethren for twenty pieces of silver: so was Jesus Christ sold by Judas Iscariot for thirty pieces of silver.

4. He was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife: Jesus was falsely accused by the leaders of the Jews.

5. It is revealed in Psalm 105 that Joseph was sorely tried when in prison: our Lord Jesus was sorely tried by Satan during His temptation in the wilderness, and in the Garden of Gethsemane, under the weight and burden of the sins of His people.

6. Joseph was released from prison and exalted to the second ruler of the kingdom of Egypt, all in one day: our Lord Jesus suffered, bled and died for the sins of His people; on the third day He rose from the dead and He now sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high. *"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"*(Philippians 2. 9-11).

When Jacob died, Joseph's brethren thought that he would take vengeance on them because of the awful way they had treated him; but Joseph is a beautiful type of Christ, in the way he speaks to them: *"So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for*

they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them” (Genesis 50. 17-21).

Think of the words of our Lord Jesus on the cross: “*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*” How poor sinners fall down before Jesus Christ when they are given to realise that He was crucified for them; wounded for their transgressions, bruised for their iniquities. Our Lord Jesus is the only Mediator between God and man: as Joseph said: “*Am I in the place of God?*” Jesus is the bread and water of life to nourish His people: the sweet wine of the kingdom to revive His people. The Jews meant it for evil when they crucified Him, but God meant it for good, for the salvation of His people. How we see in the life of Joseph the truth of the words of the dear apostle: “*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.*” (Romans 8. 28)

J.R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about PRAYER – THE EXAMPLE AND PRECEPTS OF THE LORD JESUS. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by email (see page 218 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.

1. How did Jesus say we should pray? (Matthew 6. 6)
2. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do, “when ye stand praying”? (Mark 11. 25)

3. Who should we pray for? (Matthew 5. 44)
4. Why did Jesus tell His disciples to “watch and pray”? (Matthew 26. 41)
5. Jesus related the parable of the unjust judge, but what was His purpose in telling it? (Luke 18. 1)
6. Write out a verse in which Jesus encouraged His disciples to ask “in My name.” (John 16)
7. In John 17, who did Jesus pray for, and who did He not pray for?
8. “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few.” What did Jesus tell His disciples to pray for? (Matthew 9)
9. When, in answer to their request, Jesus taught His disciples to pray, what two things did He say they should pray to be preserved from? (Luke 11)
10. Write out the prayer which Jesus repeated in substance three times in bitter anguish, yet in gracious submission to His Father.

ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. David was a shepherd and kept his father's sheep.
2. David could play the harp well.
3. A lion and a bear which came against the sheep.
4. Michal put an image in David's bed and a pillow of goats' hair for a bolster.
5. Saul's spear and a cruse of water.
6. Women singing: “Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” (1 Samuel 18. 6-9)
7. Abigail. (1 Samuel 25. 32-33)
8. David was distressed because his wives and family had been taken captive, and his own friends spoke of stoning him. He “encouraged himself in the LORD his God.” (1 Samuel 30. 1-6)
9. That Saul intended evil against David and he should go away. (1 Samuel 20. 13, 19-23, 35-39)
10. David's excuse for not being at Saul's table at the new moon was not truthful (1 Samuel 20. 6 & 28-29). David's explanation to Ahimelech as to why he was alone was not the truth (1 Samuel 21. 2-5). David's fleeing to Gath and his subsequent behaviour was unwise (1 Samuel 21. 10-15).

Contributed

KEZIA

Job's Second Daughter – Job 42. 14.

Kezia a daughter of Job,

She, and her two sisters were fair:

No others were found in the land

That could with these sisters compare.

Methinks she was gentle, and kind,

A beautiful person was she,

In tracing her history we find,

God gave her a comfort to be.

Her father was one who feared God;

This caused him to hate every sin.

His blessing in paths that he trod,

Brought joy and contentment within.

He prospered the work of his hands,

His flocks and possessions were great;

Most honoured of all in the land,

He sat as a chief in the gate.

One day, he became so distressed,

With trials, and losses and woes,

Lost children, and all he possessed,

And friends seemed to turn into foes.

Afflicted in body, and mind,

His heart was so burdened with grief,

And though to God's dealings resigned,

It gave him no lasting relief.

But God, who is never unkind,

Who never can make a mistake,

In wisdom and mercy designed

The way that His servant should take.

He saw, from beginning, the end;

Sustained him through trials most sore,

And did, after losses, intend

To give twice as much as before.

How wise, though mysterious, His ways;

Though hard be the lesson to learn,

He often the blessing delays,

Till we can our weakness discern.

When humbled, like Job, at His feet,
Confessing our vileness, and sin;
We taste of His mercy most sweet,
And streams of new blessings begin.

So when his Kezia was born,
She came as a gift from above,
With joy he embraced her sweet form,
As coming from infinite love.
He named her Kezia, because,
It "sweet-smelling cassia" means
And oh! what sweet comfort he draws
From heaven's own love-scented streams.

Oh, that we could patiently wait,
And truly seek help from on high,
Till trials, and sorrows abate,
And mourning is turned into joy;
Till God, in His gracious designs,
Whose love is for ever the same,
Each bitter with sweetness entwines,
And bids us rejoice in His name.

But what are all sorrows and woes
To those which Christ Jesus endured?
He suffered, and died for His foes,
E'en those who His death had procured.
Who though He had riches immense,
Yet He for their sakes became poor,
From poverty suffered intense,
That they might be rich evermore.

His goodness His saints shall admire,
For He shall supply all their need.
Like Job with his earthly Kezia,
The sweetness shall bitter succeed.
When earth and its sorrows are past,
He'll give them ten-thousand-fold more,
Of riches and pleasures that last
In glory's bright home evermore. *(Agnes Desborough)*

The Friendly Companion



The Longstone Island Lighthouse, Farne Islands

“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust,
and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH
is my strength and my song;
He also is become my salvation.” (Isaiah 12. 2)

November 2015

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In the October magazine, it was inadvertently stated in the Monthly Message that Jeboshaphat married Abab's daughter, when it should have said that it was his son Jeboram whom he married to Abab's daughter. Thanks to the kind friends who pointed this out.

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE – Whisperers!

Dear Children and Young People,

Solomon, in the Book of Proverbs, tells us that “*a whisperer separateth chief friends.*” No doubt this is one of the “*little foxes*” that he warns us about in the Song of Solomon, “*that spoil the vines.*”

Whispering began in the Garden of Eden. God, our Creator, had a close relationship with His newly-created man and woman, Adam and Eve. Satan was exceedingly jealous of this friendship, since he had been cast out of God’s presence through rebellion. He knew that by whispering into the ear of Eve, and through Eve to Adam’s ear, that he might be able to separate these chief friends. So it began with the whisper: “*Hath God said ...?*” From that first whisper came the separation from God, which we call “the fall of man.” What terrible consequences have flowed from it through the ages of time!

Sadly, one of the fruits of this whispering is that Satan is still at it, and has a fertile ground in which to sow seeds of distrust between sinners and God, and between sinners also.

When David had to flee from Absalom, he was met by a man called Ziba, the servant of a lame man called Mephibosheth, a grandson of King Saul. This man whispered to David slanderous things about Mephibosheth, which David, at first unwisely believed, without seeking the full facts. This brought great distress to Mephibosheth and has left a lasting shame on the name of the “whisperer,” Ziba. Generally the whisperer does not want his or her name to be mentioned, through cowardice. But what is not said to the face of a person, ought not, without very good reason, to be said behind their back.

Many years ago, Mr L.S.B. Hyde, the late pastor of Redhill Chapel, had one of these whisperers call to relate some tale against another friend. Before the whisperer could start, Mr Hyde said: “Let me get my notebook, so I can be sure of the facts you are stating, and can confront the person with what you have said.” The whisperer beat a hasty retreat at that suggestion!

The words of Jesus say that if we have anything against

anyone we should go and tell them first. How much sadness, bitterness and uncalled-for strife would be avoided if all would-be whisperers followed the Lord's command.

May we each "suffer the word of exhortation."

From your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture shown on our front cover this month is of the Longstone Island Lighthouse, in the Farne Islands off the coast of North East England, in Northumberland. It is the predecessor of the lighthouse in the picture that became famous because of the amazing bravery of a young woman named Grace Darling. Her true account is given below. Grace was evidently a woman who feared God, for her own testimony after the events recorded below, was: "I thank God, who enabled me to do so much. I thought it a duty, as no assistance could be had, but I still feel sorry I could do no more."

The era in which Grace grew up was an extremely busy one for sea travel and many sailing ships passed the islands where she lived, following a route through a rock-free channel called the Fairway, between the Inner Farne and the mainland. However, the new, larger ships that were powered by steam could not travel in the shallow water of the Fairway, so had to go out into deeper water: sadly many did not go out far enough and were wrecked against the treacherous rocks.

Launched in 1834, the *SS Forfarshire* was an early luxury paddle steamer belonging to the Dundee and Hull Steam Packet Company and built for regular runs between Hull and Dundee. It was 40 metres (132 ft) long by 9.7 metres (32 ft) wide and powered by two 90 hp engines, with an estimated 400 tons cargo-carrying capacity.

On 5 September 1838, the *Forfarshire* set off from Hull to Dundee with a cargo of cloths, soap, hardware, boiler plate and spinning gear, together with around 60 crew and passengers. A day later the ship's boiler began to leak and at around midnight on 6 September during a terrible storm off St

Abb's Head, her engines failed. The ship began to drift and Captain John Humble (who was later to drown with his wife) hoisted the sails, turned his ship and headed south for shelter. He tried to reach Inner Farne but mistook the Longstone light for the Inner Farne light and, at around 4 a.m. the ship struck Big Harcar rock, just under a kilometre to the west of Longstone, with disastrous results. It all happened so suddenly that there was no time to call the passengers from their cabins and, within fifteen minutes the ship had broken into two and the back half was swept away and sank, with more than forty-eight people on board.

Grace was on watch at the Longstone lighthouse the night the *SS Forfarshire* sank and, as the fierce storm continued to blow and huge waves battered the structure, at 4.45 a.m. she spotted wreckage on the rocks. It was not until 7.00 a.m., however, that it was light enough to see that there were some survivors stranded there. Grace's father wrongly believed that the atrocious weather would prevent the launching of the North Sunderland lifeboat, so decided that he and Grace would have to attempt a rescue of the survivors themselves.

With help from Grace's mother, they launched the four-oared, 6.5 metre (21.5 ft) long coble, and 22-year-old Grace and her 54-year-old father managed to row a vessel (which normally required three strong men to row it in such mountainous seas) for nearly a mile (1.6 km). When they finally reached the rock, they found nine people still alive, so William leapt out of the boat and on to the rocks to attend to them, which left tiny Grace to handle the boat alone. To keep it in one place she had to row backwards and forwards, trying to keep both herself and the coble from being smashed on the reef. As an old man, her father said that the worst moment of his entire life was when he had to leave behind his cherished daughter to fend for herself in the open sea.

On the rocks William found eight men and a woman, Mrs Dawson, holding two children, both of whom had died. The

coble would not take all the survivors in one trip, so William and three of the men rowed back to the lighthouse, taking Grace, an injured man and the woman with them. Grace then stayed at the lighthouse and looked after these survivors with her mother whilst her father and two of the crew returned for the remaining men. They were all safely settled in the Longstone lighthouse by 9.00 a.m. and were soon joined by members of the Sunderland lifeboat crew (one of whom was Grace's brother, William), who had launched their own rescue attempt in a coble from the mainland. They had arrived at Big Harcar rock just half-an-hour after the last survivors were rescued by Grace and her father and had followed them to Longstone, where they all had to shelter for the next two days until the terrible storm subsided.

Unbeknown to the Darlings, nine other people had also survived when the stern of the *Forfarshire* was swept away, by scrambling into a lifeboat: they had been rescued by a sloop from Montrose and taken to North Shields the same night.

News of the rescue and Grace's part in it soon began to spread and almost immediately she became a reluctant celebrity.

"I had little thought of anything but to exert myself to the utmost, my spirit was worked up by the sight of such a dreadful affair that I can imagine I still see the sea flying over the vessel."

THE SOLDIER OF FORT GEORGE (2)

Luke Heywood, in the full fervour of his first love, returned to resume his military duties at Fort George. 'The Lord had done great things for him, whereof he was glad.' One can fancy his feelings and emotions as he re-crossed on the ferry, and moving in a new world gazed upon the haunts of his former dissipation. It is likely that he brought a letter from his spiritual father to the Governor, Sir Eyre Coote, written, in part, like that model of elegant apology, Paul's Epistle to Philemon.

Even supposing he was punished for his three days' absence without leave, the severest penalties would be trifling to one

who had so recently cried as it were "*out of the belly of hell,*" and God heard his voice. Like the Gadarene demoniac, "*clothed and in his right mind,*" he was longing to tell his comrades 'how great things Jesus had done unto him.'

Forthwith he began to keep a prayer-meeting, which the soldiers attended with feelings like those of the newly-converted Saul of Tarsus, and similar results followed. The story of so remarkable a conversion, and the fame of the prayer-meetings at the Fort, extended far and wide and were the talk of the countryside.

Civilians, some of whom walked twelve miles from neighbouring parishes, after the daily routine of military duties was over, mingled with the red-coats who listened to the wonderful things God had done for the fervid convert's soul, and had their hearts bowed as they joined in the prayer of the contrite spirit. How many of the soldiers were converted cannot now be ascertained, but there is no reason to distrust the reports handed down by tradition of the change effected in many hearts hitherto strangers to grace and to God.

But persecution because of the Word was not long in arising. The captain of the company to which Heywood belonged was an avowed and determined enemy of the truth. He resolved to put an end to this outbreak of fanaticism at the Fort, and threatened to punish the Christian leader with flogging, if the meetings were not discontinued. The soldier, however, knew that he had broken no law of the army. Meetings for boisterous mirth and revelry had been, in the evil days behind them, allowed to pass unchallenged, and now that an evident reformation was spreading among the ranks, why should so good a work be interfered with? Heywood counted the cost. The sphere of conscience was invaded, and he must serve God rather than man. The God whom he served continually would deliver him; and if not, it would be an honour to suffer shame for Christ's sake.

One day the persecuting captain and another officer – said to

be a brother of his own – received an invitation to shoot on a moor near Culloden, a few miles from the Fort. Before starting on his hunting expedition, the captain summoned Heywood to appear before him. He then told him he was going from home for the day, and if on his return he found that he had been holding any prayer-meeting, he swore profanely that he would order the culprit before him to be publicly flogged.

Luke was silent for a minute or two, and then, almost echoing the words of doom spoken of old by Micaiah to Ahab, answered right solemnly: “Captain, if you return alive, God never spoke by me.” Of course, the warning words were treated with contempt, only deepening the persecutor’s resolution to stamp out the meetings as he hastened up the beach, and on to the hillside.

In the course of the day he had occasion to crouch behind a dyke (wall), and his brother officer coming in that direction mistook him for game, and firing suddenly, shot him dead on the spot. It may readily be believed that there was no further interference with the prayer meetings on the Fort.

But the Head of the church had work for him in his native land. The regiment was soon after ordered back to England, where Heywood obtained his discharge from the army. He is said to have laboured with success as a minister until his death.

Having read the article concerning Luke Heywood, “The Soldier of Fort George,” I add the following details concerning my Great x 4 Grandfather. (Peter Haywood)

Luke Haywood (not Heywood) was born around 1740, place unknown and on 5th February 1765 he enlisted into the 2nd Battalion, 1st Foot (later The Royal Scots). The Battalion moved to Fort George in 1766 where it remained until April 1768. It was during this period that Luke met Mr. McPhail and where he obtained mercy from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour. The Regiment then moved to Berwick-on-Tweed.

In Berwick-on-Tweed, Luke married Mary Sanderson before going to Minorca for several years. No further reference can be

found of Mary: it is therefore assumed that she died.

In 1776, the Regiment returned to St. Albans, Hertfordshire, where Luke Haywood, wearing his red uniform, was heard by the elders of Beechen Grove Baptist Church, Watford, to preach in the streets. They asked Luke to become their Pastor but, sadly, the Regiment then moved to Leeds where Luke was baptised into the Baptist faith at Gildersome Baptist Church.

The Regiment then moved again to Fort George, whilst the church at Watford raised 20 guineas (a huge sum in those days) to purchase Luke's discharge. The church at Gildersome also attempted to purchase Luke's discharge. Whilst the details are not clear, it appears that Luke fell into the hands of "wicked and deceitful men" but his discharge was procured by the intervention of a wonderful man of God, Simon Fraser, the Barrack master at Fort George.

Whilst at Fort George, Luke married again, to what appears to be a local girl, Jan (surname unknown). Simon Fraser writes in a letter to the church at Watford: "I beg leave to assure you that although she has brought him no worldly substance, yet he has been exceedingly favoured in his choice ... I have known her from infancy and am persuaded when she is known by his friends in England they will cordially join me in this opinion."

Luke and Jane moved to Beecham Grove Baptist Church, Watford where it is recorded that, "During the first year of Mr. Haywood's pastorate the articles of faith were fairly writ out with some little alteration being more full and explicit."

Luke was to move to Cotton End Baptist Church, Cardington, Bedfordshire under the patronage of John Howard (the Penal Reformer) and where on 16th August 1783, he died of a fever that swept the country, leaving Jane and four small children. He was interred in Cotton End Baptist Church and an entry in the church book reads: "In life much respected, at death much lamented." Jane became a Baptist pensioner and generous donations were received from a number of sources for her and the children.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**DAVID IS AFRAID**

David fled out of the land of Israel for fear of Saul. He went among the Philistines, the enemies of Israel. Surely Saul would not look for him there and he would be safe.

Then David heard the servants of the Philistine king say: *"Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing ... of him ... Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?"* Now David was afraid the Philistines would kill him. How could he escape? He pretended to have a weak or sick mind and scratched upon the doors of the gate. When the Philistines saw that David behaved like a mad man, they let him go.

David fled back to the land of Israel. He hid in a big cave called Adullam. His parents, brothers, and all his family heard of it and came to him in the cave. Since Saul was after David, the lives of his family were also in danger.

Many people who were in trouble or unhappy came to David, *"and he became a captain over them."* After a while there were about four hundred men with him in the cave.

QUESTIONS:

1. Among whom did David go?
2. What did David behave like before them? (3 words)
3. Where did David hide next?

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. Ahimelech. (or the high priest)
2. Doeg.
3. All the priests.

Contributed

*“What time
I am
afraid,
I will trust
in Thee.”
Psalm 56. 3.*

BIBLE LESSONS

PHILIP GOES TO SAMARIA

When Stephen declared that he saw *"the Son of man standing on the right hand of God,"* the Jewish leaders were filled with rage. They shouted loudly to drown out what Stephen was saying and covered their ears to make sure they would not hear him. Sometimes children behave like that, but these were the religious leaders of the people. What would you think if the minister or members of the church where you attend behaved in such a way? See what happens when Satan reigns in the heart!

They ran upon Stephen and forced him out of the city. They took off their coats and laid them at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul. Although he was young, he was esteemed a leader because of his zeal for their traditions and outward keeping of the law.

No doubt Saul urged them on as they took up stones and hurled them at Stephen with all their might. Stephen knew that his end was at hand. He did not expect to be delivered from their hands. Instead he prayed: *"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."*

As he knelt down, Stephen cried with a loud voice: *"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."* Even with his last breath he prayed for his murderers and then: *"... he fell asleep."* That is what the Bible says death is like for the Lord's people.

When they perceived that Stephen was dead, his murderers and Saul returned to the city of Jerusalem. Likely they reported with glee to all in the city that they had silenced their foe. Perhaps you are wondering what happened to the body of Stephen. The Bible tells us: *"... devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him."*

While the church in Jerusalem was prospering, Satan, the great enemy of Christ and His people, manifested his true nature and went about as a roaring lion to destroy this early church. Saul and his followers were Satan's instruments, and great persecution against the church broke out everywhere. After the stoning of Stephen, the enemies of Christ were emboldened.

The Bible tells us: *“As for Saul, he made havoc (devastation or destruction) of the church.”* He went through the city and forced the believers from their homes and put them in prison.

A number of the believers were forced out of Jerusalem. The Bible tells us: *“They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.”* Because of the persecution, the gospel of Jesus went out from Jerusalem into many cities.

Philip, one of the deacons appointed with Stephen, went down to Samaria. The Samaritans had been deceived by a man called Simon. By enchantment or trickery he made himself to be some great one. He was so convincing that the Samaritans, from the least to the greatest, gave heed to him, saying: *“This man is the great power of God.”* For a long time he had bewitched the people through the power of Satan. All the while, the poor Samaritans remained in gross darkness.

However, when Philip came into the city, he began to preach Christ unto them. Through the power of the HOLY SPIRIT the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ shone into the hearts of many. Unclean spirits, crying out loudly, came out of many whom they had possessed for so long a time. Some that had palsies and others who were lame were healed. So wonderful was the change that the gospel of Jesus had brought, that the city was filled with great joy.

You can read about this in Acts chapter 7 verses 56 to 60 and Acts chapter 8 verses 1 to 11.

QUESTIONS:

1. At whose feet did the Jewish leaders lay their coats?
2. What request did Stephen make for his murderers? (8 words)
3. Who made havoc of the church? And what did he do with the believers? (4 words)
4. Who had deceived the Samaritans by trickery?
5. Who came to the Samaritans and preached Jesus to them?

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. Joseph.
2. Moses.
3. The Holy Ghost.
4. Heaven.
5. The Son of man. At the right hand of God.

G. L. TenBroeke

THE GUNPOWDER PLOT

An address by the late H. Salkeld

This conspiracy was formed and planned by a number of fanatical Roman Catholics, and their intention was to destroy both the King and Members of Parliament, by means of a heavy explosion of gunpowder.

“Well,” you may ask, “who was the King?”

The King of England at that time was James I.

Then – what was the underlying motive which prompted these desperate men to form such a dastardly scheme?

Let us endeavour to explain.

We find that King James I was a Scotsman, the son of Mary, Queen of Scots. He was crowned King of Scotland when still a boy, upon the forced abdication of his mother. His few years as King of Scotland were years of trouble, with civil wars raging for the most part, and there was treachery and intrigues among those in high places.

James, however, had shown considerable favour and lenity to the Roman Catholics in Scotland, and when he became King of England – after the death of Queen Elizabeth I – the Roman Catholics in this country expected the same sort of treatment, but they were bitterly disappointed.

We should try and remember the conditions of our people at this time – the year 1603.

Only fifteen years earlier – in the year 1588 – King Phillip of Spain had sent his Armada – that fleet of great Spanish galleons – with soldiers, monks, nuns, and instruments of torture, all with the design of bringing our nation once again into subjection to the Pope of Rome, and so to bind us in chains

under priestcraft and superstition.

This, you see, was not so very distant in number of years from the period which we are considering, and there must have been many people living in the earlier years of the reign of King James I who remembered both the peril in which we stood, under threat of the invasion from Spain and also – the wonderful deliverance God wrought for us in 1588.

They would, no doubt, have been able to recall those stirring times when many hearts in England were up unto God and when, as a signal of the approaching Spanish fleet, bonfires were lit on high beacons and hills throughout our country from Lands End to John O’Groats. Our forefathers were determined, that, by the grace of God, we should not come again under the power of the Pope.

King James I was surrounded by a large percentage of Puritan ministers and there was a strong and growing body of Puritan people in the land.

Whatever were the King’s private opinions, this much is known, that he did not show the Roman Catholics the favour and freedom they expected, and in consequence, some of the more fanatical among them formed the Gunpowder Plot.

Thomas Winter, John Wright and Robert Catesby, three very zealous Papists, conceived the idea of placing gunpowder under the Houses of Parliament and then, at a given moment, setting light to a train of the powder – which in turn would ignite the main store.

They themselves hoped to get away quickly, and if the plot succeeded, were ready with plans for a general uprising throughout the land, with a return of Papal domination as their object.

These men soon got in touch with Guido Fawkes, himself a zealous Roman Catholic, who had fought in Holland against the Dutch Protestants with the Spanish army, but had not long before returned to England. Fawkes, with the other conspirators, decided to buy or rent a house adjoining the

Houses of Parliament.

This done, they set to work to dig down under the house, in order to clear a cavity under the Chamber of Parliament, in which to lay their gunpowder.

Being gentlemen by birth and upbringing, they found the task very arduous, as none of them had been used to such heavy manual labour, but they persevered.

Then, one night, Fawkes heard a noise overhead, and going to investigate he discovered the sound came from a cellar immediately beneath the Chamber of the Houses of Parliament. The conspirators realised that this cellar would suit their purpose admirably, so they interviewed the owner, who was a coal merchant, and arranged to rent the cellar from him.

Night after night they worked, until they had thirty-nine barrels and one large hogshead, full of gunpowder, placed in the cellar, and as a disguise, masses of brushwood and faggots were laid on top, until the barrels were well covered.

Then, to make the story short, one of the peers of the realm – Lord Mounteagle (who was a Roman Catholic) – during October, 1605, received a letter from an anonymous writer solemnly warning him not to attend the meeting of Parliament on 5th November, 1605, as a terrible event would then take place. Some time after reading this letter, Mounteagle had it delivered to King James I, who, it is said, immediately surmised an attempted blowing up of the Houses of Parliament.

Very soon after this, a search party was organised, and on the night of 4th November, 1605, a company of soldiers, headed by a prominent London magistrate, went to search the rooms and cellars underneath the Houses of Parliament. On approaching one of the cellars they met Guido Fawkes, who actually was on the point of leaving. Detaining him, they searched the cellars, and after removing the covering of wood, they discovered the mass of gunpowder barrels beneath.

Needless to say, Fawkes was immediately arrested, but he resolutely refused to divulge the names of his fellow

conspirators. Some of these men had already fled to a large country mansion in Staffordshire, but their identity and whereabouts were soon discovered, and the house was besieged by the King's soldiers.

After a short and desperate fight, the fleeing conspirators were overcome, and most of them were killed in the precincts of the house which they had made their refuge. Well now – not to enlarge further – that is the story of the plot and the timely discovery of it, and which, ever since those momentous days, has been remembered with bonfires and fireworks on the 5th November throughout our land.

When you think about this event in our National History, all those years ago, and try to visualise the feelings of the people, when the news of the discovery of the plot became known, you can well understand the deep sense of relief and joy they experienced.

Had the plot succeeded, I feel sure there would have been a retarding of progress and enlightenment in this country and our Protestant liberty, so dearly bought, would have given place to another era of Popish suppression and priestcraft.

Many of our people viewed the exposure of this dastardly plot as the very hand of Divine Providence, and a picture illustrating the story of the plot, published soon after, showed a large eye in the heavens, shining down like a searchlight upon one of the conspirators as he crept towards the Houses of Parliament.

Undoubtedly it was one of our great deliverances, and indeed there have been many in our troubled history, and in reviewing once more this remarkable event of 5th November, 1605, we are constrained to say: "What hath God wrought."

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from ALFIE KINDERMAN and JONATHAN RICHARDSON.

ANTS PREPARE THEIR MEAT (3)

The main thing the Bible says concerning the ant is she *“provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.”* There is the period of gathering which comes first. This is the time of harvest for the ant. Ants cannot gather food every day in the year. Then the ant provideth or prepares her meat in the summer (see Proverbs 6. 6-8; 30. 25). Her food must be prepared for eating. In the above Scriptures we note the words: *“gathereth”* and *“prepare,”* also *“food”* and *“meat.”* The *“food”* which she gathers is then prepared into *“meat.”*

Solomon taught that the ants store up their food for the future, or winter. Naturalists of a hundred-and-fifty to a hundred years ago, disputed this fact, saying, it was a myth and a popular superstition, claiming the ants did not lay up, for they hibernate. In the second half of the nineteenth century a further study was made and this research led to the conclusion that the ancient and modern naturalists were both right.

Their dietary habits are varied. Bees confine themselves to nectar and pollen. Wasps live mainly upon other insects, sometimes nectar and rarely pollen. The termites are entirely vegetarians and mainly cellulose eaters. The ants eat insects, animals, alive or dead, seeds, fungi, nectar, honey-dew voided by plant-lice and many substances which they find in storehouses and kitchen cupboards.

The mouth of the ant is little and of course what she eats must yet be smaller. The vegetables, grain, fruits and game brought in must be “prepared,” that is, transformed into mincemeat, or paste, or both. Especially must the food be prepared into meat, (made ready to eat) for the little ones. It requires work to gather the food and work to prepare it. Ants never are idle.

Jesus said the birds of the air do not sow nor reap neither do they gather into storehouses. Not many creatures gather food and store it in hiding places. Some small animals like the squirrels do. But there are very few creatures that prepare

their food to eat as do the ants. In this, the ants are like people. No wonder Solomon said: "*The ants are a people.*" No creature comes so near in imitating man in cultivating, sowing, reaping and preparing food, as the ants.

It requires much labour on the part of man to see that he and his family have sufficient to eat. The man cultivates the soil, sows the seeds and reaps the harvest. After the vegetables, fruits and grains are gathered by man, follows the woman's part in preparing them ready to eat. This also requires skill to mix properly, putting in the right ingredients in right amounts and baking in the oven. On the part of the ants, great wisdom is displayed in gathering the food, in storing it and in preparing it for eating.

In the ant world it is different than with people. With human beings, the men are supposed to do the hardest work, cultivate, sow, harvest and gather the food. Then the women do the lighter work in preparing the food for eating. The Bible is scientifically true in that it says: "*her meat,*" and "*her food,*" the feminine gender being employed. The male among ants are the drones which do no work and are short-lived. The Creator has wisely designed this for the welfare of all ants. If all the males lived as long as the queens and workers, it would work too great a hardship on the worker ants. It would be as if the women would have to do all the work and the men did not work at all, but merely lived on what the women gathered. This would not do for it is all many can do to make a living by both men and women working hard. The queens lay all the eggs. The workers are females, but are incapable of laying eggs. They do all the work, and know how to prepare their meat without a recipe.

Joshua Stauffer

QUESTION: Which is the ninth commandment?

ANSWER: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." (Exodus 20. 16; Deuteronomy 5. 20)

WATCHING AND PRAYING

In Bible days a master would train his servant to watch his hand and his mouth. A good servant would not want to miss any of the commands from his master so would be constantly watching his hand and his mouth.

Many years ago at a large wedding reception it was noticed that the waiters appeared to move in unison with each other in attending to their various duties. It was a puzzle to know how they knew when to move, until it was noticed that the head waiter stood a little way from the top table and all of the waiters watched his hand which gave a clear signal to all for action.

This reminds us of the words of the psalmist: *“Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that He have mercy upon us”* (Psalm 123. 2).

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about ARGUMENTS AND DISPUTES. 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. Jesus' disciples had a dispute, about which they didn't want Jesus to know. What was the dispute about? (Mark 9. 33-34)
2. In answering the dispute, Jesus took a child and set him in the midst. What did He then say to the disciples? (Mark 9. 37)
3. In Acts 23. 7 we read of a dissension between the Sadducees and the Pharisees. What was the disagreement about?
4. What did Moses do which caused even his brother Aaron and sister Miriam to speak against him? (Numbers 12. 1)
5. Paul and Barnabas had “no small dissension” with some of the Jewish believers. What did the Jews say with which Paul and Barnabas could not agree? (Acts 15. 1, 2)

6. Jesus healed a man blind from his birth on the Sabbath Day, which caused a dispute. What were the two opposing arguments amongst the Pharisees? (John 9)
7. The blind man himself was overcome with thankfulness at his amazing cure. How did he argue? (John 9)
8. In Joshua 22 we read of a sad dispute, thankfully resolved amicably, between the tribes of Israel. What had Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh done which caused the dispute?
9. On one occasion many publicans and sinners joined the Lord Jesus at a meal, and the Pharisees murmured. What argument did the Lord Jesus use to silence them? (Mark 2)
10. In John 7, the Jews were arguing over whether the Lord Jesus was the Christ (the long-expected Messiah). What misapplied Scriptural argument was used to try and show He could not be?

ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS

1. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret."
2. "Forgive, if ye have aught against any."
3. "Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."
4. Lest they should enter into temptation.
5. "That men ought always to pray, and not to faint."
6. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you." (John 16. 23, 24, 26)
7. Jesus said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine." (John 17. 9)
8. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." (Matthew 9. 38)
9. Temptation and evil. (Luke 11. 4)
10. "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." (Matthew 26. 39, 42, 44)

Contributed

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (XI)**

In Genesis 49 Jacob gives his patriarchal blessing on his sons before he dies. This was the practice of the patriarchs, no doubt as led by the Spirit of God. The blessing that interests us for the purpose of this article is found in verse 10: *"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be"* (Genesis 49. 10). This beautiful verse is the promise of the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ; "Christ" meaning the Anointed One or Messiah; "Jesus" meaning the Saviour; "sceptre" is the emblem of kingly royal authority, dominion and power.

This prophecy began to be fulfilled when David was anointed king over all Israel. David was of the tribe of Judah and is also a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was born of the tribe of Judah. This kingly office continued until the Babylonian captivity. After this there was a different form of government called in this prophecy, "the lawgiver." These governors or lawgivers or the Sanhedrim came mainly from the tribe of Judah: this continued right up to the coming of Christ, as it says, *"until Shiloh come."* Shiloh is a beautiful Hebrew name given to Christ: Dr. Gill says it comes from a root which means "quiet, peaceable, prosperous" which amply describes our Lord Jesus Christ. His spiritual kingdom is quiet, peaceable and prosperous where ever it takes root. Ambrose Searle says it comes from a root meaning "Deliverer, the looser or the rescuer." Whichever of these descriptions we take, we get a good idea of what this name means. Jesus Christ came to rescue His people from Satan's power, from the power and dominion of sin; from the condemning power of the holy law of God and its eternal curse. He came to loose them from the bondage of sin and corruption. He has, through His holy life as a Man, through His sufferings, temptations and death as a Man, and through His glorious resurrection from death as a Man; loosed His people from sin, death and hell. All the

dignity, worth and power of His life, sufferings, death and resurrection lie in this fact that He is the Son of God. The Word of God declares: *“Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead”* (Romans 1. 3-4). I see such a beauty and loveliness in this sacred name given by prophecy to Jesus Christ.

Then this word is added: *“Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.”* To the living family of God this is so, when the Holy Spirit convicts and convinces them of their sinful, wretched, condition as a lawbreaker; as a rebellious son or daughter of Adam. He then leads them unto Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of sinners. So on earth they are gathered unto Christ. Then at the second coming of Jesus Christ, at the end of the world, we read that the first act of Jesus Christ will be that He shall send His angels to the four corners of the earth and gather His elect unto Himself. And then we solemnly read: *“And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire”* (Revelation 20. 11-15). The Lord Jesus Christ speaks concerning this last resurrection of the whole of mankind and the solemn consequences of it: *“For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour*

is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5. 26-29).

My dear beloved reader, where do you stand? Have you been born again by the Holy Spirit? Have you been brought to saving faith in Jesus Christ?

J. R. Rutt

THERE IS A DAY

There is a day, 'tis hastening on.
When Zion's God shall purge His floor;
His own elect shall then be known.
For He shall count those jewels o'er.

And who shall stand the fiery test
Of this tremendous awful day?
When Thou in wrath and terror dress'd,
Shalt fan the worthless chaff away?

Nought but the grains of gospel gold
Will ever stand this trying day;
When like a scroll, together rolled,
The starry heaven shall pass away.

How stands the case my soul, with thee?
For heaven are thy credentials clear?
Is Jesus' blood thy only plea?
Is He thy great forerunner there?

Is thy proud heart subdued by grace,
To seek salvation in His name?
There's wisdom, power and righteousness,
All cent'ring in the worthy Lamb.

Then thou mayest rest, assured of this,
And lift thy favoured head with joy;
Thy hopes of heaven's eternal bliss,
Earth, hell and sin shall ne'er destroy.

John Kent

The Friendly Companion



A recent View of Nazareth from the El Kishleh Neighbourhood

**“And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth:
that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the
prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.”
(Matthew 2. 23)**

December 2015

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(Front Cover picture courtesy of Tiamat – Wikipedia Commons)	

OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

One of the most striking examples of faith in the Bible is that of the wise men of whom we read in Matthew chapter 2. There are seven things (each beginning with the letter 'd') which accompanied their faith as a lesson to all those who would "*follow on to know the LORD*" (Hosea 6. 3).

Firstly, they **discerned** the meaning of the star, especially formed by God, to declare the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ into this world. Others saw it, many other astronomers may have admired it, but only these wise men sought to understand what its message was. Although not many wise are called by grace, it does not say 'not any'!

Secondly, these men were very **diligent**; leaving their native home, and travelling many hundreds of miles across desert lands to find the King, for whom the star appeared. How different to the so-called wise men of Jerusalem, who later could tell them where Christ would be born but never took one step to go and find Him.

Thirdly, the wise men met with an unexpected **disappointment**. Inferring from natural wisdom that a newborn king would undoubtedly be found in a palace, they made their way to Herod. In this they erred by "*leaning unto their own understanding*," and not acknowledging their dependence upon God for every step of the way. Faith is often tried by disappointments to make us look only to God for wisdom and strength.

Fourthly, these good men were **delighted** as "*they rejoiced with exceeding great joy*" when they saw the star again. It renewed the hope given when they first saw it in the east, and especially now as it wonderfully guided them to the very spot where Christ lay as a Babe.

Fifthly, they were ready to humble themselves before Him and give the **devotion** of which He is worthy. Were He not truly God, they would have been guilty of idolatry, but they saw and believed that this wondrous Babe was indeed God's Son in the flesh.

Sixthly, believing Him to be God's Son, they **donated** gifts worthy of His Person: gold for a King, incense for a Priest, and myrrh as a prophecy of His death: myrrh being one of the spices with which the dead were anointed.

Seventhly, the wise men **departed** in obedience another way, being warned of God in a dream. Like godly Simeon, of whom we read in Luke 2. 29-31, they could say with exceeding great joy: *"Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."*

May it likewise be, by grace, our privilege to see and believe as did these wise men of old.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Our picture this month is of Nazareth, the town in which the Lord Jesus Christ grew up. It had been foretold by the prophets that 'He would be a Nazarene.' It must have been a mystery to Old Testament believers, as to how the three places, Bethlehem, Egypt and Nazareth were to be the place of Jesus' childhood. But looking back with New Testament eyes, it is clear. He was born in Bethlehem, called out of Egypt after Herod had died, and grew up in Nazareth. This teaches us that while many of the Lord's ways to us are mysterious, sometimes seemingly even contradictory, yet when He makes them plain all is seen to be in order and fulfilled. We need patience to wait the Lord's time!

But what an unlikely place Nazareth was, in which the Lord of life and glory grew up. It had a bad reputation, so much so, that the common saying was: *"Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"* Well, the greatest good thing of all came out of Nazareth, even the Saviour of sinners. He who was to make Himself of no reputation on the cross, did not shun the womb of a virgin, a manger, nor despised Nazareth. It was this name

which had the honour of being part of the superscription over the cross, when Jesus was crucified: *“Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”*

He still bears this name on His throne, for we read in Acts 22. 8 that when Saul of Tarsus was converted on the Damascus Road, Christ called from heaven: *“I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.”*

Sadly, though they were so favoured to have the Son of God in their midst, in general the people of Nazareth either vehemently rejected Christ’s teachings or were at a later period apathetic. How true were John’s words in John chapter 1: *“He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.”* But Paul tells us that unbelief will not make God’s words of none effect. There are a family of whom it is said, also in John chapter 1: *“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: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”*

We are no more worthy of Christ dwelling amongst us than was Nazareth, nor are we, by nature, any more ready to believe than its inhabitants were. If we do truly believe, then it is entirely for the same reason: *“but of God.”*

May we not be satisfied until we have the witness of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, that we are His children.

EDITOR’S POSTBAG

“Dear Mr Buss: Thank you very much for including the text from Proverbs 1. 10 in October’s *Friendly Companion*. At the age I am, I feel surrounded by sin at school, and this text gave me new courage to stand up to others, and has saved me from many a sinful act, which I fear I might otherwise have committed. Thank you.”

First answers to the monthly questions have been received from ABIGAIL BARNETT, BENJAMIN CHAPMAN and NATHANIEL ROSIER.

FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES**DAVID SAVES KEILAH**

The Philistines fought against a place called Keilah and stole their food. When David heard of it, he asked the LORD if he should go and help the people of Keilah. The LORD told him to go, but the men with David were afraid. They were afraid of Saul and they feared the armies of the Philistines even more.

David asked the LORD again and the LORD answered him: *“Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand.”* Then David and his men went and fought with the Philistines. They saved the people of Keilah.

King Saul heard that David was at Keilah. He called all his men of war to go and capture David. Keilah was a town with gates and bars. Saul thought that David would not be able to escape. Would the people of Keilah help David or would they turn him over to Saul? David did not trust the word of any man. He asked God to tell him! And God said: *“They will deliver thee up.”* Then David and his men quickly escaped from Keilah.

QUESTIONS:

1. What place did the Philistines fight against?
2. Whom did David ask if he should go and help them?
3. What did David ask God to do? (2 words)

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. The Philistines.
2. A mad man.
3. In a cave.

Contributed

“O LORD
God of Israel,
I beseech
Thee, tell
Thy servant.”
1 Samuel
23. 11.

BIBLE LESSONS**SAMARITANS RECEIVE THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST**

The people of Samaria are a solemn example of how quickly a gracious blessing and godly example may be forgotten and lost. A few years before Philip came to them, the Lord Jesus Himself had come and preached the kingdom of God unto them. The Bible tells us that many of the Samaritans believed on Him because of the words of the woman whom He met at Jacob's well, and many more believed because of His own words.

Yet Simon the sorcerer was able to convince the greater part of the city to believe that he was some great one. Now once again, at the preaching of Philip, the light of the gospel shone into their hearts. The people began to repent of their sins and were baptized, both men and women. Even Simon was overcome by the fervour of Philip's preaching, and more so at the miracles he wrought in the name of Jesus. Simon perceived it was done with a greater power than he had. He also desired to be baptized.

When the apostles at Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to help Philip establish the believers in the truth. What joy they must have felt when they saw the number of believers and the mighty work of God upon them!

When the people gathered together for worship, the apostles prayed for them *"that they might receive the Holy Ghost."* Although they had believed on the Lord Jesus, they had not yet received the special gifts of the Holy Ghost. This was given through the apostles laying their hands upon the people. It is important for us to remember that only through the apostles laying their hands upon them, the special gifts of the Holy Ghost were given. Not even Philip, who had first preached the gospel to them, had that power or grace given to him.

When Simon saw that the Holy Ghost was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he became very jealous. Now

Simon began to show that his believing and profession were not of God. He went to Peter and John with a good sum of money, saying: *“Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.”* Simon's only desire was to be esteemed a great man by the people again.

What an offence his offer of money was to the apostles! Peter looked at Simon with indignation and answered: *“Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.”*

Perhaps you are thinking that Peter was too severe with Simon. However, Peter knew that such a spirit as Simon displayed could do great damage to the new believers at Samaria. He told Simon: *“Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. ... For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.”* Yet Peter exhorted Simon in what was needed: *“Repent ... of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.”*

How fearful were Peter's words to Simon! Simon himself was overcome with fear and asked Peter to pray for him that the solemn judgment of God would not come upon him. The Bible does not tell us any more about Simon.

As for Peter and John, before returning to Jerusalem, they went through many of the villages in Samaria preaching the gospel of Jesus and bearing witness of the truth that Philip had spoken to them.

You can read about this in Acts chapter 8 verses 12 to 25.

QUESTIONS:

1. Whom did the apostles send from Jerusalem to help Philip?
2. What did Peter and John pray that the Samaritans would receive?
3. How was this given to the Samaritans?
4. What did Peter tell Simon was not right?
5. What did Peter tell Simon was needed? (First 5 words)

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. Saul.
2. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."
3. Saul. Put them in prison.
4. Simon.
5. Philip.

G. L. TenBroeke

A SEASONABLE MESSAGE

November is the month of *remembering*. We "remember, remember the fifth of November." Also we have Remembrance Day.

What is December the month of? No doubt you will think of all sorts of things, and give all sorts of answers. But I am going to say this: DECEMBER IS THE MONTH OF THANKSGIVING.

1. For one thing, it is the end of the year and, as we look back, we have so many, many things to thank God for. Especially we sing: "For Thy mercy and Thy grace, faithful through another year." May we not forget to give thanks to God. "*O give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good.*"

We have often told the story of the widow who was kind to the old man next door. (We knew her quite well. She lived in one of the steepest streets we have ever seen, in a place called Rising Bridge.) Well, this kind widow felt really sorry for the poor old man who lived all alone next door. So one day she made a dinner for him. He was delighted. He couldn't thank her enough.

So she kept on making him a dinner each day. But do you know what happened? After a time he began to take it for granted. He forgot to thank her for her kindness. He even grumbled if it was not just what he wanted. Then at last he started banging on the wall, shouting for his dinner, saying it

was late.

So the kind lady stopped taking him his dinner! And the poor man could do nothing about it.

May we not be like the ungrateful old man, taking God's mercies for granted.

2. What about our food during the year? Thousands are starving. A good old minister, William Tiptaft (have you read his life?) used to say at mealtimes: "Lord, make us conscious of the needs of others."

John G Paton, who preached to cannibals in the South Sea Islands, and saw some of their lives remarkably changed by the grace of God, told a remarkable story. Food on one of the islands was very short, and some were starving. The children were glad to eat leaves from the trees. Mr Paton promised them that when the ship arrived with supplies, they should all have something to eat.

At last the ship did arrive. The children, with shouts of joy, helped to unload the supplies. Soon a box of biscuits was opened and the children were told to help themselves. But there they stood with the biscuits in their hands. For a moment Mr Paton was perplexed. Why were these hungry children not eating the biscuits? But immediately he realised the answer. "Are you not going to give thanks to God before we begin?" they asked, almost with one voice. What a lesson for us!

May you not forget to say thank you to your kind relations and friends, and to God Himself.

3. But there is one thing that matters more than anything else. Paul once said: "*Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift.*" He meant the Lord Jesus. I think we would use the word "*indescribable.*" Perhaps you have visited some lovely scene and its beauty was too great to describe. Who can ever describe the greatness of God's gift of His dear Son? The greatness of His love?

May many of our "friendly companions" so be favoured by

God that they feel they have to give thanks to God for the Lord Jesus. Years ago at our Sabbath school prize giving the Pastor was given a prize also – a six-volume set of Flavel's Complete Works. The following year I asked them how many had read their prizes. They all had (or almost all). I said: "I have not read mine" – (3,000-4,000 pages!). But some of it I have read and the first book consists of forty-two beautiful sermons on the Lord Jesus. And again and again good John Flavel ends the sermon like this: "THANKS BE TO GOD FOR JESUS CHRIST."

If we, by the Holy Spirit's teaching, feel our sin and tremble at the thought of eternity to come, then, seeing Jesus Christ and Him crucified as our only hope, we *shall* say: "Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ."

It was the fourth Lord's Day in December 1957 – fifty-eight years ago. A young preacher was visiting a large chapel in the Midlands, quite well-attended. He tried to speak on these beautiful words: "*Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift,*" but felt that he had failed miserably.

Disappointed, he sat down. The old clerk stood up; it was a place where the hymns were read out verse by verse. Hymn 418, commencing at verse 3:

"He left His radiant throne on high,
Left the bright realms of bliss,
And came to earth to bleed and die;
Was ever love like this?"

The old man almost "wept out" the words. The tune *Twyford* was started. The music sounded like heaven on earth. The last line repeats and repeats again: "Was ever ... was ever ... was ever love like this?" The young preacher's heart melted and then he *could* say: "*Thanks be unto God.*"

If our readers this month are blessed with the same spirit, then sweet gratitude will flow, and December will be THE MONTH OF THANKSGIVING as never before.

The Lord Himself be with you and bless you.

B.A. Ramsbottom

THE STABLEMAN

Some years ago, a gentleman from New Zealand paid us a visit. He had retired from business, having been a partner in a large firm of ironmongers at Wellington, the capital city. He told us that before cars and lorries came into use, his firm had a small number of horse-drawn vans for delivering goods in Wellington and the surrounding district. This meant the use of a stable for the horses, and in consequence, a man was required on regular duty to look after both the horses and stable. He became known as “the stableman.”

Our New Zealand friend said that on one occasion he decided to pay a surprise visit to the stable, just to see for himself how the man in charge was fulfilling his duty. The stableman was from Ulster in Ireland, and our friend said he was a true Ulster Protestant.

He showed his master all over the stable premises, and at the end our friend said he warmly congratulated his servant, the Irishman, for the excellent way he was doing his job. The stableman expressed his thanks, and then said quietly, but with evident feeling: “Well, Sir, when I think that my dear Lord and Saviour left His heavenly glory to come down to this sin-stained earth, and condescended to be born in that lowly stable at Bethlehem, and was laid in that humble manger – and all for such sinners as I am – then surely the least I can do is to honour Him as I can in this work, which so reminds me day by day of how He came, and what He came to do.”

Our New Zealand friend said: “When I heard this, I was deeply touched, and it is something I shall never forget.”

H. Salkeld

QUESTION: Which is the tenth commandment?

ANSWER: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's. (Exodus 20. 17; Deuteronomy 5. 21)

CRUISE LINERS AT INVERGORDON

Each year many cruise liners call at the Port of Invergordon during the period from March to October. This year (2015) it is expected that over fifty ships will bring almost 90,000 passengers to the town. Some ships may call several times throughout the season. Whilst in the port, passengers and crew are given an invitation to the Sailors' Society's facilities in one of the local churches within a short walk from the quay. Bibles and Scripture portions are offered in a variety of languages to meet the requests of crew members who have their origin in countries throughout the world. There are many wonderful accounts of the power of God's Word touching the souls of these men and women. Last year up to 2,000 requests were met, and this year the requests have not diminished.

Earlier this year, when a liner docked at Invergordon on one of several visits, a young Christian lady, Anna¹, came to the church, received a Bible in her own language and spent a time of fellowship with the members of the Sailors' Society team. A few weeks later the same liner returned to Invergordon. Anna was eager to come ashore to the church and brought Elizabeth with her. Anna's crew member friend was of a different culture and from a different continent but had the same desire, and now delights to obtain God's Word in her own language.

On the liner's third visit, Anna returned to meet with team members, but because of the work routine aboard ship, Elizabeth was not free to come at the same time. However, later on that day, Elizabeth arrived taking with her a young lady of similar ethnic background to herself. Elizabeth and Paula were able to talk together, Paula having received her own Bible. The two women sat reading the Scriptures together. After a short time, Paula was seen to be in floods of tears. A little later Paula shared with a team member that she had been convicted of her sin, and gained a faith's view of Jesus Christ as her Saviour. The tears were tears of repentance and of joy. Elizabeth and Paula were able to return to the liner with their

Bibles, and to their work, rejoicing (Acts 8. 39).

September 2015

Note: ¹ The names have been changed and the countries not given, to avoid identity.

Contributed by Friends from Tain

THE GIRL'S QUESTION

The girl was just seven. She was upset. She knew there was something wrong with her, something badly wrong.

What do you think it was? She went to her minister to tell him about herself. She said: "I have been a great sinner all my life. I have lived seven years without God and without Christ."

Perhaps you would not think as the girl did. Would you say it was a great sin to live without thinking about God and Jesus Christ? Perhaps you are very surprised at what the girl said. I am sure you would think it a sin if someone stole your money, or if someone hit another person so hard that they fell down in great pain.

But we are to love God with all our heart. So it is a sin if we do not think about Him; or we do not obey Him; and if we do not speak to Him in prayer.

The girl asked the minister: "Do you think such a sinner as I can be forgiven?"

Yes, he did. He knew that all her sins could be taken away. So he told her about the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ. He is the One who died for sinners, to take away their sins. And we are to trust in Him.

By God's grace the girl trusted in Jesus. All her sins were forgiven. She did not need any more to be afraid that she would be punished for her sins. And she went on to live a godly life.

The Young People's Magazine (slightly adapted)

"Jesus called a little child unto Him." (Matthew 18. 2)

HOW ANTS COMMUNICATE (4)

No doubt you have watched the ants going and coming along their own paths leading to and from their nest. When two ants meet, they stop briefly and tap one another rapidly with their antennae, as though they had something to say. Whenever an ant discovers something good, she tells the rest and soon many more follow her. They do not keep a good thing to themselves. Their motto is: "Others"; to tell others, help others, share with others, etc.

Different experiments have been made which lead us to believe the ants have a language peculiar to themselves in which they make themselves known. If three or four larvae are placed a short distance from the nest and fifty in another place and an ant placed by each set of larvae, she will pick up one and carry it into the nest and soon other workers will follow each ant. But several times more ants will follow the ant where there are the greatest numbers of larvae. The ants must therefore succeed in making their comrades understand there is more urgent need for help in one place, than the other. Other experiments could be made which would reveal the fact that they possess an intelligence that is equal to the emergencies which arise. They have a language of their own, know how to make themselves known and have no trouble in understanding each other.

Initiative evidently originates with individual ants. A worker hitting upon an original idea, which in her view is advantageous to the community, but is unable to carry it out single-handed, usually tries to persuade the first ant she meets to assist her. If she is dull of apprehension, which may sometimes be the case among the working class, the ant will repeat the persuasive strokes of the antennae. She will sometimes employ force by carrying the stupid or reluctant comrade in her mouth to the place of action. Soon others are converted to fall in line and the task undertaken is accomplished. The original inventor of the scheme modestly

disappears in the crowd around her without claiming any distinction.

The manner of communicating is by the number of times they tap their antennae, or the strokes they make in speaking to their comrades. The message intended to be conveyed depends on the nature of the strokes, whether quick or slow, heavy or light, long or short intervals, on the top, or on the side of the head, or only on the antennae, etc. We may know very little how they communicate, or what they say, but the ants understand each other very well.

At one time only one language was spoken by the whole world. When people became wicked, and followed their own sinful devices, God confused their tongues and caused them to scatter over the earth. At the present time there are over five thousand different languages and dialects. The Bible, or portions of it, has been translated into more than a thousand of these.

It is a remarkable thing that God understands all of these languages. It is estimated that there are two billion people on the earth. If these two billion people would all pray unto God at the same time, in the five thousand dialects, God could give personal attention and understand every one as though only one prayed to Him. If all people would pray to God, it would be as if there was one great central telephone exchange, and two billion lines, all leading to one office and two billion voices in five thousand languages coming to only one operator and he answering each one in their own language at the same time. The Lord can do this very thing.

Since the Lord can do that, when He made the ants, He endowed them with an ant language so that they can communicate and make themselves known to each other for their welfare. But have we ever realised what a blessed privilege is ours in prayer? God can make Himself known to us and we can talk to Him.

Joshua Stauffer

“HONOURABLE MINU” – AN ALLEGORY

One day, a poor man had to travel from his own little village to Accra – one of the big towns on the coast. This man could not speak their language, and they could not speak his.

As he approached Accra, he met a great herd of cows. He was surprised at the number of them, and he wondered to whom they belonged. Seeing a man with them, he asked: “To whom do these cows belong?” The man replied, “Minu,” which means, “I do not understand.” The poor man, however, thought that “Minu” was the name of the owner of the cows and exclaimed: “Mr Minu must be very rich.”

He then entered the town. Very soon he saw a fine large building, and wondered to whom it belonged. The man he asked did not understand his question, so he also answered: “Minu.” “Dear me! What a rich fellow Mr Minu must be!” cried the poor man.

Coming to an even finer building with beautiful gardens round it, he again asked the owner’s name. Again came the answer: “Minu.” “How wealthy Mr Minu is!” said the poor man.

Next he came to the beach. There he saw a magnificent steamer being loaded in the harbour. He asked: “To whom does this fine vessel belong?” “Minu,” replied the man.

“To the Honourable Minu also! He is the richest man I ever heard of!” cried the poor man.

Having finished his business, he set off for home. As he passed down one of the streets, he met men carrying a coffin. He asked the name of the dead person, and received the usual reply: “Minu.” “Poor Mr Minu!” he cried. “He has left all his wealth and died just as a poor person would do! In future, I will be happy with my tiny house and little money.” And then he went home quite pleased.

“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Matthew 16. 26).

“We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” (1 Timothy 6. 7).

William H Barker (Contributed by Oliver Collins)

EARTHQUAKE PUSHES KATHMANDU FURTHER SOUTH

In the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes that rocked Nepal, scientists have revealed that the land beneath the capital Kathmandu moved southwards about 3m (10 ft).

Professor Sandy Steacy, head of the physical sciences department at the University of Adelaide, Australia, said the earthquake on 25 April occurred on the Himalayan Thrust fault. "The relative movement across the fault zone was on the order of three metres at its greatest, just north of Kathmandu," she said.

The incredible forces that brought about these earthquakes are small compared with the convulsions of the earth's crust that pushed up the mountains towards the end of Noah's Flood. These terrible modern tragedies and human suffering provide another reminder that we live in a fallen world, which is why bad things happen.

Creation

"HE HOLDS ALL NATURE IN HIS HAND"

During the grandchildren's holidays, two of our elderly readers were asked to look after their budgerigar. This they willingly did and very carefully. One day the weather was warm and sunny, so they lifted the cage off its stand and stood it on the lawn for some while. Suddenly a shower of rain came, so the grandfather rushed out and grabbed the cage, forgetting that there was no base! The bird flew out and was soon over the hedge, enjoying its new found freedom.

For several minutes frantic efforts were made to reclaim the bird, all to no avail. When all else failed, they knew there was nothing else to do, but pray. So earnest prayer was made to God who holds all nature in His hand. To the amazement of these friends, the bird flew out of the hedge right on to the lap of the grandfather. Soon the little bird was back in its cage and a doxology of thanksgiving rose heavenwards from the hearts of the grateful grandparents. He, who directed the ravens to Elijah, still lives!

Editor

BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES**CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS (XII)**

In the final part of this study we want to observe that in the lives of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we see the truth of that word the Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans: *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose"* (Romans 8. 28). What a mercy if we know this truth in our lives, and we only know it as we experience it. Often things look so different from our stand point.

Think of Jacob when he had to let his beloved Benjamin go with his brothers to Egypt. Benjamin was the true brother of Joseph, they being both the sons of Jacob's beloved wife Rachel who died at the birth of Benjamin. Jacob exclaimed: *"All these things are against me"* (Genesis 42. 36). In reality, through the providence of God, all these things were working for him. May we consider this when to our feelings everything is going wrong: remember that God is in control and makes no mistakes.

In Genesis 45 it is recorded how Joseph made himself known unto his brethren and how in this he is a beautiful type of Christ. *"And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life"* (Genesis 45. 4-5).

Jesus Christ is our elder-brother; when the Son of God assumed human nature He became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He came to live a life that we could never live, a life in perfect obedience to the holy law of God, for us. He came to offer a sacrifice that we could never offer: it was pure and holy and well pleasing to His Father. In that holy sacrifice the church, the bride of Christ, has been redeemed from sin, Satan and the curse. In that holy life His beloved bride is made righteous. So we read in this chapter: *"And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save*

your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God" (Genesis 45. 7-8). Consider the words of the apostles: *"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins"* (Acts 5. 30-31).

Joseph then promises them the land of Goshen in Egypt. Goshen means the land of plenty. We must think of the heavenly Joseph and He promises His bride those mansions of eternal glory, everlasting happiness, where King Jesus lives and reigns forever. Consider these words: *"And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him"* (Genesis 45. 26-28). How true this is of every living child of God, our heavenly Joseph has 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).

My dear beloved friends,

"What more can He say than to you He has said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

If the blessed Spirit seals these sacred truths into your heart you will say with Jacob: *"It is enough."* How blessed those words of our heavenly Joseph: *"All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."*

May our gracious God make the Lord Jesus unto us a living bright reality and may He guide us unto His heavenly kingdom, his land of Goshen: *"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His*

people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new (Revelation 21. 3-5).

J. R. Rutt

BIBLE QUESTIONS

This month the questions are about SHEEP AND SHEPHERDS. 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. Who was the first shepherd mentioned in the Bible – described as “a keeper of sheep”? (Genesis 4. 2)
2. Which shepherd was anointed king, long before he actually came to the throne? (1 Samuel 16. 11-13)
3. Jesus said: “I am the Good Shepherd.” What does the Good Shepherd do? (John 10. 11)
4. Jesus spoke about a “hireling.” In what ways was he different from a good shepherd? (John 10. 12-13)
5. Once some bad shepherds tried to drive away women who were drawing water for their sheep. Who resisted the bad shepherds and helped water the flock? (Exodus 2. 16-17)
6. Jesus spoke a parable about a man having a hundred sheep. What would he do if one was lost? (Luke 15)
7. “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.” (Psalm 23). Why was the psalmist not afraid?
8. Which prophecy in Zechariah 13 about the shepherd and his sheep did Jesus refer to before He suffered? (Mark 14)
9. In God’s denunciation of bad shepherds in Ezekiel 34, what five things (in one verse) did He say they had not done?
10. Who, in describing his life as a shepherd, said, “In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes”?

ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. The disciples were disputing which of them should be the greatest.
2. "Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth Me: and whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent Me."
3. The resurrection of the dead, which the Sadducees did not believe, but the Pharisees did.
4. Moses had married an Ethiopian woman.
5. The Jews contended that circumcision was necessary to salvation.
6. "This Man is not of God, because He keepeth not the Sabbath day." "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" (John 9. 16)
7. "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing." (John 9. 32-33)
8. They had built an altar near the river Jordan. (Joshua 22. 10)
9. "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Mark 2. 17)
10. "Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" (John 7. 42)

Contributed

**A PERSONAL TESTIMONY TO FAMILIES, YOUNG AND OLD
On the act of Entering a Public Place of Worship on the Sabbath**

Firstly, I love to go to God's House on the Sabbath with my much-loved 1611 Authorised Version of the Bible in hand because I am declaring to all the world that I believe "*in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day*" (Exodus 20. 11). As I go through the doors of the house of God, I am saying to the men of science, falsely so-called, that God made us, and not we ourselves – a verse which is an out-and-out denial that we evolved from apes (Psalm 100. 3); (1 Timothy 6. 20).

A. Randalls

EMMANUEL

As *Man* He entered Cana's feast,

A humble guest to dine;

As *God* He moved the water there,

And turned it into wine.

As *Man* He suffered weariness,

And rested on a well;

As *God* He pierced a sinner's heart,

And saved a soul from hell.

As *Man* He climbed the mountain's height,

A suppliant to be;

As *God* He left the place of prayer

And walked upon the sea.

As *Man* He slept within a boat,

O'erpowered by needful sleep;

As *God* He rose, rebuked the winds,

And stilled the angry deep.

As *Man* He wept in heartfelt grief

Beside a loved one's grave;

As *God* He burst the bars of death,

Almighty still to save.

As *Man* He yielded to His foes,

Submitting to be bound;

As *God* His presence overawed,

And threw them to the ground.

Such was our Lord, in life or death,

In dual nature One;

The woman's seed in very deed,

And God's eternal Son.

O Child! O Son of God, made Man,

May Thy high praise increase,

Thou "Wonderful," Thou "Mighty God,"

Eternal "Prince of Peace."

Bible Witness

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and Young People*

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OUR MAGAZINES

This issue of *The Friendly Companion* completes the 141st volume of the magazine. It is through God's great goodness that there is still a desire for the truths set forth for our younger and older friends within its pages. Sincere thanks are extended to the many helpers who, behind the scenes, submit articles, type and proof-read the pages before publication each month. Their help is invaluable.

The prices for the magazine for 2016 are shown on the inside page of the cover.

At this time we extend our prayerful good wishes to the esteemed Editor of The Gospel Standard Magazine, as he lays down this office after forty-five years of loyal and loving service to our churches. For several years Mr Ramsbottom also edited The Friendly Companion, during which time the circulation showed a marked increase. May he prove that 'bread cast upon the waters is being found, and will yet be found after many days.' Likewise our prayerful good wishes are extended to our esteemed friend, Mr T. Rosier pastor of the church at Maidstone, who will take up the editorship of *The Gospel Standard* in January, if the Lord will.

'Brethren, pray for us' as we would, with God's help, continue to serve our generation in this small way.

Editor