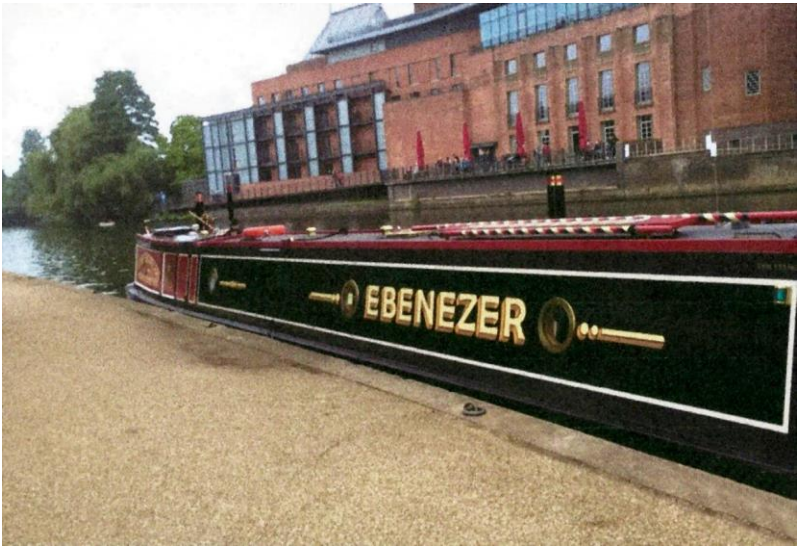


# *The Friendly Companion*



“Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.”  
1 Samuel 7. 12.

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*January 2016*

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### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

In October of last year, I was privileged to visit a tiny hamlet in Wales, where in years gone by a young Welsh girl, called Mary Jones, lived. She had a great thirst for the Word of God, and longed to possess a Bible in her own language, Welsh, which was very rare at that time. Over a considerable period she managed to save enough money, and so she set out from her home to walk a distance of twenty-six miles over the mountains to Bala, where she had heard that a minister, called Thomas Charles, had some Welsh Bibles. When she arrived there, she found that there were none for her to buy at that time. This bitterly disappointed this young seeker, so much so that Thomas Charles bid her wait for a few days to see if he could obtain a copy for her. So after a day or so she was able to return from Bala to her home, retracing her steps over the mountains carrying her precious treasure!

This action caused Thomas Charles to call a meeting in London, at which the leading ministers of the day agreed to set up a society for the distribution of Bibles. This was called the British and Foreign Bible Society: now The Bible Society. From this beginning, eventually, came The Trinitarian Bible Society which came into being when the original society began to depart from “sound” translations of the Scriptures.

If you stand near the ruins of the cottage where Mary lived, you will see a stream running rapidly past and on down the mountain valley. Standing on the bridge overlooking this stream, you see a picture of what has happened since that momentous walk. The stream (spoken of in Revelation 22. 1) representing the Word of God, distributes its waters; so millions of Bibles have been sent out to nations, all around the globe, bringing the sacred truths of the Scriptures within the reach of sinners.

As we begin a New Year, may we remember to value the Scriptures, while we have the freedom to read them, not forgetting the great cost to our forefathers that we should

enjoy this privilege for ourselves. Above all may we heed the words of Jesus when He said: *“Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.”*

The key to a truly Happy New Year lies in holding fast the Word of God in our hearts and lives.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

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### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

We hope that the owners of the barge named “Ebenezer” on our front cover have named it because they understand its meaning. It means: **“Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.”** You can read of the history of the name in 1 Samuel 7.

In the time of Eli, the High Priest, the Ark of the Covenant had been captured by the Philistines and taken into their country. God permitted this because of the sins of His people who had turned away from the pure worship of their God. After God had plagued the Philistines for their desecration of the Ark, it was sent back to Israel and received into the house of a man called Abinadab where it remained for twenty years. The children of Israel wanted the Ark to be restored to Shiloh and felt it was a sign of God’s displeasure that it remained away so long. This brought a time of repentance in which Samuel exhorted the people at a place called Mizpeh. Here the nation gathered together to seek the LORD again, led by Samuel. While they worshipped, the Philistines heard of the gathering and determined to violently disrupt it. When the Israelites saw their old enemies reappear, they begged Samuel to pray to the LORD for them. At this, Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it wholly unto the LORD. The word “wholly” was a solemn reminder to the Israelites that their worship of God had at best been only partial, as they had also worshipped a false God called Ashtaroath. The blood of the sucking lamb reminded them of their need of forgiveness through a sacrifice on their behalf.

In answer to Samuel's prayer, the LORD caused a great thunderstorm to break out, which brought chaos amongst the Philistines, who were then chased by the Israelites to whom the LORD gave a great victory. It was after this remarkable answer to prayer and deliverance that Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen and called it "Ebenezer" to remind the children of Israel that it was the LORD who had given them this victory; but the word "hitherto" was a reminder that as they were still going to need further help along the way they would prove God to be faithful to them still. They also proved that the way back after sinning is not easy. *"The way of transgressors is hard."* However the LORD was at hand to help them as they returned to the pure worship of His great Name.

As we begin another year, many of our readers can say, looking back: *"Hitherto hath the LORD helped us,"* and looking forward may we be like Paul who on one occasion *"thanked God, and took courage."*

---

### CHRIST THE ROCK

On the border of Dorset, between Bournemouth and Poole, there stood for many years a great heap of rubble known locally as "Simpson's Folly." One by the name of Simpson desired a residence near the sea. In time a pleasing house stood there – but not for long! Sufficient attention was not given to the foundation. It was built upon sand. When the wind and rain beat upon it, the foundations gave way and the house collapsed.

Are we building on sand, or on the Rock? *"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ"* (1 Corinthians 3. 11).

May our testimony ever be:

"On Christ the solid Rock I stand,  
All other ground is sinking sand."

Is it yours?

*Selected*

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

David hid from Saul in caves and woods and mountains. Saul looked for him every day, but God kept David safe.

One day Jonathan, the son of Saul, went and found David in the woods. He comforted David and told him to trust in God. Jonathan said: *"Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel ...."* Jonathan and David promised before the LORD that they would always be kind to each other and their children. Then Jonathan returned to his home.

The men of Ziph offered to help Saul. They would find where David was hiding and help capture him. Saul came with all his army to search for David. *"And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain."* David hurried to get away, as Saul and his men were about to take him.

Just then a message came to Saul. The Philistines had come into the land. Saul must go at once and fight them. He had to stop following after David. In this wonderful way God helped David.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who went and found David in the woods?
  2. The men of what place offered to help Saul?
  3. What came to Saul just as he was about to take David?
- 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. Keilah.
2. The LORD.
3. Tell him.  
*Contributed*

*“And  
Jonathan ...  
strengthened  
his hand  
in God.”  
1 Samuel  
23. 16.*

## BIBLE LESSONS

## THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH

When Peter and John arrived in Samaria, Philip humbly yielded the position of prominence to them. After they returned to Jerusalem, Philip himself was directed by an angel of God to leave Samaria and go down to the desert toward Gaza. What a strange command! Must he leave the place where his ministry had been so blessed to go down into the desert? Yet Philip did not reason with God or question the command. The Bible tells us: *"He arose and went."*

As he walked southward along the lonely desert road, he must have wondered why he had been sent to such a desolate place. Suddenly a chariot appeared, coming down the road from Jerusalem. The man who sat in the chariot was a eunuch who served the Queen of Ethiopia. He had great authority in her kingdom and was in charge of all her treasures.

Although the eunuch was not a Jew, he had heard of the God of the Jews and desired to go up to Jerusalem to worship at His temple. The journey would have taken a long time as it was over a thousand miles. We wonder if he heard any of the apostles while he was at Jerusalem.

As he rode along, the eunuch read aloud from a scroll that he, no doubt, had obtained at Jerusalem. It was a copy of the prophecy of Isaiah. The Holy Spirit spoke to Philip: *"Go near, and join thyself to this chariot."* As Philip ran after the chariot, he heard the Ethiopian reading from the portion of Isaiah which tells of the sorrows and death of Jesus. *"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before His shearer, so opened He not His mouth; in His humiliation His judgment was taken away: and who shall declare His generation? for His life is taken from the earth."*

Coming alongside the chariot, Philip asked the eunuch if he understood what he was reading. Although he was a great man, the eunuch was not ashamed to say: *"How can I, except some man should guide (teach) me?"* Although Philip was a stranger to him, he invited Philip to come and sit with him. He



asked Philip if the prophet was writing about himself or of another man.

Now Philip understood why he had to leave the work in Samaria. Philip began from the same Scripture and preached Jesus unto him. How quickly the time passed! The Ethiopian eunuch must have felt his heart burning within as the Scriptures were opened up, just as the two disciples on the road to Emmaus experienced when Jesus talked with them. As the eunuch listened, the Holy Ghost opened his understanding and by faith he saw Jesus Christ as that Lamb led to the slaughter at Calvary.

Philip spoke with such joy, love, and authority, while the eunuch listened with earnest attention, holding fast every word spoken by Philip. While he was in Jerusalem, most of what he would have heard about Jesus from the Jewish leaders would have been an evil report.

As Philip spoke of the death of Jesus in the place of all His people and then of His burial and resurrection, it seemed to answer every need the eunuch felt. Without a doubt, Philip told him that Jesus had now ascended up into heaven to appear in the presence of God for His people.

Suddenly the eunuch commanded the chariot to be stopped. Pointing out a place of water, the eunuch asked: *"See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"* Philip said to him: *"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."* The eunuch answered: *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."*

Philip led the eunuch down into the water and baptized him. As they came up out of the water, the Spirit of God caught Philip away. So the eunuch saw him no more, but we are told that the eunuch *"went on his way rejoicing."*

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 8 verses 26 to 39.*

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. To where did the Spirit direct Philip to go down? (2 words)
2. Where had the eunuch been to worship?
3. Whose prophecy was he reading when Philip came near?

4. What did he need someone to do that he might understand?
5. What answer did he give to Philip's words, "If thou believest."?  
(10 words)

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

*G. L. TenBroeke*

### **ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS**

1. Peter and John.
2. The Holy Ghost.
3. Through the apostles laying their hands upon the people.
4. His heart.
5. "Repent of this thy wickedness."

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### **THROUGH THE FLOOD WAVES**

#### **A Narrative of the Floods in the Netherlands in 1916**

Things had not been right for many years between Gerrit and Kees Hospels. They were both sons of the old Kris Hospels and the dividing of the inheritance was the beginning of the brothers' feud. Until the death of their old father, both had been employed on the farm. It was a large farmstead, situated on the inside of a dyke, and a distance of fifteen minutes walk from the village.

When the old man died, Gerrit and Kees were the only heirs, and since their mother had also passed away several years earlier, they could now divide the inheritance that was left to them. And that happened. But that is also when the feud started. Not about the farm. They agreed on that. Father had determined that Gerrit, who was the eldest, should stay on the farm. Kees was to use the money which came to him to start on another homestead. That was no problem.

No, the feud started about a small, oak chest. It was a solid little box, with copper fittings and beautiful carvings. The lid was decorated with the symbols of faith, hope and love. It was an heirloom that had been passed from father to son over the past two hundred years. The old Kris Hospels had used it to save precious and important documents. Since they were little

children, both boys had been familiar with the little chest. But with the division of the inheritance, the little chest had disappeared: Kees had accused Gerrit of embezzlement, and Gerrit suspected Kees had taken it. They both accused the other, without offering any proof. The only ground Gerrit had was that, while his father was already ailing shortly before his death, Gerrit had been away for a week to attend a market at Honover. To him it was obvious that the chest had disappeared then. In the meantime the brothers could not come to peaceful terms because of this, and the disputed chest was the cause of years of discord.

Gerrit and his family took over on the old homestead, and Kees moved to a neighbouring polder, where he built himself a new homestead. Things went very well for him there, and gradually he bought all the land that bordered his farm. Within a few years he owned the whole polder. Gerrit was also successful with his farm, although he could not match the quests of his younger brother. He did not buy any additional land, but was satisfied, nonetheless. Year followed year, and yet there was no sign of any reconciliation between the two brothers. The pastor had applied all his persuasive powers, sometimes with the one, and sometimes with the other, always without success.

One certain winter evening, Gerrit and his family were sitting by the woodstove. Outside a storm was raging fiercely. It had been stormy for a week already, but it had not reached the severity of this particular evening, the 14th January 1916. To make matters worse, a north westerly wind blew incessantly, and the sea rushed into the harbours and river inlets.

"Is everything locked up well, Jan?" Gerrit Hospels asked his young hired hand, who had joined the family by the stove.

"Yes, boss: I sealed all the windows and locked all the doors," said Jan, "but I will walk around to check if everything is still okay."

Jan went, but came back quickly with the message that

everything was in order. Gerrit Hospels was satisfied. "And how is the wind, Jan?" he asked. "Still steady north-westerly," replied the young man, "that will mean a tidal wave if it keeps up, boss."

Hospels took out his almanac and looked up the tides. "At eleven-thirty it's high tide," he announced, "that will be quite a tide!"

"We won't be in danger here, will we?" asked the farmer's wife, as she paused with her mending.

"No," said the farmer, adding after some thought, "but for my brother Kees it could mean disaster."

At the usual hour, the family Hospels made ready for bed, and soon all were resting peacefully. Only Gerrit could not fall asleep. The fear of the water filled his mind. He could not explain why. In all the years in the polder he had experienced many fierce storms. But he never had such a premonition of disaster as he had now, that it kept him awake. He tossed and turned in his bed. He heard the storm roar, and the old elms creak and groan. Again he thought of his brother. What if something should happen? Something really terrible. What if the dyke can't hold the water out and the polder would be flooded?

He could not rest, but just wanted to be sure. Quietly he left his bed, dressed himself, and went outdoors. Quickly he walked to the top of the dyke, and what he saw caused great alarm within him.

The polder there in front of him, the polder where his brother Kees lived, was one mass of water! The embankment had not been able to resist the battering waves, and gave out. As a tiny island in the middle of a sea, the farmhouse of Kees Hospels stuck up above the water. From the attic window, a light could be seen, and now Gerrit thought he saw someone's head outside the window. Then he heard a muffled call for help. What could he do? Only a few meters away the water dashed against the dyke. The village was far away, and it was almost midnight. No one else would be aware of their plight more than he. Should he help his brother? Again he thought

about the chest, but immediately he forced those thoughts out of his mind.

A silent sigh for help went up to God for the safety of his brother and his family. Gerrit called with both hands as a trumpet, that help was on the way. Then he turned and ran. Shortly all the family at his home were up and listened with bewilderment to the story of the farmer. "We must try to pull the boat over the dyke," said Gerrit, "that's all we have. There's no other boat nearby."

It was a big job, struggling with the heavy boat in the middle of the night. When the boat was finally in the water, the farmer and Jan stepped in. They were about to cast off, when they heard a splashing in the water, and a moment later a black dog scrambled up the dyke. It was Bello, Kees Hospels' dog. Bello was carrying a soggy piece of paper in his snout. By the light of the lantern they had brought with them, Gerrit read that Kees and his family were desperate for help. They were in the attic and water was still rising fast. Kees had sent Bello with this message in the hope that it would bring help to them. Quickly they rowed toward the farm. What misery! They found the family shivering with cold, in the attic. First the children were wrapped in blankets and delivered to the dyke, where Gerrit's wife took them in her care. Then they went back for Kees and his wife.

"Did you see Bello already?" asked Kees.

"Yes, I did, but we were already on our way to save you. What happened to the animals?"

"They all drowned," was the listless answer. Silently they rowed further to the dyke.

The farmstead on the other side of the dyke was a flurry of activity that night. A family, suddenly robbed of house and home, was taken in with genuine hospitality. There was not a thought about the feud. The gulf that for so many years had separated the two brothers flowed away with the floodwaters. Although not completely erased, at least for the present it was

not visible. Gerrit did not think of a precious chest; or valuable papers; of a rich farmer who may have embezzled a portion of his inheritance. His only thought now was of a deeply tried man, with a sorrowing family, and he was filled with deep sympathy for him.

"Kees," said Gerrit, "Jan and I will row back to the farm once. Maybe there will still be something floating around, that we can save. If we wait until daylight it might be too late."

Kees made no objections, although he did think Gerrit was going through too much trouble for him. Gerrit was determined, and the rest of the night he and Jan searched the water around the farm. Towards dawn, they returned with a boat full of rescued items. Kees stood waiting on the dyke and grabbed the rope to pull them in.

"Jan," said Gerrit, "go to the barn and get the horse and the cart, to load up all these things." And as soon as Jan left, Gerrit said: "Kees, come here in the boat."

Kees stepped in. Then Gerrit pulled a few items out of the way, and uncovered the chest with the copper fittings, and showed it to his brother. The symbols of faith, hope and love were exposed on the lid.

Ashamed, Kees lowered his gaze. He stammered a few words, which were meant to ask for forgiveness, and a promise to return everything he could.

"You won't have to return anything, Kees," said Gerrit. "It has been taken away from you fourfold by the floodwave, and I thank God that this flood has been used to bring us together again. It is a heavy blow for you, Kees, a heavy cross, which the Lord has used to that end."

Kees gave no answer, but the handshake that he offered his brother was answer enough.

Thanks to a tidal wave, the gulf between two brothers disappeared from the earth.

*P. De Zeeuw JGsn. Translated from "De Gezins Gids"  
January 1967*

**EDWARD SAMUEL (1)**

*Edward Samuel was brought up as a strict Jew but, having to flee from his native Poland, was in the providence of God led to England. During his journeying he had a few amazing escapes from death. An interesting sidelight of his account of his early days is the view we are given of Jewish life and customs. Brought to know Jesus as the true Messiah, led to know the doctrines of grace, and convinced of believers' baptism, he became a preacher of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. For many years he was a minister at Sleaford in Lincolnshire and became well-known in Strict Baptist circles.* B.A.R.

**Early Days**

I was born in Russian Poland, the evening before the Passover. My parents were very observant of their religion. I have a perfect recollection of my mother's grandfather. He held the rank of a Rabbi over many Jews. He was noted as a learned student in the Biblical writings and traditions. He had to judge as to things being ceremonially clean or unclean, and at times if people had broken the Sabbath and in civil questions relating to fraud or debts, the magistrates often sought his opinion in disputes between Jews and Gentiles. He lived fifteen miles away from our home and one day I went to visit him. He had not been at home the previous night, something which did not cause any concern as he was accustomed to spending three nights each week in solitary meditation. I went early in the morning according to the custom to have his hands laid on my head to receive his blessing. When I met him I saw that there was something wrong with his nose and on enquiring what had happened, he replied: "Last night whilst reading I fell asleep over the candle, burnt my nose and set my cap on fire."

Coming up to the Day of Atonement he would fast every other day. On the Day of Atonement he would speak to the congregation dressed entirely in white, wearing no shoes that day, nor leaving the synagogue the whole day. I remember when I was not more than eleven years old seeing the whole

congregation in tears because of his preaching. Before the Day of Atonement the most respectable families used to bring their children to my grandfather that he might bless them. When grandfather came to visit us he would preach on the Sabbath and the following days the Jews would bring their little children that he might lay his hands on their heads and bless them. In this way I understand the words of the Lord Jesus Christ: "*Suffer the little children to come unto Me,*" not to sprinkle, or baptise, but to bless them.

Once when having a meal with my grandparents, I did something to displease my grandmother and she stretched out her hand across the table and with great vehemence said: "As sure as I am born you will kick the bucket." This phrase to an Englishman is a vulgarism for death, but to a continental Jew it means becoming an apostate from the truth of Judaism. Thus she prophesied truth. Did not Balaam prophecy that there would be a Star rise out of Jacob, and Caiaphas that there was a need for one Man to die that the whole nation perish not? On finding out my grandmother's meaning, I began to cry saying, "Mother, I will never become a Gentile, no not I."

When an infant, I had smallpox and measles together, through which for a time I lost my sight. The doctor who attended me thought I should not recover my sight. One summer day, the servant took me out for a little air. As we were walking along we met an old Gentile woman who said she could cure me. The servant girl took the old woman back home, who when my mother saw her was much afraid, as the Jews consider that many of the old Gentile women are witches. My mother, after much discussion, decided to let her try her cure. All she asked for was a pewter plate, a lighted candle and a piece of clean linen rag. She then took the piece of rag and set light to it and put the burning rag on the pewter plate. When the rag was consumed, it left a kind of yellow moisture which she applied over my eyes with a feather. Doing this each day for two weeks, I started to be able to see again, although it



left a great weakness behind, which I expect to carry to the grave. Over the goodness of my covenant God in directing this means, He knew what He intended to do with me – to call me by grace – to send me to preach the everlasting gospel, which requires much reading, therefore in His infinite mercy He was pleased to restore my sight.

Again, once on the way to the synagogue, whilst playing with a piece of wood, I fell into a lime pit full of water. I remember sinking under the water the second time, when an old man came along and pulled me out. The watchful eye of God is over His dear children.

(To be continued)

*Adapted*

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### A CHILD'S LAST TESTIMONY

In the early years of the last century, a young lad developed a tumour on his tongue which necessitated the full removal of the tongue, and of course the sad prospect of never being able to talk again. On the day of the operation he was wheeled into the operating theatre and before the anaesthetist gave the necessary injection, the surgeon asked the lad if there was anything he wished to say before he operated.

The lad, who was a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, turned to the theatre staff around his bed and quoted the following words of William Cowper:

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

This unflinching testimony had a profound effect on the listening staff, and more than one found their eyes filled with tears. Sadly, in one sense, the lad did not survive the operation. However, on the other hand, his request was speedily fulfilled as that day he joined the redeemed church above in singing the praises of the Lamb of God, his Saviour and Lord without a stammering tongue.

*Editor*

**COULD A SPIDER REALLY CREEP ACROSS THE SEAS?**

Spiders are able to travel across water using their legs as sails, and silk as an anchor, scientists have found.

The revelations – bound to horrify arachnophobes (people who are afraid of spiders) – help to explain how the creatures can travel vast distances, even over seas. And it solves the puzzle of how they survive if they accidentally land on water, as it is already known that they use strands of silk to catch the wind and ‘fly’ up to eighteen miles a day.

Researchers from the University of Nottingham collected 325 spiders from small islands in English nature reserves. The arachnids came from the linyphiid and tetragnathid families, which together represent around 13% of all known species. They were then blown across trays of water that were turbulent, still, fresh and salt. Many lifted their legs to create “sails,” while dropping a length of silk slowed them down or fixed them to a rock. Some even used their abdomens to catch the breeze.

The findings could explain why spiders have been known to traverse long distances, often turning up on islands a considerable distance from the nearest shore. It could also increase their chances of survival after heavy rains or floods.

Morito Hayashi from the Natural History Museum said: “Even Charles Darwin noted that spiders kept dropping on the Beagle miles away from the sea shore. But given that spiders are terrestrial, and that they do not have control where they will travel when ballooning (flying), how could evolution allow such risky behaviour. We’ve now found that spiders actively adopt postures that allow them to use the wind direction to control their journey on water. They even drop silk and stop on the water surface when they want.” He added that the ability to sail compensates for the risk of uncontrolled flights. Spiders which were particularly good at flying were also found to be the best sailors.

Study co-author Sara Goodacres said: “Spiders can move from one land mass to another and potentially across huge spatial scales through the air. If landing on water poses no

problem, then in a week or two they could be a long way from where they started.”

The study is published in the journal BMC Evolutionary Biology.

Colin Fernandez

*(But we attribute this amazing account to our Creator, God.)*

*Ed.*

---

## LINES WRITTEN IN CRUDEN'S CONCORDANCE

by the late Joseph Irons,  
preacher at Grove Chapel, Camberwell

With God the Holy Spirit for my guide  
And Cruden's useful volume by my side  
I'll search my Bible, there my Saviour find  
And still proclaim His glories to mankind.  
His rich atoning blood and special grace  
Shall be my constant theme in every place.  
I'll cast wood, hay and stubble all aside  
And nothing preach but Jesus crucified.  
'Tis Cruden's kindness points from text to text  
Without his aid I should be much perplexed  
And since he condescends so much to tell  
Let those who use him always use him well.

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## BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

### THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

I AM is a name given in Scripture to the eternal uncreated God, *"in whom we live and move and have our being."*

We read in Genesis 1: *"In the beginning God."* This statement has a far deeper meaning than appears on the surface. The word *beginning* in this context is referring to the eternity of God. Moses in Psalm 90 gives us some very clear guidance on this: *"LORD, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou badst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."*

In Exodus 3, when the LORD called Moses to lead the

children of Israel out of Egypt, He revealed Himself to His servant through a bush that was burning brightly, on fire; but the strange thing was the bush was not consumed by the fire. This caused Moses to turn aside to see this strange thing. As Moses approached the bush, the LORD spoke to him from within the bush and told him to take the shoes from off his feet, for the place where he stood was holy ground. Holy: because of the presence of the holy God. First, He said to Moses: *"I am the God of thy father."* Then He said in verse 8: *"And I am come down to deliver them."*

We want to draw your attention to the "I AMs." This is significant in what follows as Moses felt his inadequacy for this great work and said to the LORD that the children of Israel would not know him or believe him. So the LORD speaks to His servant: *"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is His name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations"* (Exodus 3. 13-15). This sacred name: "I AM THAT I AM," will form the foundation of this study as it reveals to us something of the Being and existence of the eternal God.

When Jesus Christ, the Son of God, reveals Himself to His servant John on the Isle of Patmos, He reveals Himself in a very similar way: *"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty"* (Revelation 1. 8). In other words, I AM THAT I AM: what I have been from all eternity and what I will be for all eternity to come. Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet and Omega is the last letter. The New Testament was

written in Greek as that was a common language at the time of Christ. As there is not the equivalent word in Greek for that sacred incommunicable name "Jehovah" it is paraphrased: *"which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty."* This is past, present and future eternal: in other words from everlasting to everlasting. The Apostle Paul writes: *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever"* (Hebrews 13. 8). This again is a paraphrase of the name "Jehovah," showing us that Jesus Christ is really and truly God, the eternal Son of the Father, the second Person in the Godhead, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The term "I AM THAT I AM" refers to the Trinity, the one true God, in essence eternally one, as we read in 1 John 5 verse 7: *"These three are one"*: One blessed eternal God.

In the opening and sublime verses of John's gospel, John by the Spirit's inspiration gives us a little insight into the divinity of Christ, who in His divine nature is called the Word: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"* (John 1. 1-5).

If a poor sinner has been born again by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit dwells in his or her heart. The Spirit, the Son and Father are one; it must be therefore that true believers have the presence of the triune Jehovah with them as we can never separate the one from the other. Surely this must be what the Lord Jesus means in that blessed valedictory discourse in John 14 – 16 when He promises the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to the New Testament church. *"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him"* (John 14. 23). Notice the "We" and "Our." This is beyond our comprehension: the triune LORD dwells in a poor sinner's heart. O what amazing grace! J. R. Rutt

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are from THE BOOK OF RUTH. 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. Why did Elimelech go to live in Moab? (Ruth 1. 1)
2. What were the names of Elimelech's sons and the names of their wives? (Ruth 1. 2 & 4; 4. 10)
3. What had Naomi heard in Moab that encouraged her to return to Bethlehem? (Ruth 1. 6)
4. Complete the sad confession of Naomi when she came back: "I went out full ..." (Ruth 1. 21)
5. Ruth went to glean barley in the fields and happened to go to a field belonging to Boaz. What was the first thing Boaz said to encourage her? (Ruth 2. 8)
6. How do we know that Boaz had heard a lot about Ruth before she met him? (Ruth 2)
7. Naomi said that Boaz was "near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsman." What did this enable him to do? (Ruth 2, see margin)
8. What did the other kinsman do to confirm the right of Boaz to redeem the land being sold by Naomi and to marry Ruth? (Ruth 4)
9. Ruth was "steadfastly minded" to return with Naomi. What did she say that made this very clear? (Just the first of the two verses). (Ruth 1)
10. What relation was Ruth to King David?

**ANSWERS TO DECEMBER QUESTIONS**

1. Abel.
2. David.
3. "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep."
4. A hireling didn't care for the sheep, and ran away when there was danger.
5. Moses.

6. He would leave the ninety-nine sheep and go after the lost sheep till he found it. (Luke 15. 4)
7. The Lord was his shepherd and He was with him to guide and comfort him. (Psalm 23. 1, 4)
8. "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn Mine hand upon the little ones." (Zechariah 13. 7 referred to in Mark 14. 27)
9. The bad shepherds had not strengthened the diseased sheep, nor healed the sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought again those which were driven away, nor sought those which were lost. (Ezekiel 34. 4)
10. Jacob. (Genesis 31. 40)

*Contributed*

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### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from **ELIZA DE VOOGD** and **JESSE PEARCE**.*

---

### PRECEPTIVE TEACHING

I heard a preacher (and I thought  
The good man's words were wise)  
Say how much nearer to our hearts  
Promise than precept lies.

And as a test he bade us take  
The Bibles lying round,  
And turn to the Apostle James,  
Where precepts do abound.

Many a mark or teardrop blurred  
St. Peter and St. Paul,  
But the preceptive writer had  
The cleanest lines of all.

‘Tis always so,’ the good man said,  
‘I’ve looked the Bibles through;  
The Gospels and the Psalms are worn,  
But James is always *new*.’

Since then, at times, I’ve turned to James  
To learn the Master’s will;  
And though it is not sweet to read,  
‘Oh suffer and be still’;

Read on, read on till faith lays hold  
Upon God’s blessed ‘end,’  
And trusts the pitying tenderness  
Of its unerring Friend.

Read on till we, with works of faith,  
Our daily thoughts engage,  
And the grim corners of our lives  
Grow clean as James’s page.

God’s promises are precious things;  
And oh what sweets ensue  
When gratitude for mercies makes  
The precepts precious too!

Shame and confusion should be ours;  
We have one daily plea;  
‘Oh for the rest of knowing well  
That Jesus died for *me*.’

Aye, He *did* die, and died for *us*,  
If faith and love are given;  
But thorns shall rend their comforts who  
Walk carelessly to heaven.

*Mrs. M.A. Chaplin*



# *The Friendly Companion*



The Statue of John Bunyan at Bedford

“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” (Romans 5. 20)

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*February 2016*

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### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

One of the well-known preachers in our chapels during the last century was a man called George Rose. He had pastorates at Cranbrook; Tamworth Road, Croydon and finally at Kirkland near Garstang in Lancashire. It was while he was at his last pastorate that he was preaching from the words in John 16. 13: *"When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth."* As he was a true-sent preacher he did not shun to tell all the counsel of God even when it came to practical matters. As an example of how he was taught to handle potentially difficult matters at work, he told the following story from his own life.

Before he became a preacher, he worked in an iron foundry. Here he had to work with the molten iron which would be formed into all sorts of useful tools for use in everyday life. One of the tools he had to use for this was a riddle. One day whilst the men with whom he worked were having their morning break, a man came up to him using violent language, and with oaths and curses accused him of taking his riddle. He insisted that the riddle George was using was his and he rudely demanded it.

This put George in a dilemma. He was known as a Christian man, and if he had answered in like manner to this man there would have been an unseemly row and the name of Christ would be demeaned. Yet if he agreed it would seem as if he had stolen this man's riddle! Like Nehemiah he put up a secret prayer to his God who immediately gave him instruction in those words: *"Then I restored that which I took not away."* So he gave the man his riddle.

These words from Psalm 69. 4 remained on his heart all day. In fact the words of the whole verse were very true to his present path. He was led by the Spirit of truth to see how the dear Saviour had restored to God's holy law, by His holy obedience and death, the honours which guilty sinners had taken away. No doubt also there was the gracious thought that

the Lord Jesus Christ endured injustice far worse than George was experiencing. But there was a question which did concern him. It appeared that he had stolen the riddle. Like Joseph of old who was falsely accused and thrown into prison, he knew he was innocent, but those looking on would not have believed that. This was bringing a reproach upon the name of Christ which he loved.

So he prayed earnestly all day that in some way the Lord would vindicate him. The Lord graciously assured him that he would be cleared of all guilt. The very next day, it was the time for morning break again. As they stood talking, another man came up to the man who had accused George, holding a riddle in his hand. Handing it to the man, he said: "Here's your riddle. I forgot to tell you I borrowed it yesterday." With some confusion the man who had falsely accused George, handed his riddle back to him, and George's innocence was proved before all his colleagues.

It may be one who reads this account may be falsely accused. May you ask the Spirit of truth to guide you, as He did George. Solomon tells us that: "*He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good.*"

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### **OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE**

The front cover shows a statue, in Bedford, of the famous John Bunyan. His remarkable conversion can be read in his book: "*Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners.*" Below is an extract from this book, telling of how he came to realise the necessity of the new birth.

### **The Beginnings of the Work of Grace in John Bunyan**

"I thought no man in England could please God better than I. But, poor wretch as I was, I was all this while ignorant of Jesus Christ, and going about to establish my own

righteousness; and had perished therein, had not God been merciful unto me.

But upon a day, the good providence of God called me to Bedford, to work at my calling; and in one of the streets of that town I came where there were three or four poor women sitting at a door, in the sun, talking about the things of God; and being now willing to hear their discourse, I drew near to hear what they said; for I was now a brisk talker in matters of religion, but they were far above my reach. Their talk was about a new birth, the work of God in their hearts, and also how they were convinced of their miserable state by nature: they talked how God had visited their souls with His love in the Lord Jesus, and with what words and promises they had been refreshed, comforted, and supported against the temptations of the devil: moreover, they reasoned of the suggestions and temptations of Satan in particular; and told to each other by what means they had been afflicted; and how they were borne up under his assaults. They also discoursed of their own wretchedness of heart, and of their unbelief, and did contemn, slight, and abhor their own righteousness as filthy, and insufficient to do them any good.

And methought they spake with such pleasantness of Scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me as if they had found a new world – as if they were people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbours – Numbers 23. 9.

At this I felt my own heart began to shake; for I saw that in all my thoughts about religion and salvation, the new birth did never enter into my mind, neither knew I the comfort of the word and promise, nor the deceitfulness and treachery of my own wicked heart. As for secret thoughts, I took no notice of them; neither did I understand what Satan's temptations were, nor how they were to be withstood and resisted.

Thus, therefore, when I had heard and considered what they said, I left them, and went about my employment again; but my

heart would tarry with them, for I was greatly affected with their words, because by them I was convinced that I wanted the true token of a truly godly man, and also because I was convinced of the happy and blessed condition of him that was such a one.

Therefore I would often make it my business to be going again and again into the company of these poor people, for I could not stay away; and the more I went among them, the more I did question my condition; and, as I still do remember, presently I found two things within me, at which I did sometimes marvel; especially considering what a blind, ignorant, sordid, and ungodly wretch which I had been just before; the one was a very great softness and tenderness of heart, which caused me to fall under the conviction of what by Scripture they asserted; and the other was a bending in my mind, a continued meditating on it, and on all other good things, which at that time I heard or read of."

*Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*

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### A CHANGED MOTTO

Before Christopher Columbus, the famous Spanish explorer discovered America, or The New World as it was then called, he had a coat of arms on which were the words in Latin, "**Ne Plus Ultra.**" These words mean, "*There is nothing beyond.*" After his discovery, however, he dropped the word "**Ne**" and had the words, "**Plus Ultra,**" which mean, "*There is more beyond!*"

How foolish are those who say there is nothing beyond this life, just because they have not yet seen or experienced it. We believe from God's own Word, which cannot lie, that there is after death, the judgment. There is also an eternal home prepared for those who believe in Christ Jesus, as God's Son for salvation. He said concerning this in John 14: "*If it were not so, I would have told you.*"

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**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****SAUL AND DAVID IN THE CAVE**

David and his men went to hide among the rocks where the wild goats live. After fighting the Philistines, Saul took three thousand men and went to look for David. As Saul climbed upon the rocks, he became tired. He went inside a cave to sleep. He did not know that David and his men were hiding in the sides of the same cave. It must have been very dark in the cave.

The men with David told him to kill Saul while he slept. David quietly went up to Saul and cut off a part of his robe. Then he said: *"The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD's anointed ...."* He would not allow his men to hurt King Saul.

When Saul awoke, he went out of the cave and on his way. David went out after him and called to Saul. Saul looked back and saw David bowing down. David asked Saul why he believed him to be an enemy. He held up the piece of robe that he had cut off. He told Saul that he might easily have killed him in the cave. Yet he did not harm the one whom God had anointed as King of Israel. Saul was ashamed and wept when he heard the kind words of David. He returned to his own home.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did Saul go to sleep?
2. Who was hiding in the same place?
3. What did he cut off a part of?

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

*Contributed*

**ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS**

1. Jonathan.
2. Ziph.
3. A message.

*“... let them  
be turned  
back and  
brought to  
confusion  
that devise  
my hurt.”*  
*Psalm 35. 4.*



*BIBLE LESSONS***THE CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSUS**

Philip had gone down to Samaria because of the persecution at Jerusalem. Likewise, many believers escaped to other cities, some as far away as Damascus.

The man most responsible for the persecution of the followers of Jesus was Saul. Although Saul was born in the Roman city of Tarsus, his parents were Jews. His father belonged to the religious sect called Pharisees. Thus Saul was brought up in the strictest form of the Pharisees. When he was old enough, he was sent to Jerusalem to learn the Law of God more perfectly through the teaching of Gamaliel. Saul was exceeding zealous to learn and practise the way of the Pharisees.

Saul had, no doubt, heard how Jesus reproved the Pharisees on so many occasions. This stirred up hatred to Jesus and His followers. Saul believed that Jesus was a deceiver and that those who believed and taught His doctrines were dangerous.

When Saul heard that the followers of Jesus were increasing in Damascus, he was filled with rage. He went to the high priest to obtain letters that he could present to the rulers of the synagogues in Damascus. The letters would order the rulers to help Saul find the believers of Jesus and bring them bound to Jerusalem.

As Saul and the young men who accompanied him started the long journey to Damascus, he no doubt began to think of those he had arrested in Jerusalem. How gladly they bore the reproach of Jesus! The testimony of Stephen especially troubled him, causing his conscience great distress.

Messengers from Jerusalem had already arrived in Damascus to warn the believers that the young man who had imprisoned many and killed others in Jerusalem was on his way. What could the believers in Damascus do to escape the fury of Saul of Tarsus? How they must have prayed that the Lord would deliver them from such a foe!

It was midday when Saul and his companions approached the city of Damascus. Suddenly they were stopped. A great light, brighter than the noon day sun, shone upon them. They fell down upon the earth trembling. No man can stand before the light of Divine presence! Not only was this persecutor rendered weak and helpless, but the dazzling light blinded his eyes for a time.

As Saul lay on the ground, a voice spoke out of the bright light, just as it had called out to Moses from the burning bush. It was the voice of Jesus, saying: "*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?*" The once proud, defiant, persecuting Saul meekly asked: "*Who art Thou, Lord?*" The voice from heaven spoke again: "*I am Jesus (of Nazareth,) whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*" Now the words of Stephen: "*Behold, I see ... the Son of man standing on the right hand of God,*" were like arrows that pierced his heart.

Saul remembered how cruelly he had acted against believers in this Jesus. He had been sure that by killing the followers of Jesus or putting them into prison, he was pleasing God. Now he saw how wicked he had been. He cried out: "*Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?*" The Lord told him to arise and go into the city, and he would be told what he must do.

Those that journeyed with Saul rose up and stood speechless. How astonished they were at what had taken place! Although they had seen the bright light, they were not struck blind as their leader Saul was. They took Saul by the hand and led him into the city.

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 9 verses 1 to 8.*

### QUESTIONS:

1. In what city was Saul born?
2. To what city was Saul going in order to arrest the believers?
3. What stopped them in the way?
4. What did the voice of Jesus say to him? (6 words)
5. What did Jesus say it was hard for him to do? (4 words)

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

### ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS

1. The desert.
2. Jerusalem.
3. Isaiah.
4. Guide (or teach) him.
5. "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

*G. L. TenBroeke*

---

### KING EDWARD VI AND THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Edward was the only son of King Henry VIII and Henry's third wife, Jane Seymour. Edward VI succeeded to the throne in 1547 at the tender age of nine.

When the procession was about to move from Westminster Abbey to the palace, an interesting break from traditions was instigated by Edward himself: upon being brought three swords representing his three kingdoms (England, France and Ireland), Edward said that one sword was missing – the Bible, and he declared: "That Book is the sword of the Spirit, and to be preferred before these swords. That ought in all right to govern us, who use them for the people's safety by God's appointment. Without that sword we are nothing, we can do nothing, we have no power. From that we are what we are this day. From that we receive whatsoever it is that we at present do assume. He that rules without it is not to be called God's minister, or a king. Under that we ought to live, to fight, to govern the people, and to perform all our affairs."

The Bible was brought, and carried reverently in the procession.

During the brief reign of Edward, every encouragement was given to the expansion of the English Bible. His reign of little more than seven years produced eleven editions of the Bible and six editions of the New Testament. Edward's rule changed much in the church. He ordered images to be removed from the churches. Prayers were no longer to be offered for the

dead. Confession was declared to be unscriptural. The clergy were allowed to marry. The church now heard its messages in English and not in Latin.

Edward became ill and died in 1553.

His last prayer was: "O my Lord God, bless my people, and save Thine inheritance; O Lord God, save Thy chosen people of England; O Lord God, defend this realm from popery, and maintain Thy true religion, that I and my people may praise Thy holy name, for Jesus Christ His sake."

---

### AN ALLEGORY

The Lord Jesus delighted to teach by means of parables. "*Without a parable spake He not unto them.*" Also, what is possibly the greatest Christian classic, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, is an allegory. So is what follows – only a simple story, though true.

A few children were busy building a large sandcastle. Soon it was finished, and a lovely castle it was. Only one thing remained: to fill with water, the moat, which they had dug round it.

So bucket after bucket of water was carried from the sea, which was only a few yards away. But time after time the water disappeared in the sand. As soon as it was poured into the moat, it disappeared. The children were disappointed.

Their elder brother noticed what was happening. Quickly he ran to their aid. With a few deft strokes of his spade, he dug a channel, linking the castle moat with the nearby sea. The problem was solved. Immediately the sea surged along the newly cut channel and swept round the moat of the castle. The moat was not quickly emptying itself now; it was full to overflowing. There was no need for the bustle of activity now, no need for the little buckets now. They were forgotten.

"Which things are an allegory ..." Surely, it would be presumption to try to explain or apply. But have we not been busy with our little buckets for too long?

*Gospel Standard August 1986*

### ROBINSON CRUSOE AND THE BIBLE

Few tales have captured the imagination like the story of Robinson Crusoe. Daniel Defoe tells his famous tale in the form of a Diary in which, over a period of almost thirty years, the ship-wrecked mariner is supposed to record his adventures.

Three times a verse of Scripture comes to Robinson Crusoe in an hour of special need.

The first came in a *spell of sickness*. Recalling that the Brazilians used tobacco as a medicine, he searched in one of the chests for a roll of tobacco – and found a Bible. This he opened casually and the first words that came to him were: “*Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me*” (Psalm 50. 15).

“The words,” he wrote in his diary, “were very apt to my case, and made some impression on my thoughts at the time ... though not so much as they did afterwards ... Before I lay down I did what I had never done in all my life: I kneeled down and prayed to God to fulfil the promise to me.”

The second occasion was during *a sense of sin*. Recovered from his sickness, he began reading in the New Testament with the not uncommon result that he had found himself more deeply and sincerely affected with the wickedness of his past life. “Now,” he records, “I began to construe the words mentioned above: “*Call upon Me ... I will deliver thee,*” in a different sense from what I had ever done before; for then I had no notion of anything being called deliverance, but my being delivered from the captivity I was in ... the island was certainly a prison to me ... but now I learned to take it in another sense.

Now I looked back on my past life with such horror, and my sins appeared so dreadful, that my soul sought nothing of God but deliverance from the load of guilt that bore down all my comfort .... And I add this part here, to hint to whoever shall read it that whenever they come to a true sense of things, they will find deliverance from sin a much greater blessing than

deliverance from affliction.”

The third occasion was caused by *the sight of savages*. The knowledge that savages could come to his island, put Robinson Crusoe into a perfect panic. “Never frightened hare fled to cover, or fox to earth, with more terror of mind than I to my retreat.” Many and elaborate were the defences he made for his safety, “not forgetting seriously to commend myself to the divine protection and earnestly to pray to God to deliver me out of the hands of the barbarians.” The answer to that prayer was freedom from fear, and a friend for his loneliness in Man Friday.

He sets down the outcome of it all: “My grief sat lighter upon me, my habitation grew comfortable to me beyond measure ... I had not only been moved myself to look up to heaven, and to seek to the hand that brought me hither, but was now to be made an instrument, under Providence, to save the life, and, for aught I knew, the soul of a poor savage, and bring him to the true knowledge of religion, and of the Christian doctrine, that he might know Christ Jesus, to know whom is life eternal.”

The story of how God so fully and particularly answered Robinson Crusoe’s prayer may become the experience of all who, cast upon some desert island of doubt and despair, turn, as enabled by God, with all their hearts and in true repentance, to seek Him from whom alone deliverance can come.

“I know not where His islands lift  
Their leafy palms in air;  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care.”

*The Messenger (slightly adapted)*

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#### EDITOR’S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from JONATHAN BALDWIN-JONES; JAYDAN GREYN; SETH KLOP; SAMUEL MOL; HANNAH MUIS and OLIVER PARISH.*

**EDWARD SAMUEL (2)**

It was the custom among respectable Jews in my country at the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles to have a number of poor Jews from the workhouse to celebrate with us at these festivals. My mother asked one of the men to go to the garden and dig up horse radish for bitter herbs to eat with the Paschal lamb. Not having to go to school, it being the Passover, I made myself busy helping to carry out all the leaven from our house. Generally there were two people to do the job: one had a lighted candle, the other a wooden spoon and a feather searching every corner for crumbs of leaven. Prior to that, they had purposely put small pieces of bread in various parts of the house, which we children now gathered and tied up carefully in a piece of clean white rag and lit a fire to burn up the leaven bread, spoon and feather. The holy apostle speaks of a different leaven, the leaven of malice and wickedness: the leaven which only the Spirit of God can remove.

I was educated as a child in the Mishna and the Talmud, and also to read the Old Testament, but sadly the former was considered more important. When I was seven years old, I could repeat from memory the whole Book of Psalms and the Song of Solomon. The girls, too, were expected to be able to recite Psalm 119. When I was nine, I had daily to learn three or four pages of the Talmud. At my grandfather's annual visit to us, he always examined us boys to ascertain what progress we had made through the year. He told my father that he thought I should become a rabbi, but God had something better in store. He raised me to a higher dignity than that. He put me amongst His family, although unworthy of the least of His mercies.

I continued at school until I was sixteen, when in God's overruling I had to leave home. The reason was that the then Emperor of Russia issued a law compelling all Jews into military service. This law made all the Jews very much afraid: the reasons were that they must eat and drink those things which were prohibited by the law of God to them as a nation;

the breaking of the Sabbath Day and other Jewish festivals; and indeed denying their whole religion. As the town where we lived was small, many of our friends were picked out to go into the army. Soon there was another law passed, not to give any passports for males from fourteen years to the age of twenty to prevent them leaving the country. I have known fine young men chop one or two fingers off their right hand to disable them for military service.

At length it was decided that my brother and I should leave home and go to Konigsburg in Prussia. The night we departed was a night much to be remembered. We left the family weeping. My grandfather, who was seventy years old with a long white beard, placed his hands on our heads and with tears trickling down, pronounced a blessing. Some of the words I have not forgotten: "May the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, bless and preserve you, protect and defend you from all harm." The last words were these: "If you forsake the Lord, He will forsake you, but if you cleave to Him, He will cleave to you." He then kissed us and bade us farewell.

Now the prophecy of my grandmother began to be fulfilled that I should forsake the Jewish religion. My spiritual birth was appointed by God to be in London. My God had said: "*My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.*" "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!*"

As there were no passports, we left home at midnight, in disguise: the banker's only son, my brother and I. We travelled in a two-horse coach with four men to escort us to a village on the border with Prussia. There was a deep valley dividing Prussia from Russia and this valley was watched by Cossack soldiers, each soldier patrolling a five-mile stretch. The people of the village knew the timing of these patrols very well; usually they were at half-hour intervals. So within this half hour we had to make our crossing: no time might be lost as the danger was very great. If these patrols overtook anyone and



resistance was made, they were allowed to shoot them dead on the spot. As we advanced towards the valley, two men of our company were on the lookout and at their signal we had to run as fast as possible. But we three boys, with fright and fatigue, could not run as fast as the other two men. Therefore, we were sometimes carried and at other times dragged. After we had crossed the valley, there was a small mountain to climb. When we arrived at the top we were safe. We were scarcely at the top when we saw a patrol galloping after us as fast as he could but he was just three minutes too late. On the Prussian side there were six men waiting for us with a wagon and with guns. When they saw us, they cried out: "Alright!" and this was our great joy as it was the first time we had heard a voice since leaving the cottage, being compelled to cross the valley without speaking. I have that covenant God who has delivered me, does deliver and I trust will to the end.

We now took our journey to Konigsburg and remained that night at the first village in Prussia in the house of one of the men who were waiting for us. It is true we all three went to bed in one room, but we had no sleep. There was a candle burning in the room. We were talking during the remainder of the night. Now and then a secret tear stole from our eyes and one would burst into tears. We had left affectionate and weeping parents and friends and were going to face an unknown world. These thoughts would alternately pass and repass through our minds. We would encourage each other by saying we were young and we will go to England and make our fortunes: thus passed the first night.

The next morning we passed on to a small town where a man took us to a small inn where my father used to stay and where he was well-known. We all had letters of recommendation from our parents and relations. This was a town where Russian and Polish Jews used to gather.

(To be continued)

*Adapted*

## LOOKING AROUND US

### There is a Creator

The *English Churchman* has reported the case of Paul Gentuso, who began his medical training as someone “who didn’t really believe in God.” He believed in evolution, so he “assumed that his existence was but a random accident of nature.”

Dr Gentuso looked back on an area of his medical training: “In anatomy class we dissected a human hand. In investigating the hand, I first removed the skin and then isolated the individual tendons and muscles as I worked my way to the bones.

“The tendons of the hand are aligned in tendon sheaths, like self-lubricating pulleys, allowing the hand to work in a tireless, noiseless, almost effortless fashion. It was perfectly designed to carry out all the work it was called to do, everything from lifting a small object to lugging a tree trunk. In seeing how each tendon was perfectly aligned along the axis of each finger and how each finger moved in a co-ordinated fashion when tugged by individual tendons, it became obvious to me that there was a Creator who had intelligently designed and created the human hand. This was the first time in my adult life that I could say with assurance that a Creator existed ... I went from disbelief to certainty based on studying God’s creation.”

Even though we live in an age when everyone is liable to be influenced by the theory of evolution, God’s creation still speaks. Often Satan and those who resist God’s revelation in the Bible – in particular what it says about creation – make so much noise that most people do not hear God’s voice. When we see the wonders of creation, we should understand – as Dr Gentuso did – something of God’s “*eternal power and Godhead*” (Romans 1. 20). The fine tuning and the design of the hand, the eye, the individual cell and every other part of the human body are so wonderful that it is quite unbelievable that all this could have come about by chance. If we do not listen to God’s voice in nature, we are “*without excuse*” if we

reject the existence of God.

Dr Gentuso went on to become a medical missionary in Cote d'Ivoire, a country in West Africa.

*The Young People's Magazine*

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### JOHN BROWN AND HIS OPPONENT

*"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger"* (Proverbs 15. 1).

The good John Brown of Haddington was invited to become pastor there soon after he was licensed to preach. Only one man prevented the call being unanimous. Being a person possessed of considerable influence, it was greatly feared that he would exert that influence to the injury of the minister and the church. Mr Brown, meeting with this gentleman one day, took him by the hand, and begged him frankly to state his reasons for voting against him.

"I am as frank as you are, Mr Brown," replied he, "and I beg leave to say that my reason for voting against you is a strong one, and it can be told in a word – *I don't think you are a good preacher.*"

"There we are perfectly agreed," replied Mr Brown, "I know it as well as you do, my friend, and I say it as frankly as you do, that *I am not a good preacher.* But then," continued Mr Brown, as he shook his neighbour heartily by the hand, "while you and I are perfectly agreed in this particular, where is the use of you and me setting up *our opinions against the whole parish?*"

The man laughed heartily, told Mr Brown that he had completely disarmed him that he began to be of his opinion, and that he would not be found opposing the views of the whole parish any longer. He became afterwards Mr Brown's best friend.

*The Gospel Echo*

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### ON WHY IT IS WRONG FOR CHRISTIANS TO GO TO THE THEATRE

1. Because it *"is not of the Father, but is of the world."*
2. Because it is the place to indulge *"all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"*; and *"if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him"* (1 John 2. 15, 16).
3. It is the opposite of separation from the world. It is not 'coming out from among them, and being separate.' (2 Corinthians 6. 17).
4. It is the place to get, and perpetuate, the friendship of the world, which is enmity with God; and, 'if any man will be a friend of the world, he is the enemy of God.' (James 4. 4)
5. It is the place to waste time, instead of redeeming it (Ephesians 5. 15, 16); and to waste money, instead of using it in doing good to all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith.
6. It is the place where no Christian would like to die, or to be found at the sound of the last trump. It is where the Christian could not be *"looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God"* (2 Peter 3. 12), and be 'praying without ceasing' (1 Thessalonians 5. 17).

Many other reasons could be given, but it is deeply lamentable that any who name the name of Christ need to be told that the theatre is no place for the true Christian.

*The Sower 1872*

*The same is true for the cinema. Also in these days of technology, the same is true if we bring into our homes the theatre or the cinema. "Thou God seest me." Editor*

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### BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

#### THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

To continue with our study let us look at the word of the Lord unto Moses in Exodus 6. 2-4: *"And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD: and I appeared*

*unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by My name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. And I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers."*

We notice first: *"I am the LORD."* Whenever we read "LORD" in capital letters, it was the name "Jehovah" in the original Hebrew. This precious name is a covenant name. Notice what follows: *"I have also established My covenant with them."* The LORD covenanted to bring the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage; covenanted to bring them through the waste howling wilderness; covenanted to bring them into the land of Canaan and cast out their enemies from before them. All these things happened unto the children of Israel for our ensamples. Just as this great God, the Lord Jehovah, delivered the children of Israel in a most miraculous way from Egyptian bondage, in the Old Testament, so in the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, He delivers His children from the bondage of this world; from the curse and condemnation of the holy law; and brings His children into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

This liberty was purchased by Jehovah Jesus when He lived as a Man on earth and in that holy life He lived, He fulfilled the holy law that man had broken, and thereby brought in everlasting righteousness for His children. When His children are born again by the Holy Spirit, this world becomes a waste howling wilderness unto them: they find nothing in this world to feed their poor needy souls. When the Lord Jesus offered that sacred holy sacrifice on the cross of Calvary, He suffered, bled and died for His people. By and in that holy sacrifice their sins are put away and divine justice is satisfied; the redemption price is paid and our gracious heavenly Father is satisfied. Thus He has received the whole of the redeemed church through that glorious sacrifice. Christ died for their sins and rose again for their justification. He has ascended into heaven as our great High Priest so that we now have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

My dear friends, all the dignity and worth of that holy life, and that holy sacrifice, death and resurrection, lie in this glorious truth that He is "I AM THAT I AM." *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."* His righteousness that He wrought out for His people is an everlasting righteousness. In Paul's epistle we read of His holy sacrifice and its infinite worth: *"But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"* (Hebrews 10. 12-14).

In this chapter in Exodus, we read of sovereign grace: 'I will bring you out, I will rid you out of bondage, I will bring you into the land.' Think of these promises in the light of the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ; not only what He has done for His people when here on earth, but what He promises to do for them by His Spirit as they travel through this wilderness to the heavenly Canaan. *"Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD"* (Exodus 6. 6-8). He gives us the reason in *Malachi 3. 6*: *"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."* In spite of all the failings, backslidings, ill manners and wanderings of the LORD's people, He will bring them safely to the promised land: heaven, because He is *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."*

J.R. Rutt

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about KNOWING AND NOT KNOWING. 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. What do sheep “know” and what do they “know not”? (John 10. 4-5)
2. The Pharisees questioned a blind man whom Jesus had healed, who said: “One thing I know.” What did he know? (John 9. 25)
3. Write out the words of the Apostle Paul, beginning: “That I may know...” (Philippians 3. 10) (one verse only)
4. To whom was it said, “Verily I say unto you, I know you not”? (Matthew 25. 12.)
5. In expressing his wishes for the Ephesians, what did Paul want them to know? (Ephesians 3. 19)
6. “We know that we have passed from death unto life...” How do “we” know? (1 John 3)
7. Of whom was it spoken: “whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him”? (John 14)
8. The Apostle James said: “Ye know not what shall be on the morrow.” In the light of this, what should we say? (James 4)
9. To whom did Jesus solemnly say: “Ye neither know Me, nor My Father”? (John 8)
10. “And this is life eternal, that...” What did Jesus say that life eternal is? (John)

**ANSWERS TO JANUARY QUESTIONS**

1. There was a famine in the land.
2. Mahlon married Ruth; Chilion married Orpah.
3. Naomi had heard that the LORD had visited His people in giving them bread.
4. “I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?”

5. "Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens."
6. Boaz had said, "It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband..." (Ruth 2. 11)
7. Boaz had a right to redeem. (Ruth 2. 20 margin)
8. The kinsman took off his shoe and gave it to Boaz. (Ruth 4. 7-8)
9. "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." (Ruth 1. 16)
10. Great grandmother. (Ruth 4. 17-22)

*Contributed*

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### A SOUL'S SINCERE DESIRE

"God of eternal glory shine  
Upon this sinful heart of mine.  
O turn my darkness into day,  
And cleanse me from my evil way.

O search my heart, and try my reins,  
With light divine which never wanes.  
See if there be some wicked way,  
Reveal by Thy soul-piercing ray.

O cleanse me from all secret sin,  
Turn out heart's idols snug within.  
And by Thy Spirit fill their place  
With Thy all sanctifying grace.

Lord in my heart now let there be,  
A throne prepared my God for Thee.  
Reign Thou supreme and vanquish hell  
And in my heart for ever dwell."

*Anon*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“The eyes of the LORD are in every place,  
beholding the evil and the good.” (Proverbs 15. 3)

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*March 2016*

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### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

As I write this monthly message it is a very windy day. Many trees in our area have come down and have blocked roads and caused much disruption. It is natural for us to say that it is bad weather, but we should always remember that it is God's weather, and He sends to the earth what He sees fit. In Proverbs 30. 4 we read of five questions Solomon asks us: *"Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in His fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is His name, and what is His Son's name, if thou canst tell?"*

The answer to the questions is Almighty God, and His Son is Jesus Christ the Lord.

This Almighty God holds all creation in His hand. It is His handiwork. David tells us in Psalm 8. 3 that heaven is the work of His fingers. This tells us that it was easy for God to create the heavens and the earth as we read in Genesis 1, and also as we do intricate work with our fingers so it tells us of God's supreme wisdom and skill in creation.

Many times in Scripture, God has shown His power over creation, especially in the winds that blow upon the earth. God made a wind to pass over the earth to assuage the flood waters in Noah's day. (You may have noticed how that it is often the wind even more than the sun which dries the earth after rain.) God sent a mighty strong west wind to take away the locusts which had plagued Egypt. God sent a strong east wind to divide the Red Sea for the safe passage of the children of Israel. In Numbers we read how the wind brought quails for the children of Israel to eat. David had to wait for the sound of the wind rustling the leaves of the mulberry trees before he went to battle, with God at his side. Elijah experienced a mighty wind that rent the rocks on Mount Horeb. In the Song of Solomon we read of the North and the South wind. In Bible lands, the North wind coming down from the mountains of

Lebanon, was often a refreshing wind, dispersing clouds, whereas the South wind, coming up from the desert, was a warm wind. Jonah found that the Lord could send a great wind to prevent him fleeing to Tarshish, whilst the disciples proved that the Lord Jesus had complete control over the winds on Galilee when He commanded them to be still.

The most important of all winds that God has ever blown upon the earth, was that which blew upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came upon them and gave them power to preach the gospel of repentance and forgiveness to sinners who likewise need the Holy Spirit to teach and lead them to Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ taught Nicodemus this when He said: *"The wind bloweth where it listeth, (that is: man has no control over either its coming, direction or duration) and thou bearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit"* (John 3. 8). May this be our urgent and earnest desire to be breathed upon by this most blessed of all winds! As we used to sing at school many years ago:

"Breathe on me, breath of God; Fill me with life anew"

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture on our front cover this month is of a Maltese fishing boat, taken in a Maltese fishing village. The Maltese fishing boats are painted in bright colours. A number of these boats moored in a harbour make a very pretty scene.

Can you see two "eyes" painted on the bows of the boat? This practice of painting these eyes on the bows of their boats has been used since Phoenician times, they say, "to ward off the evil eye (spirit)." It is sad to say that many Maltese fishermen are superstitious and will not go out to sea without painting these "eyes" on their boats. The "eyes" are found on

those boats which venture out into the open sea where dangers are obviously greater.

We are reminded in many places in our Bible of God seeing all that happens in our world, and He sees and knows even the smallest thing that occurs. This, of course, especially applies to those, however old or young they may be, who trust in Him.

If you read the story of God's people as it is told in the Book of Ezra, you will read of the return of His people from Babylon after their long stay in captivity in that country. It was indeed God who caused Cyrus that King of Babylon to send back the Jews to rebuild the temple, and with them all the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away when he destroyed the temple. What an amazing thing that was! Truly an act of God, but note that in Ezra 5. 5 we are told that God's eye was watching over them for good, because when certain men wanted to stop them rebuilding the temple, God gave them help to resist their enemies. Satan will always try to stop God's work going on. We read at the end of the chapter that the foundation of the temple was laid. This is a lesson for God's people that if His eye is upon us, meaning, if He goes before us, even though all things seem impossible to us, God will bring about in His loving purposes all things for our good. May we be given that grace to pray unto Him in faith that His eye will indeed be on us and for our good. Proverbs chapter 3 verses 5 and 6 tell us: "*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.*" This has been proved to be true for many of the Lord's people down the years.

*Contributed*

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#### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from EMELIA and FLORENCE OTTAWAY, LEAH SAUNDERS and PERCY WOODHAMS.*

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****ABIGAIL MEETS DAVID**

There was a rich man named Nabal who was shearing his sheep. He was making a big feast for all of his workers. David sent ten young men to greet Nabal and to humbly ask him for food. When David and his men were hiding in the hills, they had helped the shepherds who cared for Nabal's sheep. Surely Nabal would be willing to give them some food at this time of feasting.

Nabal was an evil, selfish man. He spoke rudely to the young men and gave them nothing. When they told David, he became very angry. He and his men took up their swords and went to punish Nabal and his family.

One of Nabal's servants heard his cruel words. He quickly told Abigail, the wife of Nabal. He also told her how kind David had been to them as they kept the sheep. Abigail was a wise woman who feared the LORD. She quickly took a large amount of food and went to meet David. She fell at his feet and asked him to receive her gift. She spoke words of wisdom and comfort to David. He thanked Abigail for her good advice, and he thanked the LORD for sending Abigail to meet him.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did the young men ask Nabal to give them? (1 word)
2. What did he give them? (1 word)
3. Who went to meet David? (1 word)

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

**ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS**

1. In a cave.
  2. David.
  3. Saul's robe.
- Contributed*

*“... Blessed  
be the LORD  
God of Israel,  
which sent  
thee this day  
to meet me.”*

*1 Samuel  
25. 32.*

## BIBLE LESSONS

## ANANIAS SENT TO SAUL

How everything had changed! Saul intended to lead a company of men into Damascus to arrest the Christians. Now he was led by the hand into the city, dependent on the help of his followers. How the proud Pharisee had been humbled!

For three days Saul sat in great darkness. He neither ate nor drank for sorrow of heart. How heavy his sins had become! Surely he felt himself to be the greatest of sinners. In his miserable condition, he began to pray. How he prayed night and day! He no longer pleaded his righteousness, his works, or his religious zeal. The very thought of them increased his guilt and darkness. What could he do? Where could he turn? He began to pray for mercy. Yet, mercy could only come from and through that Jesus whom he had persecuted. It is likely that Saul could hardly find words to speak, yet he sighed and groaned before God. Later he would write to the believers that the Spirit of God: *"maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."*

During this darkness the Lord gave Saul a vision. He saw a man named Ananias coming unto him and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Ananias was one of the believers in Damascus that Saul would, no doubt, have arrested, if Jesus had not stopped him.

While Saul was praying, the Lord appeared to Ananias in a vision. At once Ananias replied: *"Behold, I am here, Lord."* How good it is when the Lord's people are quick to answer Him and ready to do His bidding. Then the Lord commanded him: *"Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth."* The Lord knows exactly where His people are.

When Ananias heard the dreaded name: *"Saul of Tarsus,"* he feared there had been a mistake. He told the Lord that he had heard many reports of the evil that Saul had done to the



believers in Jerusalem. Further, he had come to their city to arrest all who called upon the name of Jesus.

How tenderly the Lord spoke to quieten his fears and calm his heart. *“Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.”* What the Lord said about Saul of Tarsus is true of all His people: *“He (she) is a chosen vessel unto Me.”* Yet for this great persecutor, who had caused so much suffering and grief, the Lord had a special word: *“For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name’s sake.”*

Emboldened by the command of God, Ananias made his way to the house of Judas. What a sight it must have been to see this humble, fearing, obedient servant of the Lord put his hands upon the great persecutor! His very words express his faith in what God had told him: *“Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.”*

As Ananias spoke these words, what seemed to be scales began to fall from Saul’s eyes and his eyesight returned. Before anything else, Saul desired to be baptized. No doubt he had seen some of the Lord’s followers walk in this path and wondered what it meant. Not only was Saul’s natural eyesight restored, but the eyes of his understanding were opened and he saw what baptism really signified. He later would write to the believers: *“Therefore we are buried with Him (Jesus) by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead ..., even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 9 verses 8 to 18.*

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. For how many days did Saul sit in darkness?
2. What did the Lord say that Saul was doing?
3. What did the Lord tell Ananias that Saul was unto Him? (3 words)
4. What did Ananias call Saul when he first spoke to him? (1 word)
5. What did Saul desire to do first after his sight was restored?

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

### ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. Tarsus.
2. Damascus.
3. A great light.
4. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?"
5. "Kick against the pricks."

*G. L. TenBroeke*

---

### "THE VEIL WAS RENT IN TWAIN"

*"And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." (Mark 15. 38)*

The death of Christ was unlike any other death. Death did not come to Christ; He was not conquered by its power. On the contrary, Christ approached death and encountered it as a Conqueror. His last utterance sounded forth with a loud voice. In peace and triumph, He bowed His head and gave up the spirit.

Nature trembled when its Maker died. At noon, the sun failed to give its light. When His only begotten Son was silent, the Father spoke. The Father spoke in the quaking of the earth, the rending of the rocks, the opening of the graves, and, most significantly, in the rending of the veil in Jerusalem's temple.

Historical chronicles dating from temple times record that thirteen veils hung in various parts of the temple. Each year, two veils were replaced. The veil which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies was eighteen metres high, nine metres wide, and as thick as the palm of a hand.

This veil was only opened once a year, on the Day of Atonement. On this great day of humiliation, the high priest was allowed to move the curtain somewhat aside and enter the Holy of Holies. Before he was permitted to do this, he was required to sacrifice a sin offering.

In the solitary darkness of the Holy of Holies dwelt God the Lord. There God was present with His people, Israel; at the

same time, He was separated from them by the impressive veil. The heavy curtain with its splendid embroidery was an obstacle to God's nearness. It solemnly declared that the way to God was closed. When fallen man was expelled from the Garden of Eden, holy cherubims prevented man from re-entering. Cherubims were embroidered on the veil that marked off the Holy of Holies. They proclaimed the same lesson: sin has made a separation between a holy God and sinful man.

For fallen man, nearness to God is impossible without a satisfactory atonement for sin. God will never pardon a sinner without maintaining His truth, honouring His holiness, and satisfying His justice. *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die"* (Ezekiel 18. 20).

Let every sinner be persuaded that his sins separate him from his God. Let him realise that awesome reality that his sins will banish him forever from the presence of his Maker, unless he be reconciled and forgiven on the basis of a perfect atonement. Only the blood of reconciliation can take away the veil.

It was Friday at three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour of the evening sacrifice. Numerous Israelites were visiting the temple and its surroundings. Devout men and women were lingering in the sacred courts, prayerfully waiting for the officiating priest to appear. They desired to be blessed in the name of the Lord. The priest was in the Holy Place to kindle and burn incense on the golden altar.

Suddenly, the earth trembled and shook. The waiting people and the ministering priests were frightened. Simultaneously, there was another remarkable occurrence. All at once, the thickly woven veil, hanging from golden hooks at the entrance of the Holy of Holies, was severed. The invisible hand of God rent the heavy curtain from top to bottom. The two pieces exposed the Holy of Holies. Who can describe the astonishment and consternation of the witnesses to this sacred event! Undoubtedly, they did not yet realise the relation between this striking occurrence and the atoning death on the cross.

Christ's death is a perfect atonement for sin. Therefore, the veil must be rent in twain and disappear. No longer does the Jewish high priest need to pass through the veil to enter the Holy of Holies to atone for sin. The Levitical service with its types and shadows has been rendered void. The temple at Jerusalem has now lost its importance. The true Day of Atonement had arrived!

The sacrifice of the New Testament High Priest is the final sacrifice for sin. As Mediator, Christ answered and fulfilled every requirement for the pardon of guilty sinners. He fully secured their admission to the throne of God. By His atoning suffering, Christ widely opened the gate of heaven, the door to the Father-heart of God.

To the believer, the rent in the temple veil portrays the sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ. Prodigal sons and daughters may now come, without money and without price, and wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb. By faith, they may cast themselves, unworthy as they are, in childlike trust on the Father's heart. The cross is the gateway to eternal life!

*G. Hamstra*

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### **IMPRESSION OF ROYAL SEAL OF HEZEKIAH FOUND**

An impression in clay of a seal has been found which reads: "Belonging to Hezekiah (son of) Ahaz king of Judah" along with a two-winged sun, at the foot of the southern wall of the temple in Jerusalem. This is the first time that a seal impression of an Israelite or Judean king has turned up in a scientific archaeological excavation.

This 2,700-year-old artefact, 1cm across, first came to light during an excavation of a refuse dump, directed by Eilat Mazar, dated to the time of King Hezekiah or shortly after, and originated in the Royal Building that stood next to it and appears to have been used to store foodstuffs.

*British Church Newspaper*

### THE FOUR LAST STEPS OF THE SAVIOUR

There are four places, all beginning with 'G,' to which the Lord Jesus came at the end of His life here on earth.

#### **Gethsemane**

Here Jesus entered into the full weight of the burden of the sins of those for whom He was to suffer, bleed and die. Here He agonised in prayer. Here He was arrested by the band of soldiers accompanied by Judas, the traitor, who identified Him to His enemies by giving Him a treacherous kiss. Here He was forsaken by all of His other disciples.

#### **Gabbatha**

Here Jesus was arraigned as a criminal, although innocent, before Pilate whose weakness in trying to please man rather than God led him to commit Christ to be crucified. Here Jesus was scourged, spat upon, mocked, crowned with thorns and reviled by His captors. In all this as a meek and lowly lamb, He, the Lamb of God, bore the taunts and insults without retaliation.

#### **Golgotha**

Here Jesus was led to be crucified between two thieves. Here He suffered intense and unbelievable agonies in His holy body, and even more so in His holy soul as He suffered for sinners' sakes. Here He pardoned the sins of the dying thief who hung alongside Him, and also saw to the personal needs of His mother, Mary, who stood a little way from the foot of the cross. When those sufferings were complete, Jesus cried: "*It is finished,*" and laid down His holy life, at the same time as God rent the veil in the temple in half.

#### **The Garden**

Here, in the garden which belonged to Joseph of Arimathæa, His holy body was laid in an undefiled tomb in which no body had been laid. From this tomb in this garden, He arose triumphant over the grave on the third day, and appeared first to Mary Magdalene and later to His disciples.

*Editor*

**EDWARD SAMUEL (3)**

At the inn where we were staying, two merchants going to Memel, seeing us enquired as to where we were from and to where we were going. When we showed them our letters of recommendation, one said that he knew my father and had heard of my grandfather. We told them we had no passports and that we were going to Konigsburg to my mother's uncle with the expectation that he would get us a passport to England. After this conversation he left us for a couple of hours and then returned and told us it was too dangerous to travel without a passport and if we would go with him to Memel he would take care of us and see us safe to Konigsburg. We thanked him and were very pleased to accept his offer. He then set off to the Burgomaster and had our names inserted on his passport as servants. When he returned and told us, our spirits were raised as we were quite out of danger. Through the help of this man we arrived safely at my uncle's in Konigsburg, leaving my brother, by the advice of my father, at Memel.

Now having the passport promised by my uncle, the banker's son and I set off on foot for Frankfort-on-the-Oder where we stayed for two weeks. It was the custom for all strangers who entered the town staying for a few nights to hand over their passports to the Burgomaster, collecting them as they left. When we came to leave, to my dismay I was told that I was a runaway and must return home. My travelling companion was given his and when questioning found out that he had informed on me to the Burgomaster, and so we parted. The thought of returning home by myself and the treachery of my companion filled me with such horror and distress that for a whole day I neither ate nor drank. Having my phylacteries and Hebrew prayer book with me, also remembering the advice of my grandfather, I prayed to the God of Israel to support me, strengthen and deliver me as I was young and in a strange country.

(As I write this many years later, it reminds me of my

spiritual pilgrimage. Sometimes I feel that I am advancing in the divine life, pressing homeward towards the heavenly Canaan; whilst at other times, alas, I feel I am going backward. The holy apostle had to go to Rome to preach the everlasting gospel, and although his journey was rough, yet he arrived safely. This was my case, I had to preach the everlasting gospel in England: therefore nothing could hinder. Satan is permitted to do many things, but the Lord works all for the good of His people.)

Through the mercy of my God, I again reached my uncle at Konigsburg, who seeing me was greatly surprised. He told me not to worry as he would get me another passport, which he did. After staying with him a month, he said that if I would like to go to England, he would advise me to go to Gdansk by water. He kindly paid my fare and provided me with everything necessary for my journey.

What a trying journey it was! On crossing the Gulf of Dantzic, we encountered a violent storm. The boat was loaded with wheat which we had to throw overboard into the sea. The main mast and rudder were destroyed and the captain found a leak in the vessel so that the sailors and passengers had to pump alternately day and night to keep the boat dry. All this upset many of the women and children, whose cries were heartbreaking. The captain told us that there was no hope of escape and that we would all drown. A flag of distress was hoisted. One night we were told another boat was approaching, but this soon proved to be false. The next morning the captain told us we were drawing near to a port where we should most likely meet with other boats. The same day one did come to our help and all the passengers were taken off. When we got on board, we began to feel the effects of the fright and the want of food, but at length we arrived at Gdansk. The day after we arrived at Gdansk, we heard that the boat had sunk. Here again I have cause to raise an Ebenezer to my covenant God who once more plucked me like a brand

from that abyss from where no hope comes.

I stayed in Gdansk for a month and decided to see a little of the country instead of going direct to England. Having heard about Leipzig, I made up my mind to go there and made my journey by foot. Arriving one Friday afternoon at a small town to spend the Sabbath, as it is forbidden to travel on that day, I went in the evening to the synagogue and met with a very kind reception from my fellow Jews. The head of the synagogue invited me to spend the Sabbath with him and when he enquired where I was going, I told him Leipzig. He then said that if I would stay until Monday, which was the market day, I could cross the river as there were boats plying to and fro which would save me a day's journey. I thanked him and took his advice.

On Monday evening, I proceeded to the waterside and boarded the boat. There were only a few drunken men on board and seeing by my dress that I was a Jew and a foreigner, they began to tease and then ill-treat me and would have thrown me into the water had it not been for the captain intervening. When we landed, they all walked off and left me. I remained all night by the riverside.

Early next morning a gentleman taking his walk, found me and seeing I looked unwell, asked me what I was doing. He was a Jew and recognised me as one. He took me to his house and giving me medical treatment, looked after me for a month. How the dear Lord appeared for me. The apostle speaks of perils of robbers, and I have experienced the same, both literally and spiritually. Sin and the world: what a robber they are, robbing me daily of my heavenly comforts and the presence of my dear Redeemer. So now feeling much better I started on my journey to Leipzig.

(To be continued)

*Adapted*

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**“BUT ASK NOW THE BEASTS, AND THEY SHALL TEACH THEE”**

*The following article showing God's wisdom in the creation and life of a reindeer has been sent by a kind reader.*

The Cairngorm reindeer are the only herd of reindeer roaming free in Britain and were introduced to Scotland in 1952 by a Swedish reindeer herder, Mike Utsi. The herd has grown to almost one hundred and thirty and is kept to about that number by controlled breeding. They range on about 6,250 acres of mountains at between 1,500 and 4,300 ft. and stay above the tree-line throughout the year, regardless of weather conditions.

**Antlers**

Reindeer are the only member of the deer family in which both males and females grow antlers. Even calves will grow antlers in their first summer, usually small and simple in design. Whilst the antlers are growing, they are covered with a furry skin called “velvet” which protects the growing bone and carries blood vessels to the tips of the antlers.

**Calves**

Reindeer calves are born in May and are able to walk and follow their mothers almost straightway. Reindeer milk is very rich, enabling the calf to grow quickly.

**Food**

Lichens form their main diet in winter, and sedges, cotton grass, birch, willow leaves and other plants in summer. They are able to digest even poisonous mushrooms which are deadly to us.

**Winter weather and protection**

Reindeer will face into a blizzard to keep the hairs of their coats flat which traps a layer of air and so increases insulation. Their winter coat gives very good protection from the cold. There are about 5,000 hairs per square inch on a reindeer! They also have long hairs at the base of their legs, and between each left hoof to prevent them slipping on icy conditions. Their nose is covered in hair and stays warm even in the snow, so there is no danger of frostbite. A series of complex nasal

passages exist whereby cool air is warmed as it is breathed in and warm air is cooled as it is breathed out.

### **Hooves**

Reindeer have large splayed hooves, wide, flat and deeply cleft so spreading their weight on soft ground or snow. They are also very well designed for pawing down through the snow for food.

### **Keeping in touch**

All reindeer have a tendon which slips over the bone in the heel, making a 'click' sound as they walk, and so reducing the need for vocal communication which would waste heat. That 'click' sound helps them to stay together even in poor visibility.

Reindeer are marvellously made to live in harsh conditions and it is said that those living in the wild in Spitzbergen (in the Arctic region) are able to survive for a time in the winter without food by just standing around and conserving energy by not moving too much!

**How wonderful God's work is, in creation!**

*Contributed*

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

### **THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (3)**

For this study we will go four hundred and thirty years before Moses to the time of Abraham when he was sojourning in the land of Canaan. In Genesis 12 we have recorded the call of Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees. The LORD promised Abram that He would bless him and his seed after him. He promised him a land that "*I will shew thee.*" It is important to notice this because the children of Israel did not inherit the land until after the time of Moses. It was Joshua who led the children of Israel in to possess the promised land of Canaan. We see in this record that the LORD fulfils His promises sometimes over many, many years. But His purposes will not fail and in His own time and way He will bring to pass what He has promised.

Abraham came out of Ur of the Chaldees with his nephew Lot. But when they increased in herds of cattle and sheep they parted company. We read that Abram gave Lot a choice that if he and his flocks went one way then he would go the other. So Lot chose, and what a sad choice it was, motivated only by covetousness: *"Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly"* (Genesis 13. 11-13). What a solemn choice towards the wicked city of Sodom. My dear young friends, towards where is your tent pitched? This was the root of all the problems that Lot came into, later in life.

This introduction is needful to expound Abram's circumstances in Genesis chapter 15. In chapter 14 we read how there was war against Sodom, and Lot was taken prisoner, and one came and told Abram the Hebrew. (He was called a Hebrew, as at this time he lived in Hebron.) He was a man of great wealth. He had three hundred and eighteen servants which he then armed; pursued the armies of four kings; overcame them; rescued Lot and recovered all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah. This was a remarkable victory, called in the New Testament the slaughter of the kings, which the LORD graciously enabled him to do. This brings us to Genesis 15. 1: *"After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward."* The great I AM, the Lord Jehovah reminds His servant that though he now had some seriously powerful enemies he should not fear them as the LORD Himself, the Creator of heaven and earth, was his shield, his defender, his support, his strength. My dear friends, this Shield is none other than our gracious and precious Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who according to His promise would be born a Man through the seed of Abraham. The prophet Isaiah speaks a word that is just as relevant today as it was in Abraham's day:

*"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the LORD"* (Isaiah 54. 17).

The sweet Psalmist of Israel takes up this very theme when he meditates upon Zion, the church of the living God, and this is verily true of the church of Jesus Christ today. We are surrounded by the very powerful forces of antichrist who would seek to uproot and overturn all that we hold true and dear: the glory of Christ, the Son of God; the truth of His holy perfect life; His holy perfect sacrifice; His literal death and resurrection and His bodily ascension into glory; the truth of the divinely inspired Word of God; the truth of creation as revealed in Genesis 1 and 2; but we must never forget that no weapon formed against the LORD's people will ever prosper. David prays: *"Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of Thine anointed"* (Psalm 84. 9). His anointed is Jesus Christ and this was Abraham's shield and great reward. In the same Psalm is declared: *"For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly"* (Psalm 84. 11): a sun to give light and warmth, a shield to defend. He is still the same today. But the other deeply instructive point is this: as sure as He gives us grace to believe in Jesus Christ and grace to follow Him, so after this life we shall enter into His glory in heaven. *"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."* *"He will give grace and glory."*

In Genesis 15, Abram asks the LORD his God concerning his seed that the LORD had promised him, and yet Sarai was still barren. The LORD now speaks to Abram: *"And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness"* (Genesis 15. 5-6). The apostle quotes this Scripture to show that Abram was made

righteous by faith in Jesus Christ, the same as true believers are today.

Now again we have this sacred name spoken to Abram: “*And He said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it*” (Genesis 15. 7). The great eternal I AM speaks to His servant, and He caused a deep sleep to fall upon Abram and a horror of great darkness with a sacrifice before him. I believe the LORD showed His servant something of that glorious sacrifice that the Son of God would offer when He was born of the seed of Abraham. He showed him that this glorious eternal covenant would be sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary: “*Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant*” (Hebrews 13. 20).

J.R. Rutt

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### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about FISH AND FISHING. 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 address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.*

1. What kinds of creatures which live in water were the children of Israel allowed to eat? (Leviticus 11. 9-12)
2. What did Jesus say that a kind father would never give to a son who asked him for a fish? (Luke 11. 11)
3. In Exodus 7. 21 we read: “And the fish that was in the river died.” Why did they die?
4. Jonah ran away from God, but was overtaken by a storm at sea and thrown overboard. What happened to him? (Jonah 1. 17)
5. What did Peter find in a fish’s mouth? (Matthew 17. 27)
6. “Five barley loaves, and two small fishes.” What did Jesus do with them? (John 6)

7. Peter said: "We have toiled all the night and have taken nothing." What did Peter do when he saw the fish which were subsequently caught? (Luke 5)
8. "That night they caught nothing." What did Jesus tell the disciples to do and what happened? (John 21)
9. Which two ways of catching fish did Jesus, at different times, tell Peter to use? (See the references for the previous questions.)
10. Which of the disciples of the Lord Jesus were originally fishermen?

### ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY QUESTIONS

1. The sheep know the shepherd's voice, but not that of strangers.
2. That, whereas he was blind, now he could see.
3. "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."
4. The foolish virgins.
5. "The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."
6. "Because we love the brethren." (1 John 3. 14).
7. The Spirit of Truth. (John 14. 17).
8. "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." (James 4. 15)
9. The Pharisees. (John 8. 13, 19)
10. "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." (John 17. 3)

*Contributed*

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### LIST OF NAMES

*The following young people have answered questions during the months July to December 2015. The total number is 222, for which we would thank God.*

Oliver Alderman; Daryl and Jared Aldridge; Ben, Jessica, Megan and Tom Aldridge.

Ellie and Matthew Baker; Katie and Tommy Baker; Anna, Jethro and Jonathan Baldwin-Jones; Daisy, Josiah, Lily, Noah and Poppy Barker; Abigail and Katie Barnett; Abigail, Joshua and Samuel Broome; Jemima, Josiah, Kezia, Phebe and Tabitha Burden; Amelia, Caleb, Kezia and Olivia Burgess; Emily Buss.

Benjamin, Bethany, Daniel, Elizabeth and Victoria Chapman; Anna-Louise, Isaac and Sophie Clark; Phebe Collins; Sebastian Cooper; Alice, Beth, Charlotte, Isaac, Katy and William Cottingham; Annie, Evie 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.

Edward Dadswell; Louise Dadswell; Eliza and Noah de Voogd.

Ruby Field.

Abigail, Cornelia and Luke Hayden; Katharine Hills; Caleb and Joseph Hydon.

Benjamin and Joshua Ince; Joshua Izzard.

Emily Janes; David and George Jempson.

Henry and Jemima Kerley; Joshua Kerley; Annabel and Alfie Kinderman.

Alex, Benjamin and Harry Main; Florence, Harriet and Lewis Mathpherson; David, 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; Elysia, Harvey and Sophia Parish; Priscilla and Joseph Parish; Jesse and Oliver Pearce; Sophie Pestell; Heidi, James, Joseph, Katie and Oliver Playfoot; Harry, Millie and Thomas Playfoot.

Eddie, Jessica and Oliver Raymond; James Rice; Jonathan Richardson; Andrew, Daniel, Joseph and Nathanael 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; Matthew and Rachel Scott; Chloe and Jessica Seymour; James and Rosie Shaw; Matthew Stearn.

Harry, James, Jemima and Phebe Tarbin; Elizabeth Topping.

Alec, Emma and Joshua Wigley; Chloe, Jonny and Lydia Wilkins; Bethany, Caleb, Jemima and Nathanael Wiltshire; Benjamin, Ellen, George, Jessica, Naomi and Thomas Woodhams; Maisie and Rosanna Woodhams.

#### *Overseas Names:*

Sophie Bruere, Austin Christian; Scott Easterhoff; Calvin and Dennis Glass; Jarrod and Montanalee Greyn; Kilee and Jaydan Greyn; Daniella Kaat; Jared and Seth Klop; Brennan, Cayley, Olivia and Quinton Knibbe; Isaac Knol; Luke Linna; Lydia, Rachel and Shelley Mol; Joseph, Thomas, Samuel and Savannah Mol; Hannah, Heidi, Kevin and Mariah Muis; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Abigail and Kaitlyn Teunissen; Fred VanGemert; Jonathan, Laura and Rebekah Wesdyk; Tyler White.

**“AND HE BEARING HIS CROSS”**

*“And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha.” (John 19. 17)*

When my burden seemed too heavy  
For my little strength to bear;  
When the cross I scarce could carry  
Satan tempting to despair;  
Then to me a sight was granted  
Of the Saviour on His way  
To the Place of Skull appointed  
For the depth of Love’s display.

He, condemned to crucifixion,  
Bore His cross along the road,  
Soon, exhausted by affliction,  
Jesus sank beneath the load;  
Simon, on the route proceeding,  
Was compelled that cross to take,  
Jesus to the place still leading  
Where He would atonement make.

As His Father’s willing Servant  
Like a flint His face was set,  
Nought could act as a deterrent  
From the payment of our debt;  
Yet He felt the sinking weakness  
Of a Man with sorrow pressed,  
Bore it all with patient meekness,  
Firm – though grieved and sore distressed.

For a season – sacred healing,  
I had fellowship with Him,  
His deep sufferings God revealing  
I my cross could light esteem;  
O, to me His faith be given,  
Patience, love, enduring grace,  
Till at length I find my heaven  
Where I may behold His face. *E. Jempson*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“Blessed be the LORD my strength,  
which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight:  
my goodness, and my fortress; my high tower,  
and my deliverer; my shield, and He in whom I trust.”  
(Psalm 144. 1-2)

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*April 2016*

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April 2016

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Cover image: *Cantemir Olaru / Shutterstock.com*

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

This month I am writing to you about three men, whose names are found in an epistle (letter) with only one chapter. There are, of course, two epistles in the New Testament with just one chapter. I wonder if you know which these are?

In this epistle we read of a slave who ran away from his master. We learn from reading the letter that his master was a man who feared God, and though we do not support slavery, I am sure he would have treated his slaves fairly, and humanely. Also we learn that he had a church in his house. A church in the Bible is not a building as is thought today, but rather a group of believers, who having been baptised, are joined in fellowship with each other. No doubt, the slave would have been required to attend the worship of God with others when these believers met together in the master's house.

However, it seems that this slave was restive. Perhaps, understandably, he was tired of being a slave to another man. He may have been punished for disobedience. One thing is certain, he did not fear God as his master did and probably resented the sober atmosphere of his lodging. This being so, he resolved to run away to the most important city of the times, Rome. He probably thought that with so many people living there he could easily lose himself among the crowds and enjoy his freedom. He probably had heard of the attractions there and no doubt wanted to see them for himself. Wrongly, he stole some of his master's money to pay for his journey, so breaking the commandment: *"Thou shalt not steal."*

No doubt, in the mind of this slave was the thought that in Rome he would not hear about the God his master loved, and his conscience would not be troubled by the reproofs he had no doubt received at home. How different were God's thoughts to his! God, whose eyes are everywhere and are never closed, was watching in love over this sinner. He determined that although he had run away from the truth, this slave would nevertheless hear it, and be affected by it.

In Rome, probably in a prison cell, was an eminent preacher of Jesus Christ. No doubt, in a different way, he would have been glad to be as free as the runaway slave wished to be. However, he believed that God had ordered his way to be imprisoned for the truth's sake and that, unlikely as it may seem, God had a work for him to do there. So it proved to be. We are not told how this slave came to be in the congregation of this noble preacher. Perhaps he came out of curiosity as another man did to hear Jesus in Jericho. Whatever the reason for his coming, God used the words of His servant to open the heart of this slave to receive the truth concerning himself as a sinner, and Christ as the Saviour of such. So much so, he became a follower of Jesus Christ and was greatly beloved by God's servant. Truly repentant, his life now changed.

Now, dear readers, if we are truly sorry, then our lives will show it to be so. We shall be prepared not just to *say* we are sorry, but *show* that in our actions. So the slave, now a believer in Christ Jesus, must return to his master and he must say 'sorry.' But what about the money he had stolen and wasted when he first came to Rome? God's servant, seeing the predicament he was in, wrote a very kind letter to the slave's master, begging him to forgive the slave, and offering to pay all that the slave owed to his master. We are not told what the master said or did when he read the letter handed to him by the slave, but we can hope that as he saw how repentant he was, that he was ready to forgive, even as God had forgiven him. No doubt, he would remember that he also needed forgiveness from God as much in other ways!

Dear young friends, it needs grace to say sorry and really mean it, and it also needs grace to forgive and really mean it. But if we are Christ's we will remember the words of the preacher, who preached in Rome, in another of his letters: *"And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you."* Can you tell me where this verse is in the Bible?

Can you tell me the names of the slave, his master, and the preacher he heard in Rome? And what was the name of the curious hearer in Jericho?

*(The answers will be in the May Friendly Companion, if the Lord will.)*

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor

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### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture on our front cover this month is of Battle Abbey, East Sussex, England. It is 950 years ago this year that the Normans, led by William the Conqueror, overcame King Harold, and so brought to an end the Saxon dynasty which had ruled England for many years. An abbey was built on the site by William to commemorate his famous victory. Sadly, of course, it would not have been the pure worship of the Reformation (which was yet to take place) that took place within its walls, but that of the dominant Roman Catholic Church.

However, the history of this famous battle tells us one telling fact. The reason William was able to overcome the forces of Harold comparatively easily, was that the Normans unexpectedly fired their arrows up into the air; the men of Harold's army foolishly looked up without raising their shields to protect their faces as the arrows came in, and so many were blinded which caused early consternation and confusion among the English. In the providence of God it was His will that the battle should have turned the way it did. The Bible tells us of God: *"By Me kings reign, and princes decree justice."*

There is a lesson for us to learn here. Just as Harold's men needed the shield to protect their faces, so when Satan fires his arrows of unbelief into our hearts, we need the shield of God's unerring Word to protect us. How clear this is as we read of the temptations of Christ in the wilderness, that He used the shield of the Word again and again: *"It is written."* Paul calls it

‘the shield of faith,’ and when the Holy Spirit helps us to put this shield between us and Satan’s fiery darts, then we are protected from the harm they would do to our soul. As soon as we neglect this part of our armour, we find Satan gains the mastery. How wonderfully was Joseph kept, and when sorely tempted by Satan through Potiphar’s wife, said: *“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”* Yet how quickly did Eve, and then Adam, fall when Satan cast a doubt on God’s Word with the words: *“Hath God said?”*

The great mercy is, that the Lord Jesus, who suffered being tempted - yet without ever succumbing to it - is able and willing to deliver the tempted from the tempter, providing a way of escape for all who flee to Him for refuge.

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### **DNA REVEALS HOW MIGRATIONS SHAPED EUROPE**

After investigating the DNA of ancient individuals, a University of Copenhagen study has concluded that massive population migrations shaped modern Eurasian people groups who are, genetically speaking, not more than a couple of thousand years old.

The lead author, Assistant Professor Morten Allentoft, said that the study of skeletons excavated across large areas of Europe and Central Asia confirmed that migrations had brought on the economic and social changes that happened at the beginning of the third millennium BC.

The migrations resulted in huge changes to the European gene-pool, so that – genetically speaking – ancient Europeans from the time after these migrations are much more similar to modern Europeans. It also accounts for the origin of northern European language families.

While the study discusses scenarios for the migration, including the possibility that “re-writing of the genetic map began in the early Bronze Age, about 5,000 years ago,” Biblical creationists immediately think of the Tower of Babel and the dispersal of people groups as in Genesis 11. 7-8: *“Go to, let us*

*go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city."*

The "discovery" seems to be a matter of "modern" science catching up with the Bible.

*Creation*

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### **"THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS"**

Dear Editor,

Having just read your editorial address in the February *Friendly Companion*, it reminded me of an experience I had many years ago.

I was in partnership with an ungodly man (which I now know was not Scriptural). For no good reason this man decided to turn me out of the office. Shortly after this, I had a meeting with the landlord, who surprisingly took the side of my partner and did not seem to appreciate the injustice of the situation. (The landlord at that time was Chairman of the British and Foreign Bible Society). This left me very perplexed. I well remember driving home and wondering why this situation had occurred: I was being wrongly accused. It then suddenly came into my mind that this was just like the situation which had occurred to the Lord Jesus. Immediately I realised this was bringing me into fellowship with His sufferings and I was truly thankful for the Lord's goodness in granting me this privilege. A blessed experience I never forgot.

Some weeks later, I met the landlord again and mentioned to him that I was surprised at his attitude towards me. He looked at me and said that he had never intended to portray that view, in fact, he meant the opposite. So what a mercy the Lord allowed this situation to occur to allow me in some small measure to have fellowship with the sufferings of the Saviour!

*An older reader*

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

The men of Ziph told Saul that David was hiding in the wilderness near them. Then Saul went to hunt for David again with an army of three thousand men.

David heard that Saul and his army had come after him. David and Abishai, one of his brave men, crept down to the camp of Saul at night. Saul and all of his army were asleep, *"because a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them."* Abishai wanted to kill Saul. But David said: *"Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?"* David took Saul's spear and bottle of water while he slept, but he spared Saul's life.

Then David went to the top of a hill that was far off. He shouted to the captain of Saul's army and asked why he had not kept watch over the king in the night. He asked him where the king's spear and bottle of water were. Saul heard the words of David and knew that David had spared his life. He said: *"I have sinned: return, my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day."* David asked Saul to send one of his young men to fetch the spear. Then David went on his way and Saul returned to his place.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. When did David and Abishai go down to the camp of Saul?
2. What did Abishai want to do?
3. What did David take from Saul while he slept?

*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.*

*Contributed*

**ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Food.
2. Nothing.
3. Abigail.



“... for the  
LORD  
delivered  
thee into my  
hand today.”

1 Samuel

26. 23.

**BIBLE LESSONS****SAUL RETURNS TO JERUSALEM**

After he was baptized, Saul remained in Damascus for a number of days, preaching the Lord Jesus. How startled the disciples of Jesus must have been as they saw the renowned persecutor enter their synagogues!

He was no longer filled with rage and enmity against them though. No, he now preached Jesus unto them. The Bible tells us that: *"All that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?"* He was now constrained to preach the faith he had come to destroy.

After a number of days, Saul departed from Damascus and went into Arabia. Just as Moses was prepared to lead Israel out of Egypt during the years he spent in the back side of the desert, so Saul spent considerable time in the solitude of Arabia to pray and study the Scriptures. With great light the Holy Ghost opened the Scriptures to him. Jesus of Nazareth, whom he had so despised, was the very One whom all the prophets wrote of.

When he left Arabia, Saul returned to Damascus and preached the Lord Jesus with great boldness. Many of the unbelieving Jews who came out to hear him preach became enraged against him. He was given such wisdom and strength in the knowledge of Jesus that the Jews were confounded before him. He proved from all the Scriptures that Jesus was *"The Christ."*

The Jews plotted amongst themselves how they could kill Saul. They set watchmen by the gates of the city night and day, who were ready to seize him if he tried to leave the city. Saul, who had come to Damascus to hunt down the believers, now became the one hunted. However, Saul and the disciples in Damascus became aware of their plans. With Saul's life in great danger, the disciples thought of a plan to get him out of the city. One night under the cover of darkness they let Saul down from the wall of the city in a basket.

Escaping from Damascus, Saul made his way to Jerusalem.

It had been three years since he left Jerusalem with a band of young men, but now he returned a lonely figure. He could no longer go to his former friends, nor did he want to. He sought to join with the disciples of Jesus, but they were still afraid of him. They did not believe he was a disciple.

Perhaps the news of Saul's conversion had not reached them, or perhaps they feared it was a disguise whereby he could quickly destroy them.

Saul experienced what many of the Lord's people feel when they are first converted. They are cut off from their former friends, who will have nothing more to do with them. Likewise, when they try to join with the people of God, they are very wary of them, especially if they have acted with scorn and hatred toward them in the past. What a lonely place Saul felt to be in! Although Saul could not make the disciples willing to accept him, the Lord Jesus would incline their hearts.

One of the disciples befriended Saul. It was Barnabas, who earlier had sold his land and brought the money to the apostles to distribute among the poor believers. Perhaps you may remember that the apostles gave him the name of Barnabas, which meant the "*son of consolation*." It was this Barnabas who brought Saul with him into the presence of the apostles.

Barnabas told the apostles how the Lord had appeared to Saul on his way to Damascus and enabled him to preach boldly the name of Jesus. Now the apostles in Jerusalem received him gladly and rejoiced to hear him tell of the mercy their Lord and Master had shown to him.

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 9 verses 19 to 28, and Galatians 1 verses 15 to 19.*

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Where did Saul go when he first left Damascus?
2. What did Saul prove from the Scriptures that confounded the Jews?
3. How did Saul escape from Damascus?
4. Who befriended Saul and brought him to the apostles?
5. What does his name mean?

*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. Three.   | 2. Praying.     | 3. A chosen vessel. |
| 4. Brother. | 5. Be baptized. |                     |

*G. L. TenBroeke*

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### EDWARD SAMUEL (4)

When I arrived at Leipzig it was the great annual fair: what a sight it was! There were traders from almost all parts of the world. I met with one of my countrymen who knew my family. Here also I met an Englishman for the first time. With my new Jewish friend we went to Frankfurt-on-the-Maine, and from there we had a pleasant journey back to Leipzig.

It was here that I had an interview with Baron Rothschild. Although he was a very great man and immensely rich, yet he was very humble. His pew in the synagogue, contrary to the usual custom, was among the poor. My dress and age and devout manner during the service attracted his attention. On coming out of the synagogue, he arranged for me to speak with him the next day. Accordingly, I went to his house, handing to the porter the card I had been given. I was admitted into the grandeur of the house. It made me feel very awkward.

Presently the Baron and another gentleman made their appearance. This gentleman was a rabbi. The Baron told me not to be afraid of answering the questions the rabbi would put to me. This made me tremble. My dear reader, you may depend the questions would not be about the Lord Jesus Christ, neither His blood and righteousness. The rabbi asked what I had studied at school, then brought a large copy of the Talmud and questioned me from it. I answered to the best of my ability, and they both appeared pleased. The Baron then asked me where I was staying and for where I was bound. I

replied: "England," and he left the room for a few minutes and came back with a note for the man where I was staying to say that the Baron would pay all my expenses during my stay in Leipzig. Thus the Lord provided a friend for me there. All hearts are in His hands and at His divine disposal.

Later, meeting with some Jewish merchants, one asked me where I was from and where I was going. I replied to his questions and he asked me to meet him that evening, when I showed him my letters of recommendation from home. After reading these he said: "If you come to Rotterdam and call on me, I will pay your passage to London." Oh how great the bounties of heaven are, not only are our present needs supplied, but also for the future. What love to enemies and rebels: *"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

After much travelling I arrived in Holland, although on the way I had the experience of being lost in a wood and through confusion and fright could not find my way out. I remained all night, expecting every moment to be killed by the wild beasts. In the morning, and being spared, I spied an apple tree. Feeling very hungry, I climbed up the tree which was very high. A branch gave way and down I came, where I remained lifeless. On recovering, I scarcely knew where I was. Being never without my phylacteries and prayer book, I put on the former and opened the book and said my morning prayers, crying bitterly to the Lord to deliver me from this wood.

The dear Lord soon appeared for me, and about midday I heard footsteps. Pausing for a moment as to what I should do, I decided to walk in the direction of the sound. I had not walked many steps when I met a tall man with an axe on his shoulder. I spoke to the man in German. I could only understand a word or two of the language he replied in. He spoke kindly to me, telling me that if I would go on for four or five miles I would find the right road and that he would guide me to it. He very kindly took from a clean bag a piece of nice bread and gave it to me. At length I reached a village. Here

again, I can say with the Apostle Paul: *"In perils in the wilderness ... in hunger and thirst, in fastings often...."*

Through divine protection, I arrived in Rotterdam and made enquiries about the Jewish merchant I had met in Frankfurt-on-the-Maine. The innkeeper where I was staying, said that he did not think I would be able to see the man as he was one of the richest bankers in Rotterdam and lived two miles out of town. However, the next day I went to see this gentleman: coming to the lodge, I was accepted and sent on to the house. This gentleman was very pleased to see me and asked me where I was staying, and said he would send his footman with me and take me to a better place to stay and invited me to dine with him that evening. So at 6 o'clock I went to his house and was introduced to his wife and three daughters. He told them that I was the little Polish boy about whom he had told them. At the dinner table, the lady said: "We shall expect you to dine with us every day during your stay in Rotterdam." Of course, you will understand that this banker was a strict Jew. At the dinner table he asked me whether I should like to remain in Rotterdam. If I did stay he would see me provided for. I thanked him, but told him my mind was fixed on going to England. He answered that England was a very wicked place, and if I took his advice I should stay in Rotterdam. He said I might stay as long as I liked and he would cover all my expenses. I stayed about a month, in some indecision of purpose and then I told him I should like to leave.

(To be continued)

*Adapted*

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#### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*The names of HARRY DADSWELL; CARISSA, CAROLYN, HANNAH, JANNA and LEAH YMKER are added to the list of names published in March. The name of JONATHAN BALDWIN-JONES was inadvertently included. First answers to the monthly questions have been received from WILLIAM LUCAS.*

### HOW THE STORY GREW

*(Before reading this story, read first James 3. 1-10)*

As two young girls, named Kitty and Maggie, were going to school one morning, Kitty said: "I was over at Uncle Fred's last Saturday, and stayed later than I meant to. We had such fun that I did not notice that the sun was nearly set. I had to walk home alone and was rather worried."

"Did you meet anyone?" asked Maggie.

"Only Johnnie Gates. He was coming with a big water-melon under his arm. I was really scared at first but when I saw who it was I got over it."

At break-time, Maggie said to Mary: "Kitty told me that she saw Johnnie Gates carrying a big water-melon on Saturday evening. I wonder where he got it from, and what was he going to do with it?"

Before they went back into the school, Mary whispered to Sallie: "Johnnie Gates was seen carrying a great big water-melon on Saturday evening. Do you think that he got it honestly?"

"Mr Hart's water-melon patch was robbed about that time; maybe that's where it came from," answered Sallie.

At lunch-time, Sallie told Susan and Jennie.

"I know something, and I'll tell you if you won't breathe a word of it to a soul."

"Oh, no we won't," cried both the girls in one breath, "what is it?"

"Well, Johnnie Gates robbed Mr Hart's melon-patch one night last week."

"Oh, dear, isn't that awful!" exclaimed Susie.

"I always thought that Johnnie Gates was not so much better than the rest of us, for all that he pretended to us that he was honest," said Jennie.

"He could not have done it alone," said Sallie; whereupon Jennie hurried to a group of friends in the classroom and told them.

"Johnnie Gates and a lot of other boys robbed Mr Hart's

melon-patch, and destroyed all they could not carry away."

Just at that moment, who should appear in the classroom, but Johnnie Gates himself! He was whistling in a very happy mood, and carrying under his arm, unashamedly, a large water-melon.

"Hey, guys," he cried, "come here quickly." I've got something for you. Be quick, the bell will go soon for the next lesson."

The girls, who had been reporting Johnnie's supposed misdeeds, looked at each other, and with disgust registered on their faces, they turned away.

Poor Johnnie was most upset. "Why, what's the matter with you all? Hurry up the bell is about to go."

"We know what you've got, Johnnie Gates," said Sallie, "and we don't want any of your stolen melon. I think you should be ashamed of yourself."

"Who says I stole the melon?" cried Johnnie getting very hot under the collar. "Let them come and tell me to my face. I was over at Uncle Harry's on Saturday evening, and he gave me a splendid one. I saved it over the weekend on purpose to share it with you all, but if that's what you think about me, you can do without!"

"Well that's what I heard, anyway," said one of the girls.

"Who told you, I would like to know," said Johnnie getting more and more upset.

They all began to speak at once and became so excited that they did not notice the teacher come into the room, until she said to Johnnie: "What is their quarrel with you?" At which Johnnie gave his side of the story. At this the teacher interrogated each of the witnesses, and found that the whole story came from Kitty who had told Maggie that she had met Johnnie carrying a water-melon.

When the children realised how the story had grown from what Kittie had told Maggie, their faces were rather red!

The teacher sat them all down, and said: "I hope that every



one of you will learn a lesson from this incident. And now, before the habit of gossiping becomes fixed, resolve that you will tell nothing but what you know to be true, and what you do tell, you will tell exactly as you heard it, and not unnecessarily tell anything to injure the reputation of anyone else, even if it is true. I hope Johnnie will forgive you, and that you will not forget the important lesson you have learned today.”

Johnnie, being a very generous boy, as well as honest, willingly shared his water-melon with the rest of the class.

Before you spread reports, this do: know for certain they are true. And never do, by act or tongue, what might do others grievous wrong.

Always ask these three questions before reporting: “Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?”

*Selected*

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### “MIND YOUR ‘P’s AND ‘Q’s”

You have probably been thus advised by someone older, or perhaps to “dot your ‘i’s and cross your ‘t’s.” Carelessness in even such small details might lead to serious error. But even when great care is taken, there are very few, if any, human writings that are absolutely free from error. The Holy Scriptures, however, are unique in this respect; for Moses, Isaiah, Matthew, Paul and others wrote and spoke *“as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”* (2 Peter 1. 21), and He is infallible in all He does.

This “inspiration” of the Bible is so thorough that not only is each word inspired (1 Corinthians 2. 13), but even the letters and minute parts. We gather this from what the Lord Jesus said about the tiniest details of the law: *“One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled”* (Matthew 5. 18). Every *jot* and every *tittle*, He implied, was a necessary part of the perfection of the law (meaning the Old Testament), and these small details would therefore remain intact, though heaven and earth passed away. Remember that

these words of the Lord Jesus teach us that we must take notice of the jots and tittles of Scripture because God had a purpose in making them an integral part of Holy Writ.

But you may ask what the two words mean. “Jot” is the name of the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. Because of its shape and its comparatively small size, it is the most likely letter to be omitted by a scribe in writing, or by any person in reading the Scriptures without due care. The name of this dwarf letter is usually spelt “Yod” or “Jod.” Its name will be found in our English Bibles as the heading to the tenth group of stanzas in Psalm 119 (verses 73-80). It is placed there to indicate that those eight verses each begin with the letter “Yod.”

The “tittle” was not even a tiny Hebrew letter, like “jot.” It was only the little twiddle found in some of the letters, which served to distinguish them from other letters, similar in shape. Think of the “tittle” in our capital “G,” by which we know it is not a “C.”

There are two or three couples of Hebrew letters, in which one in a pair has a “tittle,” and the other has not. In reading, therefore, you are bound to look carefully for the tittle. Should you overlook it, you will probably be led astray as to the word as well as the letter itself. Thus, in the English example given, supposing you came to the word “Grown,” and did not notice the “tittle,” you would call the word “Crown”: a different word altogether, and a ridiculous substitute, spoiling the sense entirely.

From what has been said, you will have gathered that even the minutest parts of Scripture God will never allow to fail or pass away until the purpose for which they were written has been fulfilled. For this fact we have authority in the Lord’s own teaching (Matthew 5. 18; Luke 16. 17).

“*Thy Word is very pure*” [or “well refined”], said the psalmist; “*therefore Thy servant loveth it*” (Psalm 119. 140). As Moses, Isaiah, Daniel and others were writing the sacred history or prophecy, their hands were so guided and [their

minds] controlled by the Holy Spirit, that absolute accuracy was secured for every word, so that it was “pure” and “well refined” from every error. Moreover, that accuracy extended, not only to each word, but to the smallest letter of a word, indeed to every dot, dash, stroke, or curve forming each letter. And the Lord has said that not one jot or tittle shall pass away until all has been fulfilled. What a wonderful writing!

The Jews had great veneration for their holy oracles, both as a whole and in their slightest detail. It has been stated that there are 66,420 yods in the Hebrew Bible. Whether this large number is exactly correct or not, we may be sure that the original manuscripts did not contain one too many, nor one too few. Not one jot or tittle is unimportant, not one will pass away or be lost.

Sometimes the only difference between the spelling and meaning of a Bible name is just the little yod. This is the difference, for example, between Sarai (dominative), the original name of Abraham's wife (Genesis 11. 29), and Sarah (princess), the name she received before she became the mother of Isaac (Genesis 17. 15). It is also the difference between Oshea (help), the family name of the son of Nun (Numbers 13. 8) and his name as the famous servant of the LORD, Joshua (Jehovah's help); (Exodus 17. 9).

*Friendly Companion 1939*

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### **“I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS”**

Mr Robert Bruce, an eminent minister in Scotland, having to preach on a solemn occasion, was late in coming to the congregation. Some of the people, beginning to be weary, and others wondering at his delay and the time far spent, the elder was asked to go and enquire the reason; who coming to his house, and finding his study door shut, and hearing a sound, drew near, and listening, overheard Mr Bruce often, and with much seriousness, say: “I protest I will not go, expect Thou go with me.” Whereupon the man, supposing that some person

was in company with him, withdrew without knocking at the door.

On being asked at his return, the cause of Mr Bruce's delay, he answered he could not tell; but supposed that some person was with him, who was unwilling to come to church and he was engaged in pressing him to come, declaring that he would not go without him.

Mr Bruce soon after came, accompanied with no man, but he came in the fulness of the blessings of the Gospel of Christ; and his speech and his preaching were with such evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, that it was easy for the hearers to perceive he had been in the mount with God, and that he enjoyed the presence of his Divine Master.

*Selected*

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

##### **THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (4)**

In Genesis 17 v 1 the LORD reveals Himself to His servant Abram: "*I am the Almighty God.*" We find in this chapter that Abram was ninety-nine years old, and that Sarai his wife was ninety years old. The Apostle Paul in Hebrews 11 writes of this time in Abram's life when he had been waiting for his promised son for twenty-five years and it looked increasingly impossible that this promise could be fulfilled. If the Lord gives us a promise it will be tried, not to prove to God it is real, but to prove to us that it is real, and not only that, but in the fulfilling of it we shall see that God alone could do it. This is why the LORD reveals Himself to Abram as: "*I am Almighty God.*" Abram's situation was naturally speaking impossible. What an encouragement to Abram and Sarai's faith. The passage in the Hebrews shows us the impossibility that faced them: "*Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead,*

*so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth"* (Hebrews 11. 11-13). It reminds us of the word of the angel to Mary when he told her that she, a virgin, would have a son: *"For with God nothing shall be impossible"* (Luke 1. 37).

In this chapter the LORD changed the name of Abram to Abraham, meaning: "Father of a great multitude"; and Sarai to Sarah, meaning, "Princess." This was to be a turning point in their lives: the promised son would be born. Abraham and Sarah had tried thirteen years before to fulfil the promise themselves. Sarah gave Hagar, her maid, to Abraham and Ishmael was born. But my beloved friends, Ishmael was the fruit of the flesh of unbelief, of impatience, and in this chapter Abraham pleads with the LORD: *"And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before Thee!"* (Genesis 17. 18). But this could not be: it is as if the LORD says to Abraham: "NO!" But He continues graciously to say: *"And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him"* (Genesis 17. 19). All this was accomplished because *"I am Almighty God."*

Abraham and Sarah were godly gracious people, who lived by faith, but we have to prove that one of the afflictions of the Lord's living family is unbelief; this is revealed in the following chapter: *"And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And He said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind Him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the LORD said unto Abraham,*

*Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And He said, Nay; but thou didst laugh*" (Genesis 18. 9-15). My dear beloved friends, unbelief would drag God from His throne, would limit the Holy One of Israel, as the apostle says: *"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin"* (Hebrews 3. 12-13).

*"I am Almighty God."* Notice Almighty is written here with a capital 'A': in other words, it is not as in some other places speaking of an attribute, but of what God is: "Almighty." It reminds us of the precious words of our Lord Jesus when He was about to ascend up to heaven: *"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth"* (Matthew 28. 18). My dear beloved friends, may we never forget this. Whatever our troubles, trials, impossibilities, and hopeless circumstances: *"I am Almighty God."* I remember reading about when George Muller had a very important meeting in New York. Having sailed from Bristol they could not sail into the harbour because of dense fog. On speaking to the captain of the ship he informed him that they could not move until the fog lifted. He immediately knelt down and prayed, and as he got up from his knees the fog lifted and they sailed into port. O for more faith to constantly look to the Lord. There was a Lady Lucy Smith connected to the Countess of Huntingdon who was renowned for her faith, and a gentleman being introduced to her one day said: "O you are a woman of great faith." She replied: "O no, I have a little faith in a great God."

*J. R. Rutt*

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### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about THANKSGIVING. 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. "Thanks be unto God for..." For what? (2 Corinthians 9. 15)
2. On one occasion we read that Jesus "rejoiced in spirit." What did He thank His Father for? (Luke 10. 21)
3. What did Daniel do three times a day, knowing that it might cost him his life? (Daniel 6. 10)
4. Who in the Book of Genesis was thankful for God's gracious leading and direction when faced with a very difficult task? (Genesis 24. 27)
5. On one occasion Jesus healed ten lepers, but one was different from the other nine. In what way? (Luke 17. 12-18)
6. David was once thankful for good advice given by a woman when he was bent on revenge. What was the woman's name? (1 Samuel 25)
7. Jesus always gave thanks to God before a meal. Give two references in John 6 which show this.
8. "Be careful for nothing; but...." What gracious instruction does the Apostle Paul give? (Philippians 4)
9. Jesus spoke of a Pharisee who only gave thanks to God in pretence. What did he 'thank' God for? (Luke 18)
10. How many Psalms begin with the words: "O give thanks unto the LORD"?

### ANSWERS TO MARCH QUESTIONS

1. The children of Israel could eat creatures which had fins and scales.
2. A serpent.
3. The fish died because all the water of the river was turned to blood.
4. Jonah was swallowed by "a great fish" and later vomited out on dry land.

5. A piece of money, sufficient to pay the tribute for the temple.
6. Jesus fed five thousand with the five barley loaves and two small fishes. (John 6. 9-13)
7. Peter fell at Jesus' knees saying: "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (Luke 5. 8)
8. Jesus told the disciples to "cast the net on the right side of the ship." They caught 153 "great fishes." (John 21. 6-11)
9. On one occasion Jesus told Peter to "cast an hook" (Matthew 17. 27); on two others to "let down your nets" and to "cast the net" (Luke 5. 4 and John 21. 6).
10. Peter and Andrew, James and John. (Matthew 4. 18 and 21)

*Contributed*

---

### THE WEAVER

My life is but a weaving  
Between my God and me,  
I do not choose the colours,  
He works so steadily.  
Oft times He weaves in sorrow,  
And I in foolish pride,  
Forget He sees the upper,  
And I the underside.

Not till the loom is silent,  
And the shuttles cease to fly,  
Will God unroll the canvas,  
And explain the reason why  
The dark threads are as needful  
In the Weaver's skilful hand,  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned.

*G.C. Tullar*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“The LORD that delivered me ... out of the paw of the  
bear, He will deliver me ....”  
(1 Samuel 17. 37)

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*May 2016*

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*Erratum: page 91 in the April issue, last but one line, 'expect' should read 'except'.*

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

We read in the Scriptures of a godly man called Nehemiah. He was greatly used of God in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, and also in reforming the worship of the one, true God in Judah and Jerusalem. On one occasion while he was the Governor, he was told how the rich men were oppressing the poor and charging them extortionate rates of interest. He sharply rebuked them saying: *"So did not I, because of the fear of God"* (Nehemiah 5. 15). The reverence and love, which Nehemiah had for God, was the ruling principle in his life.

It is something to be truly thankful to God for, if His fear governs your life. *"The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death"* (Proverbs 14. 27).

See what a restraining hand this fear had in the following men in the Bible.

- Because Joseph feared God, he fled from Potiphar's wife when she would have enticed him to disobey the seventh and tenth commandments (Genesis 39. 9).
- Because David feared God, he would not slay Saul, even though he had the opportunity, was encouraged to do so by his friends and had been so unkindly treated by Saul (1 Samuel 24. 4-6). He remembered God's word: *"Touch not mine anointed"* (Psalm 105. 15).
- Because he feared God, David also would not let his men slay Shimei, even though he was casting stones and spitting at him (2 Samuel 16. 10-11). He left God to deal with him, who has said: *"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord"* (Romans 12. 19).
- Because Paul feared God, he would not let himself be worshipped by his hearers (Acts 14. 8-18). He kept the first commandment.
- Because he feared God, the dying thief rebuked the other thief when he took the name of the Lord Jesus in vain, as the third commandment forbids.

I wonder if this fear has ever shut your mouth, or opened it! So often we are influenced by other fears: the fear of man, the fear of this world, for example. Abraham denied his wife twice because he feared man. Peter denied his Lord because he feared man. How we need to be kept in this fear of God!

“Fear Him, ye saints! and you will then  
Have nothing else to fear;  
Make but His service your delight,  
Your wants shall be His care.”

Many of you are at school and college where you are surrounded and often taught by those who do not fear God. To act in His fear when you are the only one so doing needs courage and strength of mind which only God can give. That is why the word “kept” was so precious to Peter when he was restored from his fall.

*“Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto Thy statutes continually”* (Psalm 119. 117) was the psalmist’s prayer. May it be our prayer also!

Also remember God’s words to Eli: *“Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed”* (1 Samuel 2. 30).

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

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### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture on our front cover this month is of a brown bear. It looks quite harmless in the picture, but if we were in its territory and it felt threatened, we would think quite differently! Bears are, of course, one of the many animals God has created. They are mainly herbivores, that is, they live on vegetation: in their case, berries, especially blueberries. This may seem surprising considering their size. However, they are not averse to changing their diet if they think necessary!

You will all have heard of the great danger David was in when a bear came and took a lamb out of his flock. Because

he loved his flock he could not tolerate the loss of one of his flock to a bear, or a lion either, for that matter. No doubt using his sling, which he always carried with him as a shepherd boy, he was able to do what he later did when confronting Goliath. Relating this adventure and deliverance to King Saul, he assured him that the God who delivered him from the paw of the bear and the mouth of the lion, would not fail him when he went to meet Goliath.

Why was David so sure of this?

Firstly, David had faith in God. Without that it would have been foolhardy for a young lad to take on the experienced giant, Goliath. But David believed that God, in whom he trusted, was mightier than this great foe.

Secondly, David knew that God had a great love for His chosen people, Israel, even as David had for his flock.

Thirdly, David knew that whenever the honour of God was at stake, as it was in the valley of Elah, God would come to defend His own cause.

Fourthly, David had proved God to be faithful, and had experience of His deliverances. He knew what God could do!

All these things David had been led to believe by the Holy Spirit and this made him "*strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.*" He was a man "*after God's own heart.*" Paul said to the church at Philippi: "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" May we also be clothed with the same armour of faith and be strengthened with the same might.

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#### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from BARNEY BARKER; BRYCE de BLIECK; GRACE and JUDE COTTINGHAM; JOB HICKMAN; SUSANNA KERLEY; JOHN MURPHY and JESSICA SCOTT.*

## FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES

**ZIKLAG**

Saul told David that he would no longer try to harm him, but David did not trust his word. He went to live in the land of the Philistines. At first David and his men lived in Gath. Then David asked Achish, the king of Gath, to give them a place far off in the country. Achish gave them the town of Ziklag, and there they lived with their families for over a year.

David was friendly to Achish, and he believed David had turned against the people of Israel. Soon the Philistines went to fight with Israel. Achish also went and took David and his men with him. The princes of the Philistines saw David and became very angry. They told Achish to send David and his men away.

When David and his men returned to Ziklag, they found the city had been burned with fire and their families taken captive. They all wept for sorrow. Then David's men began to speak of stoning him. David was greatly distressed, but he *"encouraged himself in the LORD his God."* He asked God what he should do. Then David and his men pursued after those who had invaded Ziklag. With the help of God, David recovered all that had been taken. *"And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great ... David recovered all."*

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Which town did Achish give to David?
2. What did David's men speak of doing? (two words)
3. With the help of God, what did David recover? (one word)

*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. At night.
2. Kill Saul.
3. His spear and bottle of water.

“... *but David  
encouraged  
himself  
in the  
LORD  
his God.*”  
*1 Samuel  
30. 6.*

**BIBLE LESSONS****PETER RAISES A PARALYSED MAN AND A DEAD WOMAN**

While Saul was with the apostles in Jerusalem, he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus. How this angered the Jews in Jerusalem! Like the Jews in Damascus, they set about to kill Saul, but their plans were made known to the brethren. They secretly brought Saul down to Cæsarea so that he could escape to his own city of Tarsus.

After Saul's conversion, the Bible tells us that the churches in Judæa, Galilee, and Samaria had a time of rest. They walked in the fear of God and enjoyed the comfort of the Holy Ghost and their numbers multiplied.

With the churches multiplying around the countryside, Peter went on a circuit, visiting the churches in each of the little villages to confirm them in the Gospel and set up pastors over them. The believers in Jesus began to call each other saints: a fitting name for those whose hearts had been purified by faith in Jesus and whose lives proved that they were followers of holiness.

Among the saints in the village of Lydda was a man who had been confined to his bed for eight years with a grievous sickness. When Peter saw the poor man, he said unto him: "*Æneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed.*" Æneas immediately rose up and walked. This wonderful miracle had a great effect on others, who turned from former ways to follow the Lord.

A little further on from Lydda was the seaport city of Joppa, where another company of believers was found. One of the disciples was a woman named Tabitha. However, she was generally called by her Greek name Dorcas. Like the Lord Jesus, Dorcas loved and cared for the poor people, especially the poor widows and their children. She laboured with her hands to make coats and clothes for them. No doubt, she had also given them money at times. What a labour of love! She did it for those who could not return any favour to her, nor did she expect any. Really, she did it as unto the Lord.



One day Dorcas became very sick and soon died. Gently they washed the body and laid it in an upper room. Having heard that the Apostle Peter was in the nearby city of Lydda, the disciples sent two men to ask Peter to come without delay to Joppa.

When Peter heard the request, he arose and went to Joppa with the messengers. They brought him into the upper room where the body of Dorcas lay. What a scene was before him! The room was filled with widows weeping with sorrow. As Peter looked around, they began to show him the coats and other garments Dorcas had made for them. They hoped Peter would understand how much Dorcas meant to the church in Joppa.

The heart of Peter was stirred for them. He urged them all to leave the room, and when he was alone, he knelt down and prayed. The Bible does not tell us what he said in prayer, but we may be certain that he prayed earnestly that the Lord would have mercy upon the church at Joppa. Peter believed the Lord had heard his prayer. Turning to the body, he called her by her Hebrew name: *"Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up."* Peter gave her his hand and lifted her up.

Peter then called the saints and widows and presented her to them. They must have looked on with great astonishment and tears of joy. The joy of the church at Joppa flowed out, and the whole city seemed to be talking of this miracle. Many believed on the Lord Jesus because of it.

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 9 verses 29 to 43.*

### QUESTIONS:

1. The believers began to call each other by what name?
2. Who was the man that Peter healed in Lydda?
3. How long had he been confined to his bed?
4. Who had made coats and clothes for the poor widows?
5. What was the Hebrew name by which Peter called her?

*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. Into Arabia.
2. That Jesus was the Christ.
3. In a basket.
4. Barnabas.
5. Son of consolation.

*G. L. TenBroeke*

---

### **MAKING SENSE OF A SENSE OF DIRECTION**

A tiny antenna-like structure in a worm's brain may hold the key as to how animals use the earth's magnetic field to navigate.

Researchers from the University of Texas made the unexpected discovery while using soil worms for Alzheimer's research. When looking for food, worms from different parts of the world moved "down" based on the corresponding magnetic field in their place of origin; but that changed when the magnetic field in their enclosure was surrounded by a magnetic coil system.

The researchers also discovered that genetically engineered worms – in which what is known as an AFD sensory neuron had been switched off – did not react to magnetic field changes. Worms use the neuron to sense carbon dioxide levels and temperature.

The team used an imaging technique on "normal" worms to show that changes in the magnetic field caused the AFD neuron to light up and concluded the neuron may be the key to not only the worm's ability to navigate but also other creatures.

The navigational feats of various creatures have long been observed and point to perfect design by the perfect Designer rather than the blind chance of directionless evolution.

*Creation Magazine*

**EDWARD SAMUEL (5)**

My refusing to stay in Rotterdam, I can only attribute to the overruling power of God, who had appointed London to be my spiritual birthplace. *"There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand."* The banker paid my fare to London in a first class cabin. He asked me to write to him and let him know how I was getting on. I never wrote: therefore I heard nothing from him. I have reason to remember my voyage to London, inasmuch as the boat was shipwrecked, yet I escaped as I had done before. *"Oh that men would praise the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men."* So through the goodness of the Lord I was brought to London.

Soon after my arrival in England, my brother whom I had left at Memal on the advice of my father, came also to England and we met at Bristol and what a happy meeting it was! We commenced in the jewellery trade and travelled a great deal around the district.

After a few months in business, I was taken ill in Bristol and went to the infirmary. It so happened that the doctor could speak German. Here again the Lord had provided me another kind friend. One Saturday I was very ill. Indeed my brother came to see me, and finding me so ill, sat by my bed and wept. This kind doctor would often sit by my bed and talk to me.

One evening they took blood from my arm. The next morning I put my phylacteries on the arm which had been bled. (Phylacteries were some cases containing strips of parchment on which were written four passages of Scripture. They were bound on the forehead and arm according to the Jewish understanding of Exodus 13. 6.) This made my wound seriously bleed. The nurse seeing this tried to take the phylacteries off my arm. I told her I would rather bleed to death, than have them taken away. I struggled hard but she overcame me. What an infinite mercy to be delivered from a natural religion. Nothing short of the power of God can do it. When the doctor came round, I told him how cruelly I had

been treated. When he saw the nurse, he told her she ought to have shown kindness, not force, knowing I was a foreigner and a Jew. The Lord was pleased to heal me and I left the hospital. Thus the watchful eye of the great Shepherd of Israel was upon me when a blasphemer.

My brother and I, on leaving Bristol, travelled to various parts of the country, and so strict were we in our religion that we went for three or four months at a time without meat, not being within the reach of a Jewish butcher. We lived chiefly on fish, eggs and bread and butter, as cheese was also prohibited. At the different places we stayed, we had to use our own saucepans and such-like utensils with our names written in Hebrew on the inside, to prevent them being used by anyone else.

I was very fond of my brother. On one occasion, my brother had to go to London, leaving me in Wiltshire. Whilst in London and hearing a great deal about America, he made up his mind to go there, and wrote to me to that effect. I wrote back, saying I would go with him and asked him to meet me. I had to leave where I was staying for two weeks on business and left my address with my landlord, with a note asking the landlord to give my new address to my brother, should he come whilst I was away, but this note the landlord lost. When my brother came to find me, I could not be traced. My brother, having our passage booked on a boat at Liverpool, had to leave on his own.

On my return, my landlord told me what had happened. This was the greatest trial that I had ever experienced: even greater than leaving home in Poland. I never expected to see my brother again. For the first few days, I ate little and could not sleep. My rebellion was so great under this providence. Twice I made an attempt to follow him, but each time something occurred to prevent me. The angel of the everlasting covenant had watched over me by land and sea, like the Israelites of old in the wilderness, and had brought me to

England. Here I can see the mysterious ways of God in providence and can say with the poet, Cowper:

“God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.”

That I should not leave this country and the reason for it, we shall see as my story unfolds. Eighteen months had passed since my brother had left England. When I was in London on business, I called one morning at a Jewish café. I sat down with two other men, one of whom had just come back from New York. Hearing that, and knowing that my brother was there, I listened to what was being said. He was telling of a very shocking occurrence which had taken place. A young man, whom he knew well, had been burnt to death. When the other man at the table enquired his name, I had the shock of hearing my brother's name mentioned; I immediately fainted and fell off my seat. When I recovered I told them he was my brother.

The man then told me the story. It appeared that when my brother arrived in New York, he went into partnership with another Jew and was very prosperous. One evening, having a little too much to drink, they went to bed and it was supposed that my brother had forgotten to put his candle out, and in consequence the house was burnt down. The rest of the occupants escaped, except my brother. The man went on to say that my brother left a good deal of property and as it was all insured, if I went to America I could claim it, but I was too distressed to do anything about it.

(To be continued)

*Adapted*

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**Answers to questions posed – April Monthly Message**

The slave: Onesimus

The master: Philemon

The preacher: Paul

The curious hearer: Zacchæus

**THUNDER AND LIGHTNING AND GIFTS FROM ABOVE**

In the Bible we have many references to thunder and lightning. I wonder how many you can find? I will give you one – Job 28. 26: *“When He made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder.”* If we have ever been close to a lightning strike and a violent crash of thunder, it makes you forget all you were thinking about.

In many parts of our world, fires are started by lightning strikes, with no accompanying rain to suppress the fire. Cattle will often seek shade under a large tree on a hot sunny day, and will take shelter under the same big tree during a storm. Should lightning strike the tree, any animals sheltering there can be killed, resulting in financial loss for the farmer, and, if insured, losses to the insurance companies, too.

Many animals, especially dogs, due to their four bare feet on the ground, are aware, minutes before we are, of an approaching thunderstorm, feeling the approaching storm through vibrations in their paws, and with their acute hearing and scent. We once heard of a dog named Happy, who could be found hiding in a cupboard minutes before its owner heard the first clap of thunder. Many folk will hide and cover their heads at the first flash of lightning or crack of thunder.

Many years ago in Canada, there was a farming family, and one day all the young men: brothers and cousins, were haymaking, when a heavy storm chased everyone out of the field and made them take shelter in the old farmhouse kitchen. Realising that haymaking was over for the day, they very wrongly started to play cards and gamble. Just after the card game commenced, a very strong bolt of lightning hit the kitchen chimney, came down the stove pipe into the big kitchen stove, jarred all the lids on the stove, blew open the warming oven door and blasted the lid lifter onto the floor.

From there the lightning went down the cast iron stove leg to one of the wide floor planks, followed the plank under the kitchen table where the boys were playing cards and split the plank from end to end. It then went from the end of the plank

through the stone foundation and went to ground just outside the kitchen window, leaving a very large hole in the ground.

The old lady, whose house it was, was one who feared God and she came and told those young men that this was a warning from God, and although no one was hurt, she would never allow card playing or any other form of gambling in the house again.

There are many wonderful benefits of lightning, thunder and rain. Many people will count the seconds between lightning and hearing the thunder, every second being equal to about a mile, so they can work out how far the eye of the storm is away from them.

Also in a lightning strike, the many thousands of volts of electricity released causes the nitrogen in the air to combine with oxygen and form nitrous oxide which the rain brings down to earth, and provides a form of nitrogen that the plants can use. Nitrogen fertiliser is quite expensive, and so having it provided during a thunder storm is truly a gift from God.

The air smells nice and clean after a thunderstorm, too. The clean smell is ozone, also released when the lightning converts nitrogen in the air to a form that plants can use. Ozone also kills bacteria, so the air is really cleaner. How Christians admire our wonder-working, all-creating God!

In the Bible, references to lightning and thunder often speak of God's judgments in the earth and of that Day when the Lord Jesus will return again to this earth. How important it is that we should be ready for that "Day of the Lord," for we read in Revelation 6 of those who will be ashamed and afraid on that Day when the heavens depart as a scroll, when it is rolled together. What place of safety can be found in that Day, or before, when we are summoned to appear before the Judgment Seat of God at our death? The Bible teaches us that it is only those who are brought to trust in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ who will be safe. May the gracious Holy Spirit be our Teacher and lead us to trust in that redeeming blood.

*Adapted*

### **MUST WE ALWAYS HONOUR OUR FATHER AND OUR MOTHER?**

Perhaps you sometimes read books that you shouldn't read: books that plant bad ideas in your minds? That's a question not just to the young people; it's a question for every one of us.

Perhaps you have sometimes upset your parents by reading books unacceptable to them? That's not good, is it? Doesn't the fifth commandment tell you to obey and honour your father and mother?

Is it ever right to disobey your parents? Read this story carefully. It will answer the questions I have just asked you.

William Maldon hurries home through the darkening streets of Chelmsford, Essex. He's later than usual. His mother will want to know why he's late. She won't be happy when he tells her that he's been reading the Bible with his elderly friend, Gaffer<sup>1</sup> Girton. And what if his father finds out? William shudders. Then he'll really be in big trouble. Even though his son is sixteen-years old, Mr Maldon won't hesitate to give him a beating. And William knows by experience that his father hits hard!

Sure enough, his mother asks for an explanation as soon as he steps into the house. "You're late tonight, William. Your father has been asking for you. I don't know what happened today, but he's in a bad mood. Speak softly, he's dozing in the other room. Try not to wake him up. Here's your supper. I kept it warm. But where have you been?"

William takes the plate and sits down close to the fireplace. "Mother, Gaffer Girton came to the shop just before closing time. I couldn't get away any sooner."

"Gaffer Girton! He's bad company for you. Some say that he's a heretic and reads the Bible even though the priest has forbidden it. We've told you not to keep company with the likes of him!"

---

<sup>1</sup>*Foxe's Book of Martyrs* uses "gaffer" which used to mean "an elderly man."



Then his mother sees something else. “But William, did you make the sign of the cross before you started eating?”

William is tempted to lie; tempted to say that he has forgotten. Then he straightens his shoulders and says gravely: “No, Mother, I didn’t do it.”

“Is that what Gaffer has been teaching you, to not make the sign of the cross?”

“No, Mother. It’s not Gaffer’s fault. It’s what the Lord says in His Word.”

“But, William, the priest says...”

William interrupts his mother. “Mother, the priest says things that God does not say. I have read the Scriptures myself.”

Fear fills Mrs Maldon. She doesn’t like what her son has said. More so, he has spoken dangerous words. What will her husband do when he finds out?

She takes the crucifix down from the wall. “Please, William, kiss the cross. Kneel before me, confess your sin, and all will be well.”

“No, Mother, I can’t. What good can it do to kiss a piece of wood? The Bible tells me that is idolatry. It is a sin to worship or adore a graven image.”

Mrs Maldon is terrified. “If your father hears you saying those words, he’ll hang you! Can’t you just worship like everyone else? Hurry off to bed, now William. I hear your father’s chair creaking in the next room. It’s better to go to bed and not meet him tonight.”

William goes up the stairs to the small room he shares with his younger brother and his father’s apprentice. As he kneels beside the large bed in which all three sleep, he hears his father’s angry voice and his mother’s weeping. He crawls in between the two other boys and pulls the blanket over him.

Then he hears heavy footsteps storming up the wooden stairs to the bedroom. His father throws open the door and steps in. He is carrying a heavy stick. “Tell me, sirrah,” he thunders at his boy, “tell me, who has been teaching you to go

against the church and to mock with the holy crucifix?"

The heavy stick strikes William's body. "I have no teacher, Father, but the Word of God, just like I've already said."

"Who has taught you to despise the Holy Church? Who has taught you to go against the king's command? Our king doesn't want us reading the heretic's Bible," continues his father, all the while hitting him hard with the stick.

"No, Father, it is not against the king's command. There is a poster on the church door giving everyone permission to read the Bible for himself."

"I don't care about any poster! You have disobeyed me and must suffer!" Meanwhile the stick continues to fall violently on the cringing boy. "Promise me that you will stay away from people who read the Bible and talk about it and despise the Holy Mother Church!"

"No, Father, I can't promise that."

Now Mr Maldon turns to his wife who has also come up the stairs to the bedroom. "Did you hear that?" he demands. "He won't even make that promise and has no tears in his eyes. I think he's past hope if he doesn't even cry after the beating I've given him."

"Tom," he tells the apprentice. "Go downstairs and get me a rope. It's better that I should hang him rather than someone else having to do it."

The apprentice doesn't move. Now Mr Maldon himself storms down the stairs. Soon he comes back, holding a rope.

"Father," cries the wife. "The boy's been punished enough!"

"Get out of my way!" he shouts as he pushes her aside and wraps the rope around his son's neck, and begins to twist it tight. William soon gasps for breath.

Then Mrs Maldon's motherly love rises to the surface. "Stop that," she screams at her husband. "That's our son, yours and mine!" William's little brother also joins in. "Stop that, you bad father! Leave my brother alone!"

Finally Mr Maldon realises what he is doing. He drops the

rope. With a shame-reddened face, he goes down the stairs. His wife follows him.

"It hurts real badly," says William as he gently rubs his bruised neck. "But that doesn't matter. I was witnessing for a good thing."

The three boys talk for a bit longer but then they fall asleep.

Downstairs, though, there is no sleep. Mrs Maldon forgets her usual respect and fear for her husband. He listens to the scolding, silently, his head down.

William stays inside for several days. Neither his parents nor he want anyone to see his badly bruised neck. William goes back to reading the Bible, to discussing it with Gaffer Girton and the apprentice. His parents no longer bother him.

The Lord commands us to read His Word, our Bible. We must obey Him, even if our parents and others forbid it.

William had a Bible of his own. He had saved up his small allowance until he had enough to purchase his very own copy. But, as you have read, reading the Bible almost cost him his life. Is the Word of God just as precious to us? Would we be willing to risk our lives in order to read the Bible?

*Adrian Stoutjesdyk*

*Based on a story in Foxe's Book of Martyrs*

---

### **"ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD"**

Bernard Gilpin was a well-known minister of the gospel in the perilous times for Protestants during the reign of Queen Mary I. He was eventually arrested by his enemies and was taken on a long journey to London where he was to be tried for non-conformity to the Roman Catholic religion of Mary. Strangely, while on his way he fell and broke his leg so badly that for several weeks he was not able to proceed any further, but was put into the custody of a man whose sympathies were with the Queen. In conversation with his captor, Bernard made the comment that "nothing happens to the people of God but what is intended for their good." The captor asked

him: "If that is so, why have you suffered a broken leg?" His reply was: "I make no question, but it is."

Not many days after, before he was fit to travel onwards, Queen Mary died. At her death, all political prisoners (as Bernard Gilpin was deemed to be) were released. He returned to his home in Houghton amid great rejoicing from his loyal hearers.

*Editor*

---

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

#### **THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (5)**

Our beloved Redeemer, Jesus Christ, reveals Himself in the Word of God as "I AM," meaning the eternal self-existent LORD Jehovah. We have already noticed how He revealed Himself to John on the Isle of Patmos: "*I am He which is and which was and which is to come the Almighty.*" In the Gospel according to John there are several times when He shows Himself the great "I AM." The one we will look at is probably the most well-known of them all: "*I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep*" (John 10. 11). This is one of the most poignant revelations of our Lord Jesus in the Scriptures. David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel in the most well-known of all, Psalm 23: "*The LORD is my Shepherd*" (Psalm 23. 1). Everything in this little Psalm flows from this blessed confession of faith. Because He was his Shepherd: "*I shall not want,*" and "*He restoreth my soul,*" and "*He leadeth me,*" and "*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever*" (Psalm 23. 6).

Everything in this Psalm flows from this blessed truth: "*The LORD is my Shepherd.*" This sacred Scripture proves the divinity of Christ: Jehovah is my Shepherd: He is the great "I AM," the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us.

In the temple at Jerusalem when the unbelievers questioned His Person and integrity, He shows Himself, the great "I AM":

*“Then cried Jesus in the temple as He taught, saying, Ye both know Me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not. But I know Him: for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me”* (John 7. 28-29). In John 10 the Lord Jesus expands on the theme of a Shepherd. An eastern shepherd walks before his sheep and they follow him. So the Lord Jesus goes before His sheep. *“And the sheep hear His voice: and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers”* (John 10. 3-5). My dear beloved friends, do you know the voice of Jesus? Are you following Him? Would you know to flee from a stranger? These are very important questions.

In the prophecy of Isaiah, the Lord Jesus is set forth as the tender Shepherd of His people, and again His divinity is highlighted: *“Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong band, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young”* (Isaiah 40. 10-11). Notice He is called the hand and the arm of the LORD. He will, and does, deal very gently with His sheep; He loves them with an everlasting love and will draw them to His heart and carry them through the trials and difficulties in this wilderness. He will protect them from the wild beasts whether they be men or devils.

The prophet Ezekiel shows us a little of this glorious Shepherd. He clearly speaks of the Shepherd of Israel as Almighty God, again proving the sacred divinity of Christ: *“For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark*

*day*" (Ezekiel 34. 11-12). He speaks wonderful words of grace to His church and people on earth concerning their future prosperity and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ as the glorious Shepherd, the Son of David: *"And I will set up one Shepherd over them, and He shall feed them, even My servant David; He shall feed them, and He shall be their Shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and My Servant David a Prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about My hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing"* (Ezekiel 34. 23-26). Our prayer, our yearning is: "Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come to Thy church and visit her with Thy great salvation."

Let us just look at the words of Jesus and how blessed they are: *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one"* (John 10. 27-30).

*J. R. Rutt*

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### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about PENTECOST. 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. On the day of Pentecost, when the Apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost, what was the immediate outward effect? (Acts 2. 4)

2. What did the Apostles speak about? (Acts 2. 11)
3. When Peter began preaching about the sin of the people in crucifying the Lord Jesus, what was the effect? (Acts 2. 37)
4. What happened to those who “gladly received his (Peter’s) word” and how many were “added unto them”? (Acts 2. 41)
5. Whom did the Lord “add to the church daily”? (Acts 2. 47)
6. What did Peter say to the lame man who sat begging at the Beautiful gate of the temple? (Acts 3)
7. When the people around marvelled at the healing of the lame man, Peter charged them with the death of the Lord Jesus. What titles or names did he give to Jesus as he spoke? (Acts 3)
8. Of whom was it written, “They (the Jewish rulers) took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” (Acts 4)
9. Why were the Sadducees in the temple grieved at the preaching of the Apostles? (Acts 4, see also Acts 23)
10. Give two references where Peter spoke of the necessity of repentance.

#### **ANSWERS TO APRIL QUESTIONS**

1. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.”
2. Jesus thanked His Father that He had hidden these things from the wise and prudent and had revealed them unto babes.
3. Daniel “kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God.”
4. Abraham’s servant.
5. One of the lepers returned to give thanks and to give God the glory.
6. Abigail. (1 Samuel 25. 32-34)
7. John 6. 11, 23.
8. “In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” (Philippians 4. 6)
9. The Pharisee thanked God that he was not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as the publican. (Luke 18. 11)
10. Four. (Psalms 105, 107, 118, 136)

*Contributed*

**“ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME”**

Like beasts which creep forth in the night,  
Sin's venom fills my soul with fright,  
See, Lord, my soul in awful plight,  
O save me by Thy power.

Its venom drags my spirit down,  
And in despair it feign would drown  
Beneath Thy everlasting frown,  
But save me by Thy power.

My heart intoxicates my soul,  
And stifles with suggestions foul,  
Dismayed to see such wild beasts prowling,  
Lord, save me by Thy power.

Sin's numbing influence I feel,  
My soul's affection it would steal,  
It stupefies and makes me reel,  
Lord, save me by Thy power.

O give me breath, O Lord, to pray,  
Have pity Lord, do not delay,  
Lest I for ever from Thee stray,  
O save me by Thy power.

Omnipotence alone can save  
My soul, from hell's devouring grave,  
Raise up, against hell's tidal wave  
A standard, by Thy power.

All Power is given to the Son,  
All Satan's works He has outdone,  
My soul's affection He has won,  
And torn from Satan's power.

O, Spirit of Christ descend on me,  
From sin's dominion set me free,  
Redeem my soul that I may see  
With joy, Thy glorious Power.

*J. Aldworth*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“For how long shall thy journey be?  
and when wilt thou return?”  
(Nehemiah 2. 6)

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*June 2016*

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### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

It is always a sad thing when children fall out with each other. Something happens or is said and is often magnified until hasty words follow and sometimes blows also! Then the whole matter has to be sorted out by parents or teachers and blame apportioned to either side if justice is to be done. It seems that there had been a quarrel between two people at Philippi. Their names were Euodius and Syntyche. When Paul wrote to the church at Philippi, he begged them to *"be of the same mind in the Lord."* That is, they were to seek what the Lord's mind was on their quarrel and then submit to His judgment which cannot err! Usually, though not always, in a quarrel there are faults on both sides. "Six of one and half a dozen of the other," the saying goes. (A dozen is a name for the number twelve.)

However, sadly and solemnly, God has a controversy (quarrel) with young and old sinners. In this case it is God who is entirely in the right, and man who is entirely in the wrong. Only He can put the matter right between us and Himself. (Read 1 John 1, to see how.) Reading in Psalm 50 we read of a quarrel God had with men in Asaph's time. On the one hand there were those who worshipped God outwardly, worshipping at the right time and seemingly in the right way, but their hearts were not in the worship. On the other hand there were those whose lives were totally inconsistent with the Word of God, who only when they were in trouble prayed to God, but as soon as the trouble was over, they went back to their evil ways. In Psalm 50, God reproves both of these cases.

But right in the middle of the Psalm, the Lord has left both a precept (a rule) and a promise, which if we follow, we can find that the controversy that God may have with us can be resolved.

*"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: and call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."*

How many of God's children have proved this to be true!

Our message to you this month is twofold:

Firstly, if you feel that God has a controversy with you in some matter, then the best course is to go to Him in all sincerity and acknowledge your fault: *“There is forgiveness with Him that He may be feared.”* *“Kiss the Son lest He be angry”* is the Psalmist’s word to us. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to deal with the controversy He has with sinners.

Secondly, whatever our age, however young or old, in any time of trouble, prayer is our best weapon. Many children and young people have proved this!

Many years ago there was a young boy who later became a well-loved deacon in one of our churches. When he was about seven years of age, he was playing with his young friends, during which time he lost the key to the house. When he returned home, his father was very angry and said that if he did not find it, he would punish him severely for his carelessness. The young lad retraced his steps searching for the key, but at first to no avail. Then he suddenly remembered that he had been told in his chapel that God hears prayer, even that of children. So getting down on his knees, there and then, he simply told the Lord his trouble; the lost key and the certain punishment awaiting him at home if he failed to find it. When his simple prayer was over, he got up off his knees and there to his astonishment was the lost key right beside him! How thankful he was that the controversy between him and his father was over! Even more important he had learned that God does hear and answer prayer, even that of a young boy.

May we also know the power of prayer.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

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#### EDITOR’S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from ISAAC BURDEN; DONOVAN KNIBBE and JOEL TAYLOR.*

A “thank-you” to those who sent in answers to the questions posed in the Monthly Message for April.

**OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE****The Railway Line of Life or Death**

Dear Friends: This is a children's evening, and what I say tonight, I shall say to them especially. I wonder what you are each thinking about?

We are living in very solemn times, too solemn to be light and trifling. I want to speak to you about a most important thing that each one of you possesses. You think of your parents and teachers, but still there is something which is of greater importance – your soul. Why is your soul the most important thing? For this reason: it will live for ever. Parents and teachers all will pass away, but your soul must spend an eternity. Each of you is travelling in one direction or another, either on the down line or on the up line.

When Jesus Christ was on earth, He was very fond of telling anecdotes, called "*parables*." One of these was about a man having two sons; the younger of these began to travel on the down line, for it is said (Luke 15. 11-13): "*A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me ....*"

Each one of us is a traveller. Now on which line are we travelling? Each is travelling either on the down line or the up line. The first station on this down line at which this younger son arrived was "*Discontentment*." Now, some may lay the blame upon Adam, but sin lies at each door – personally. The next station was "*Wandering*." Every step he went took him further from his loving father. The next station was "*Wastefulness*"; for it says: "*And there wasted his substance with riotous living*." He wasted his time, his opportunity, his substance. This brought him to a terminus – "*Ruin*." This ruin was seen in his great misery, abject poverty, and extreme baseness. Now children, just look at what sin will do. Ask yourselves, are you travelling on this downward line? It will bring misery, poverty and extreme baseness. When this younger son reached this stage, a change took place – a great

change; for it says, (verse 17): *"And when he came to himself."* Now he had changed from the down line to the up line.

*The upward journey.* The first station was *"Conviction,"* for he said: *"I perish."* Have you ever felt as though you were perishing? The second station is *"Conversion,"* *"I will arise and go to my father."* Now his face is turned towards his father, he is heaven-bound; a complete turning round. The Lord turned him round. The third station is *"Confession,"* he says: *"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee."* He could not say: *"I have been a good son,"* could he? Now there is every encouragement, for the Apostle John tells us, (1 John 1. 9): *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* It also says in the parable: *"He arose."* The fourth station was *"Deep Contrition,"* deep humility; he was willing to take the lowest place: *"Am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."* Here we have conviction, conversion, confession, and contrition.

Now he receives a most blessed reception. The father was willing and ready to meet him, for: *"When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him"* (verse 20). Now children, what love! 'Love will cover a multitude of sins.' His heart was touched, it went out to his returning son; he *"fell on his neck, and kissed him,"* a kiss of love and peace.

Which line are you travelling, children? The down line leading to ruin, or the up line? – *"Everlasting joy?"*

*S. Champion. Friendly Companion 1916.*

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### MORE THAN A FRIEND

I was deeply interested in hearing of an incident that took place at a soldier's grave in one of the Southern States of America. A person was seen decking it with flowers; and a stranger, observing him, asked with a tone of sympathy whether his son was buried there. "No," was the reply. "A

brother?" "No." "Some other relation?" "No." "Whose memory, then, do you so tenderly cherish?"

Pausing a moment from emotion, he replied – "When the civil war broke out, I was drafted for the army; and as I was unable to procure a substitute, I prepared to go. Just as I was leaving home to report myself for duty, a young man whom I knew came to me, and said: 'You have a large family whom your wife cannot support when you are gone. I am a single man, and have no one depending on me – I will go for you.' He went. In the battle of Chickamauga in 1803 the poor fellow was dangerously wounded, and was taken to the hospital. After a lingering illness, he died, and was buried here. Ever since his death I have wished to visit this place, and having saved sufficient funds, I arrived yesterday, and today I have found his grave."

The touching story concluded, he planted the rest of the flowers. Then taking a rough board, he inserted it at the foot of the grave. On it were written these simple words, and no more: "HE DIED FOR ME."

But what of One who is the Son of God? Listen! He says: *"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."* *"If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt."* He died a most suffering, agonising death, and a mocking crowd stood round Him.

*"He who knew no sin"* was then *"made sin for us"*; He *"bare our sins in His own body on the tree"*: and the Father hid His face from His own Son, when made a curse for us. It was this – not the tortures of crucifixion, but *this* – that broke His heart, and wrung from Him that cry of agony: *"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"*

It was thus He died for His dear people, loved before the world began, who by grace are brought to trust in Him. Are you, my reader, brought to trust in Him?

*Cheering Words*

---

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****THE DEATH OF SAUL**

The Philistines came again to make war with Israel. They marched into the land by thousands. When Saul saw them, he was afraid. What should he do? The LORD no longer spoke to him by prophet, by priest, or by dreams. Samuel, the great prophet of the LORD, had died. Saul had slain many of the priests. He had not kept the word of the LORD, and now the LORD was silent to him.

Saul did not ask God to forgive him and help him once more. Instead he went to a woman who claimed to have special powers to know the future. God had forbidden people to ask advice from such a person. Only He knows for sure what will happen in the time ahead! Saul was given no help or comfort by going to this woman.

The battle with the Philistines was terrible. Many men of Israel fled and many were slain or wounded. Three sons of Saul were among those killed. Saul was badly wounded by an arrow. He asked his armour-bearer to kill him before the Philistines could find him, but the armour-bearer refused. Then Saul fell upon a sword and died.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Which great prophet of the LORD had died?
2. Who were among those killed in the battle? (4 words)
3. What was Saul wounded by? (2 words)

*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. Ziklag.         | 2. Stoning him. | 3. All. |
| <i>Contributed</i> |                 |         |



“... *the*  
*LORD*  
*answered*  
*him not ...*”  
*1 Samuel*  
*28. 6.*

**BIBLE LESSONS****A GREAT VESSEL LET DOWN FROM HEAVEN**

After Dorcas was raised back to life, Peter remained in the city of Joppa for many days. No doubt he found the people in Joppa very receptive to the Gospel after seeing such a great miracle. The Lord had told Peter and the other disciples that in whatever city or town they entered, they were to ask who was worthy, and to abide with them until they departed. Peter must have found such a man in Joppa. He was known as Simon, a tanner.

Thirty miles north of Joppa was the beautiful seaside city of Cæsarea. Cæsarea was the city where Philip, one of the seven deacons, was from. Also, King Herod and other Roman officials made homes for themselves in Cæsarea. One of the officials was a man named Cornelius. He was called a centurion because he was in charge of one hundred soldiers. You may remember that when the Lord Jesus cried out His last words on the cross, the centurion who was in charge said: *"Truly this Man was the Son of God."*

Cornelius had heard of the Lord Jesus and longed to know Him. The Bible tells us he was: *"A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway."* Most of the Roman soldiers were very greedy, selfish, cruel men. What a change grace had made in Cornelius! He pitied the poor and gave great sums of money to help them.

One day as Cornelius fasted and prayed that the God of Israel would reveal Himself to him, he saw in a vision a man standing before him in bright clothing. This great Roman captain became so afraid that he cried out: *"What is it, Lord?"* The heavenly visitor, (for it was an angel of God), spoke unto him: *"Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, ... he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do."*

As soon as the angel of God had departed from him,

Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier. He told them all about the visit of the angel and what the angel had commanded. It is likely that these two servants and the soldier also feared God.

Early the next morning they started on their journey to Joppa. No doubt they prayed as they went and asked the Lord to direct their way, just as Abraham's servant did when he was sent to seek a wife for Isaac.

At the noon hour Peter went up on the house top to pray while his meal was being prepared. He became very hungry and fell into a strange sleep or trance. In a vision or dream he saw heaven opened and a vessel that appeared like a great sheet was let down to the earth by its four corners. It came right where Peter was.

Finally Peter was able to look inside the sheet. What a sight it was! All kinds of beasts and creeping things and flying fowl, clean and unclean, were all mixed together. Whatever could it mean? Then Peter heard a voice from heaven saying to him: *"Rise, Peter; kill, and eat."* How terrible this must have seemed to Peter! Perhaps you may remember that God had given laws to the Israelites about which animals and fowls they were allowed to eat. All others were considered unclean to them. Peter answered the voice that spoke, saying: *"Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean."*

The voice spoke a second time: *"What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."*

Twice more the same vision was given. Then Peter watched with wonder as the vessel with all the things inside, clean and unclean, was received up again into heaven.

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 10 verses 1 to 16 and chapter 11 verses 5 to 10.*

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the name of the centurion?
2. What kind of a man does the Bible say he was? (first 8 words)
3. Who was he told to send for?

4. What kind of beasts and creeping things and fowls were in the sheet?

5. What had God done to all things that were in the vessel?

*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. Saints.

2. Aeneas.

3. Eight years.

4. Dorcas.

5. Tabitha.

*G. L. TenBroeke*

---

### EDWARD SAMUEL (6)

In Dover I met a French Jew whom I took into partnership. We had a small horse and a van and one morning, leaving Dover for Folkestone, we had to go down a steep hill. I got out, but my partner would not, so he descended at great speed and got out of control. My partner fell out and broke his arm. I stayed with him a week before having to go to London, leaving all my goods with him. Whilst I was in London he collected in all the money owing to us, came to London unknown to me and sold all our stock and went to France leaving me almost destitute. Thus the Lord did not allow me to enjoy the world when I tried all that was in my power to do so. The Lord crossed me in everything. He had something better in store for me: imperishable riches; life eternal and a crown that fadeth not away.

I will now give an account of my call by grace. In 1836 I came to London for the purpose of keeping the Passover, expecting to meet a friend who for years had kept his Passover in London. Calling at the same meeting house where I had heard the news of my brother's death, and talking with my Jewish friends, a man came in, seated himself down at the same table and called for a cup of coffee. He proved to be a converted Jew. He first began to talk about business, and by

degrees he introduced religion and the Messiah into the conversation.

Someone said: "This is a converted Jew." I replied: "We will have a bit of fun with him." I then spoke to him, saying, "You are one of those who has forsaken the religion of our fathers, denying the law of Moses, and believe one to be God who was condemned by our rabbis and priests and hanged upon a tree: Jesus of Nazareth, who you say was the Son of David. Where can you prove it from our Scriptures that the Son of David is come?"

He replied that he had not forsaken the religion of our forefathers nor the law of Moses. He said: "I believe the Messiah is come and Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah and I will prove it from the Word of God."

I replied: "If you could do that, I would believe; but it must not be from a Christian Bible but from our Bible." A Hebrew Bible was placed on the table and he took another from his pocket. We discussed Genesis 49. 10; Isaiah 53 and Zechariah 12. 10, but my friends and I considered we had gained a point in the argument. My friends said that the converted Jew could not prove from the Bible that the Messiah is come and that the Messiah is Jesus Christ.

The converted Jew replied: "If I could not believe that Jesus was the Christ, I shall die in my sins." We all then laughed at him, and he left.

Soon after, I also left and while in the street these words: "Who can tell, but maybe this Jesus is the Messiah?" came to me very powerfully so that the thought made me uncomfortable, partly because I believed that the very thought itself was blasphemy. I tried all I could to shake it off and to get it out of my mind, but the more I tried to do this, the more the arrows of the Almighty struck me. Such thoughts followed me and made me restless and miserable.

One day, I took a Hebrew Bible and began to examine those references before referred to. Finding nothing to satisfy me, I

closed the Bible, when the words spoken to me by that converted Jew came to me: "If thou believest not, thou shalt die in thy sins and perish." They came with such power, that for a short time I knew not what to do with myself, not knowing whence they came or what they meant. The uneasiness of my mind kept increasing until I was in much distress.

I remember one evening going to bed, praying to the Lord to remove all the blasphemous thoughts that came into my mind. Then the words came to me: "If thou diest in thy sins, thou shalt surely perish." Then for the first time, I went down on my knees and wept bitterly, calling upon the God of Israel to show me the cause of my misery. Bending the knees is contrary to the Jewish custom, as well as to pray with the head uncovered: but I did both. That night I had no sleep. The thought of death and perishing were dreadful to me. The Jews believe in a place of reward and punishment, but deny any knowledge of where they are going until the dissolution of the soul and body. Again, they say that death makes atonement for all their sins. That night I tried to take comfort from this, but alas it afforded me none! I now believe that the atonement is made by the death of one Man – the God Man – Jesus Christ.

Having heard that there was a house in Bishopgate Street where Jews might meet to speak about Christianity: the house being occupied by a converted Jew, named Saul, I resolved to go there. On meeting a man on the way, I enquired of him about this place. He said that he was going there, and that he would take me. When we arrived, he asked me what I wanted. On hearing that I wanted to speak about the Messiah, he said that he was an Israelite and was convinced from the Word of God that the Messiah was come and that Jesus of Nazareth is that one, and if we believe not that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, we cannot be saved. This was like a hammer driving my convictions deeper into my conscience.

(To be continued)

*Adapted*

### MY FIRST PRAYER

One of my earliest memories is that of standing before my father, lisping a prayer which he wanted me to repeat every day until the Lord would give me a prayer from Himself. For a mere child beginning to put words together, this prayer was not only a light burden, but also a suitable plea:

“Lord, in mercy open the eyes of my soul that I may see my need of Christ. Amen.”

That was all. This prayer was so woven into my mind and memory that for some years, without adding to it or taking from it, I said it night and day, both on rising and on lying down to sleep.

*Murdoch Campbell*

*(The Editor would be pleased to hear from any reader who can remember their first prayer and its answer!)*

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### THE WRIGHT BROTHERS: PIONEERS OF THE SKIES

One Saturday afternoon in 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright made final repairs and adjustments to their aircraft. This was the culmination of four years' work by the brothers. Next morning the aircraft was ready and wind conditions were perfect, but there would be no flight that day. This was Sunday, and Wilbur and Orville chose not to work on the Lord's Day.

Wilbur Wright was born on 16th April 1867, on a farm 13 km (8 miles) east of Newcastle, Indiana. He was the third son of Bishop Milton Wright, a minister of the United Brethren Church. The family later moved to Dayton, Ohio, where the fourth son, Orville, was born on 19th August 1871.

As boys, Wilbur and Orville loved playing with anything mechanical and investigating how it worked. Their toys included a gyroscope, an old sewing machine, and a small helicopter-like toy, operated by rubber bands. During their youth, they began building their own machinery. They built a

complicated lathe, and Wilbur designed and built a machine to fold newspapers. This ability to construct their own machinery proved extremely valuable.

As well as being interested in mechanical equipment, the boys tried their hands at various business ventures, some successful and some not. Their more successful business ventures included making and selling kites, and printing leaflets for local shopkeepers on a small printing press given to Orville by his older brothers. Both these childhood enterprises foreshadowed their future endeavours.

In March 1889 Wilbur and Orville started producing a newspaper in Dayton. Seventeen-year-old Orville was the publisher and twenty-one-year-old Wilbur was Editor. Soon they were publishing other newspapers as well. However, in 1892 they became fascinated with a more mechanical interest – the bicycle.

The present-day style of bicycle was rapidly replacing their penny-farthing bicycle during the 1890s. While continuing their publishing, Wilbur and Orville opened a shop, selling bicycles. Their active minds constantly sought ways to be more efficient. This prompted Orville to invent a calculating machine in 1895 to make their bookkeeping easier. The next year they decided to design and manufacture their own bicycles rather than merely sell those manufactured by others.

Their mechanical abilities ensured their success, but the manufacture and sale of bicycles was somewhat seasonal. This left Wilbur and Orville some time during the cold months each year to pursue another interest.

Wilbur and Orville's interest in flying had begun when their father had given them a helicopter-like toy, and had continued through years of making, flying and selling kites. However, in 1899 they decided to seriously study aeronautics. Neither of them had officially completed high school, but they were certainly educated and scientific in their approach. Extensive personal study made them experts on the existing information



relating to aeronautics.

The first step towards powered flight was to construct a glider which would lift a man's weight and which could be manoeuvred in flight. To test the glider, strong head winds were needed. The most suitable weather conditions were found at the sand hills near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, during summer and early autumn. For the next four years, the Wright brothers spent most of the summer and autumn experimenting at Kitty Hawk, and the remainder of the year in Dayton, studying and planning. Although they still owned their cycle business, they now employed someone to operate it on their behalf, for their "hobby" was occupying most of their time.

The glider which Wilbur and Orville built in 1900 successfully supported a man's weight, but was difficult to control. Several years earlier, Wilbur had realised that the Creator's "flying machine" – the bird – had excellent manoeuvrability. Wilbur sought to unlock the bird's flying secrets. By spending many hours with binoculars, studying birds in the wilderness near Dayton, Wilbur found that birds manoeuvre by changing the shape of their wings. The Wright brothers designed a system of pulleys and cables to change the shape of the glider's wings in a similar way. By doing this, they achieved manoeuvrability during their 1901 experiments.

But the brothers were disappointed with the lift they had achieved. They had designed the curve of the glider's wings using published tables of information. But something was wrong. Wilbur wrote: "Having set out with absolute faith in the existing scientific data, we were driven to doubt one thing after another until finally, after two years of experiments, we cast it aside, and decided to rely entirely on our own investigations."

Wilbur and Orville's ingenuity now shone through. They set up a wind tunnel in their bicycle shop and experimented with different shaped curved surfaces. Their research produced the first reliable tables of the effect of air pressure on various shaped curved surfaces. The usefulness of their new tables was

verified during their 1902 gliding experiments in which they achieved better lift than before, and solved the problem of balance in flight.

The brothers were now ready for the final step – the addition of a light-weight engine. However, no suitable engine was available, and they could not find an engineering company prepared to take them seriously and build what they requested. So they designed and built their own engine. Their experience with bicycles was put to use in designing a system of chains and gears to operate the propellers. Wilbur and Orville also built the propellers themselves, designing them according to their own data on air pressure.

### **First powered flight**

Delayed by mishaps, minor mechanical problems and severe storms, the Wright brothers continued their 1903 experiments as the bitterly cold winter set in. Despite the harsh conditions, the tone of their letters to their sister Kate reflected their continuing cheerfulness. As always, they steadfastly observed their principle of not working on Sundays, even though they often had to wait several days for suitable wind conditions to return. Finally, on Thursday 17th December 1903, Wilbur and Orville achieved their goal – the world's first powered flight. Orville flew the Wright Flyer a distance of about 37m (120 ft), staying aloft for 12 seconds. Later the same day, Wilbur flew about 260m (852 ft) in a flight lasting 59 seconds.

Most other aircraft experimenters at that time had large crowds watching their trials. In contrast, Wilbur and Orville had quietly gone about their work without fanfare. This now proved to be a disadvantage. The media and the public had not witnessed Wilbur and Orville's achievements and were not willing to believe them. A few newspapers did carry the story but wildly distorted the facts, greatly upsetting the brothers. This lack of recognition did not dampen the brothers' enthusiasm for their work – they merely continued experimentation to produce further improvements. This was done near their home town, Dayton, for the strong head winds

of Kitty Hawk were no longer needed once the engine had been fitted to the aircraft.

It was not until Wilbur flew before a crowd in France in 1908 that the Wright brothers' achievements were finally recognised.

### **Christian character**

Wilbur and Orville had both been called by grace during their youth. Throughout their lives, they refused to work on Sundays, and they did not drink, smoke or gamble. The level of cooperation between Wilbur and Orville was truly remarkable, even during their somewhat loud debates over possible solutions to problems. They remained cheerful while experiencing danger and physical hardship. They were not dependent on praise and recognition for their motivation, and when fame finally came, they retained their humility.

The Christian character displayed by the Wright brothers was evident to those around them. Co-founder of the Rolls-Royce Motor Co., C.S. Rolls, gave the following description of Wilbur and Orville: "They have lived through continual accusations of bluff, through disbelief and ridicule and have been unaffected. Now they have seen the sudden turn of popular opinion and have sprung to fame; but they are still equally unaffected, pursuing their daily work with their own hands in their own quiet way."

And what was their father's explanation for these enviable characteristics displayed by Wilbur and Orville? "He never tired of relating the positive effect that the Bible had had on his children."

The Wright brothers used intelligence, experience, and ingenuity to design their aircraft. They allowed chance to play no part. From studying God's creation in the form of bird-flight, they were helped to develop their own creation of a better aircraft. If we marvel at how great their achievement was, how much more should we give glory to the Creator who designed flight in the first place.

### AN URGENT PRAYER

During the American Civil War, a Highland soldier was once brought before his commanding officer for being, as his accusers thought, in communication with the enemy under cover of night. At the interview with his superiors, the man explained that he was only praying to God, and not conversing with men. The commander, a shrewd man and familiar with his Bible – after he had carefully examined him, said: “Let us hear you pray now, for never had you more need of prayer.” The pious Highlander, there and then, fell on his knees and addressed his Maker in reverent and Scriptural language. His prayer revealed that not only was he familiar with the Word of God, but was, as a true believer, deeply exercised in his spirit. When he had finished, the officer said: “You may go. No one could have prayed so, without long apprenticeship. Those who have never attended *drill*, fare but ill at a review.”

*Selected*

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### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about HYPOCRISY. A hypocrite is one who acts a part, someone who is not what he makes himself out to be. Younger children need only do five questions and may need some explanation and help from parents. 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. The Lord Jesus spoke severely against the scribes and Pharisees because of their hypocrisy. Why did they pray standing at the street corners? (Matthew 6. 5)
2. Jesus spoke of a man who wanted to take a mote (a speck of dust) from his brother's eye. Why was he a hypocrite? (Matthew 7. 3-5)
3. Which king of Israel deceitfully went into battle in disguise, hoping he wouldn't be recognised, but was killed by an arrow? (1 Kings 22. 30-37)

4. Complete the sentence: "What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained ..."? (Job 27. 8)
5. "This people honoureth me with their lips." What showed their hypocrisy? (Mark 7. 6-7)
6. What does James say is "without partiality, and without hypocrisy"? (James 3)
7. Who seemed a faithful friend to King David, but deserted him in a time of trouble and afterwards hanged himself? (2 Samuel 15-17)
8. The Pharisees came to Jesus and said: "We know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for Thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth." Why was this hypocritical language? (Mark 12)
9. Which man appeared to be a disciple, but whose end proved the words of the Lord Jesus: "One of you is a devil"? (John 6)
10. Which chapter in the Bible has the words: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," seven times?

#### **ANSWERS TO MAY QUESTIONS**

1. The Apostles "began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."
2. The wonderful works of God.
3. They were "pricked in their heart" and said to the Apostles: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"
4. They were baptized. About three thousand were added to the company of the disciples.
5. "Such as should be saved."
6. "Look on us." "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." (Acts 3. 4, 6)
7. The Son of God. The Holy One and the Just. The Prince of Life. (Acts 3. 13-15)
8. Peter and John (Acts 4. 13)
9. The Sadducees were grieved because the Apostles preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead, which they did not believe in. (Acts 4. 2, 23. 8)
10. Acts 2. 38, 3. 19

*Contributed*

## BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES

## THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (6)

John 15 commences with the sacred words of our Lord Jesus Christ: *"I am the True Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman."* So we have another of the great "I AMs" of Holy Scripture. If Christ is the True Vine it follows that there must be false vines that appear to be like a true vine. There are indeed many false vines or churches that do not have the Spirit of truth working in their midst. There are many false branches that do not bring forth good fruit. We are not now thinking of churches in a denominational way but the individual local Christian church. Think of that solemn separating word in Romans 8. 8-9: *"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."* The fruits of the flesh are sinful, carnal, unrighteousness: *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law"* (Galatians 5. 22-23).

If we are truly united to Jesus Christ the living Vine, we shall bring forth fruit to the glory of God; we shall be fruitful unto every good work and word and way: *"I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing"* (John 15. 5). My dear beloved friends, we only bring forth fruit as we are united to the living Vine. All our life is bound up in Christ, the living Vine, and if the branch is severed from the vine it withers and dies and is only fit for burning.

Asaph in Psalm 80 likens Israel to a vine being transplanted from Egypt to the land of Canaan and bringing forth much fruit so that it filled the land. The vine in Israel was properly fenced or hedged around to keep out the foxes that do so spoil the vine and the tender grape. In the days of Asaph the church was in a very low place. *"Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?"*

*The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it. Return, we beseech Thee, O God of Hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; and the vineyard which Thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that Thou madest strong for Thyself. It is burned with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance"* (Psalm 80. 12-16). What a picture this is of the church of God today and how we need to pray with Asaph: *"Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, upon the Son of Man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself"* (Psalm 80. 17). The Man of His right hand is the glorious Person of our Lord Jesus Christ who sits at the right hand of His and our Father in heaven and who spoke to His disciples just before He ascended into heaven: *"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen"* (Matthew 28. 18-20).

What a sacred encouragement this is to the Lord's living family today, and to His servants as they labour in word and doctrine. There is a glorious Redeemer, a living Saviour, sitting at the right hand of their Heavenly Father who is the Husbandman of the church. This great God has promised never to leave His church, to defend and protect it, to support and sustain it. May we with Asaph cry mightily unto our gracious Father that His hand may be upon Christ in sending real prosperity to His church today. The effect of this would be the ingathering of precious souls into the church; the sending forth of godly ministers; the settlement of pastors in the churches. May we give Him no rest until He establishes His Zion and makes it a praise in all the earth.

The following hymn by Isaac Watts so beautifully expresses the feelings of His church and the great "I AM."

*J. R. Rutt*

**“GIVE EAR, O SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL”**

Great Shepherd of Thine Israel,  
Who didst between the cherubs dwell,  
And led the tribes, Thy chosen sheep,  
Safe through the desert and the deep.

Thy church is in the desert now;  
Shine from on high, and guide us through;  
Turn us to Thee, Thy love restore;  
We shall be saved and sigh no more.

Hast Thou not planted with Thy hands  
A lovely vine in heathen lands?  
Did not Thy power defend it round,  
And heavenly dews enrich the ground?

But now her beauty is defaced;  
Why hast Thou laid her fences waste?  
Strangers and foes against her join,  
And every beast devours the vine.

Lord, when this vine in Canaan grew,  
Thou wast its strength and glory too;  
Attacked in vain by all its foes,  
Till the fair Branch of promise rose.

Fair Branch, ordained of old to shoot  
From David's stock, from Jacob's root;  
Himself a noble Vine, and we  
The lesser branches of the tree.

'Tis Thy own Son, and He shall stand,  
Girt with Thy strength at Thy right hand;  
Thy first-born Son, adorned and blessed  
With power and grace above the rest.

Oh! for His sake attend our cry,  
Shine on Thy churches lest they die;  
Turn us to Thee, Thy love restore;  
We shall be saved and sigh no more.



# *The Friendly Companion*



“Rejoice with me; for I have found  
my sheep which was lost.”  
(Luke 15. 6.)

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*July 2016*

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**Erratum:** In the May issue it was inadvertently stated that the American Civil War Battle of Chichmauga took place in 1803 whereas it actually took place in 1863.

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

In the April *Friendly Companion* we included an article on ‘*minding your p’s and q’s*’ in which the importance of accuracy was emphasised. A kind reader pointed out that in the very next article a small but significant error had been unnoticed by the Editor! The word *expect* had been put instead of the word *except*. The letters *c* and *p* had been transposed. So we soon had an example of how we need to be accurate!

It is commonly thought that one of the reasons that Napoleon lost the Battle of Waterloo was that his General sent a badly written message back to his leader, which was supposed to say that the battle had commenced, but the omission of one letter, actually conveyed the meaning that there was plenty of time yet as it had already been won! For this and other reasons, Napoleon fatally delayed his repulse which ended in a humiliating defeat for him and the French Army.

When the scribes in Bible days were copying the Holy Scriptures, accuracy was so important to them, that if a mistake was made, that whole sheet had to be rewritten! No “delete” button or “Tippex” in those days! Further, if the reed they were using as a pen broke, they were to throw it away in case it brought any uncertainty to the copying of the Word of God. This is thought to be one explanation of the words in Isaiah 42: “*A bruised reed He will not break.*” How kind of God not to cast away His people when they make mistakes, or become bruised.

On the other hand, the meticulous copying of the Word of God by the scribes has been used of God, so that we can, with full confidence, read and translate from the original manuscripts knowing that they are accurate and that we have God’s will purely revealed to us in them.

Sadly, many of the scribes in the time of the Lord Jesus had become more engrossed with the Talmud, which was the

Jewish interpretation of the laws of God. This had become more important to them than God's Holy Word, introducing traditions of men which superseded the Scriptures. So a Jewish boy at school would spend most of his time reading and learning the Talmud, rather than the Holy Scriptures. In the same way, the Roman Catholic Church vehemently opposed the reading of the Bible in the Middle Ages. They could see that it would weaken their hold of their followers if they did not blindly follow the Church's teachings.

Dear young friends, the Word of God is our only authority and rule. That is why God commanded Joshua: *"This Book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success"* (Joshua 1. 8). This is the way to true prosperity in our lives, wherein God has the first place, and He adds elsewhere: *"Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed"* (1 Samuel 2. 30).

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Dear (Editor)

I am ten years old, so my Nanna said that I was old enough to help with the lambing at her farm. I went up there every morning at 7.30. I had been doing so for about three weeks when the last ewe had her lambs. She had three. As you probably know, if a ewe has more than two lambs she does not have enough milk. We took one of her lambs off and put it in the (orphan) pen with the others. She always follows me around, and I have named her Betty.

Now comes the best bit! I went up there yesterday morning, and I went down to the lambs' pen as usual. I looked in the orphan pen where Betty lives and she was not there! Of course, I went and told Nanna and soon everyone was out

looking for Betty. We searched the whole farm, and we could not find her. I went home thinking that some predator had taken her.

Later that day, I was up there again, and my brother Isaac suddenly arrived at the shop on the farm where I was watching some customers. He said to me: "We have found the lost lamb!" I went straight down and, yes, he had found the lamb! I took it up and carried it up to the house and everyone was shouting: "The lost lamb is found!" I warmed a bottle of milk and it drank loads because it had not had anything all day!

The strange thing is that it really is the hundredth lamb! We were all very glad to see Betty again. Nanna said that it was just like the parable, and she told our minister, Mr. T. Parish, when he came to preach, and he made mention of it in our Sunday School. It was really amazing!

*Anna-Louise Clark*

---

### **"HE THAT BELIEVETH SHALL NOT MAKE HASTE"**

Naturally, we are always in a hurry. We pray, and we expect to get an answer like turning on the tap, but He waits: *"Therefore will the LORD wait, that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment" – a God of wisdom, a God of method – "blessed are all they that wait for Him."*

So there is a waiting for God for a waiting people. You know when Christian in the *Pilgrim's Progress* told Pliable of the glories that were before him in the Celestial City, Pliable said: "Let us mend our pace." "O," said Christian, "I have got a burden on my back." Pliable had no burden. Have you? *"He that believeth shall not make haste,"* and this includes gracious submission to the Lord under all circumstances, to lie submissive in His hands, and know no will but His.

*J. Green*

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****DAVID BECOMES KING**

A man ran to tell David about the battle with the Philistines. He said that many men of Israel had been killed or wounded. He also told David that King Saul and Jonathan his son were dead. How sad David felt! He wept for Saul and Jonathan, saying: *"How are the mighty fallen!"* Jonathan had been a wonderful friend to David. He had often helped David and told him to trust in God.

David was anointed as king by Samuel many years before. Yet he had to wait for the LORD to bring it about. Now that Saul was dead, David asked the LORD if he should return to the land of Israel. The LORD told him to go up to Hebron, a city of Judah. Judah was the family or tribe that David was from.

David and all his men went to live at Hebron with their families. *"And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah."* David reigned over Judah for a little over seven years. Then he became king over all the land of Israel.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Who had been a wonderful friend to David? (1 word)
2. Where did the LORD tell David to go up to? (1 word)
3. David was anointed king over the house of \_\_\_\_ ?  
(1 word)

*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. Samuel.
2. Three sons of Saul.
3. An arrow.  
*Contributed*

*“... He  
removeth  
kings, and  
setteth up  
kings.”  
Daniel 2. 21.*

**BIBLE LESSONS****THE GENTILES RECEIVE THE GOSPEL**

Peter was filled with wonder and awe by the vision of the great sheet with wild beasts and unclean animals and fowls of the air, that was received up again into heaven. What could it mean? As he thought on it, the men sent by Cornelius arrived at the house and asked for him. The Spirit of God said unto Peter: *"Behold, three men seek thee. Arise ... and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them."*

How wondrously the Lord was ordering all things! He made the Roman centurion willing to send for a despised Jew, and He made Peter willing to go into the house of a Gentile.

Peter told the messengers that he was the man they sought. He asked them for what purpose they had come to him. They told Peter that Cornelius was a just man who feared God and had been warned of God to send for Peter to hear the Word of God that he would speak. What a great mercy it is when we are ready to hear what God would speak to us!

Peter kindly invited the men to spend the night with him. In the morning they journeyed to the house of Cornelius, where he waited for them. He had invited his relatives and friends into his house. Thus a great company was gathered together.

Never before had Peter entered the house of a Gentile, but the meaning of the vision was now becoming clear to Peter. All his former prejudice towards the Gentiles had been broken. As he entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet to worship him. But Peter quickly took hold of him, saying: *"Stand up; I myself also am a man."*

As Peter stood before Cornelius and all those with him in the house, he reminded them of something they all knew: that it was unlawful for a Jew to keep company with those of another nation. He added: *"But God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. ... I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?"*

Peter and the Jews who had come with him from Joppa



listened with great wonder as Cornelius began. *"Four days ago I was fasting ... and ... I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, ... send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; ... who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. ... Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."*

Peter now understood fully the vision he had in Joppa. He said: *"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, ... is accepted with Him."* No longer does God make a difference between Jew and Gentile. What a wall of separation the Holy Ghost had broken down!

Peter boldly declared that the Word which God first sent to the Jews, he would send to all people, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: *"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him."*

Peter told Cornelius and all those in the house that he and others were eye witnesses of the miracles Jesus wrought, of the truths which He taught, and of the death He accomplished at Jerusalem. Further, he told them how God raised Him from the dead and how Jesus had revealed Himself to chosen witnesses after His resurrection.

As Peter preached, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. The Jews who came with Peter were astonished to see the Gentiles believing. Peter asked: *"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"*

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 10 verses 17 to 48.*

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did God tell Peter to arise and do with the three men who sought him? (10 words)
2. What did Cornelius say they were all here present for? (10 words)

3. What did Peter perceive God was not? (4 words)
4. What was to be preached by Jesus Christ? (1 word)
5. What did Peter say he and others had been of the miracles? (2 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. Cornelius.
2. A devout man, and one that feared God.
3. Simon (Peter).
4. Clean and unclean.
5. Cleansed them.

*G.L. TenBroeke*

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### EDWARD SAMUEL (7)

Being concerned about my soul's condition, these words came to me: "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*" This made me go back to the house in Bishopgate Street, where I had met with those converted Jews. Calling there, I met with the man I had first spoken to. He sought to help me and asked me to visit him at his home. This I did and found it profitable. I found these visits to him were used of God to give me a greater desire to read the Word of God. On one occasion, I was reading Isaiah 53 and felt a little sweetness. I thought that if this is true of the Messiah, that He was wounded for our transgressions (I felt myself to be a transgressor) there was hope for me that I should not perish eternally. Jewish converts have many conflicts about the Lord Jesus as the Messiah: Satan suggesting firstly, that the Messiah has not come; secondly, He is not God, as the Jews deny the Trinity; and thirdly, their conflict as to being able to have a personal knowledge of Christ.

In speaking with those Christian Jews, I was persuaded to go to classes for further studies in Bible doctrine. Here I had many conflicts. What would my family back in Poland say, should they hear that I had forsaken the religion of my forefathers; also, about me not keeping the Sabbath and the

Passover? These were great trials to me as I could not give these things the regard I used to. Regarding the instruction I received, I had to say as the eunuch said to Philip: "*How can I [understand], except some man should guide me?*" The Lord did appear for me, and gave me these words: "*Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.*" And also the words: "*When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.*" Being comforted by these words, and taking it to be divine direction, I went back to those Christian Jews belonging to the Bishopgate meeting, to speak with the brethren there. I joined that little society, and in God's kindness, received much instruction in Bible truth. I was comforted to find that through reading the New Testament, I could better understand the Old. I compared them, and could see the blessed harmony between them.

One Friday evening, which is the commencement of the Jewish Sabbath, I felt much tried as to whether I was breaking the Sabbath by lighting a fire, as this is prohibited in the law of Moses, as are many other things. About these concerns, these words came to me: "*And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.*" I began to consider why we keep the Sabbath, when these words came to me: "*The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath.*"

At the time of the Passover, God comforted my soul with the words: "*Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and of wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*" In this way, the Lord has been pleased by degrees to deliver me from the Jewish ceremonies. Although at times I feel much sin and hardness of heart, the Lord has helped me, so that I was encouraged to hope in a

dear Redeemer.

In due course, I joined the Church of England, but this day proved an unhappy day to my soul, for Satan continued to try me. The Jews believe there is no pardon for those who confess publicly that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah and the Son of God. How this tested my faith and brought me low in health. About this time I became acquainted with a lady who was well-taught in the things of God. She took me to an independent chapel in Hackney, where under the preaching I was led into the doctrines of free grace. How this gospel fed my soul, so in due time I left the Church of England and attended the meeting in Hackney. Despite many temptations, the Lord kept me.

I found employment in Bermondsey with a good and gracious man, who acted towards me as a father and a brother. One day, Mr. David Denham, a godly minister, came to see me and seeing me cast down because of Satan's temptations, said: "Brother Samuel, why are you cast down?" I replied: "A heavy heart makes a sad countenance." Opening up my heart and thoughts to him, he told me he was sure that I should enjoy Glory, as the Apostle Paul is now in Glory. Thus I was much comforted by his wise counsel. In due time, these words came to me with very great power: *"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."* I exclaimed: "Lord, is it me? Art Thou my God?" The clouds immediately began to disperse, the horror of my soul, fled. With tears I said: "Lord, can it be me?" A glorious light broke into my soul. I said: "Instead of hell, I have heaven." How precious all the promises of God became to me.

When I was under the law and conviction of sin, I often told the Lord that if it were His sovereign will to bestow mercy on me and deliver my soul, I would spread His fame abroad and tell sinners what He had done for me. When attending Mr. Denham's prayer meetings, I was called upon to take part and pray.

(To be continued)

*Adapted*

### THE ADVOCATE

*“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2. 1).*

It was toward the end of spring in 2003 when I received the summons to appear in court for committing multiple speeding offences. The Lord had not begun the ‘Work of Grace’ in my heart at that time, and in a mixture of pride, ignorance and foolishness I dismissed the seriousness of the summons and carried on with my life, not giving it another thought until the day of the court hearing. How solemn to think that for us there is a summons to appear before God at His Judgment Seat to give an account of the things we have done in this life, and we dismiss it as nothing, unless Grace makes a difference. May the God of all Grace open our eyes and ears to make eternity a tremendous sound to us personally. It is a fixed date – an appointment we cannot delay and will not miss.

On the morning of the court hearing, I arrived at court with my wife, and we met the solicitor who would represent me in court. I decided to use the ‘Duty solicitor’ who was based at the court that day, rather than seeking out one in advance of the court hearing. May we each by the Grace of God be found seeking to know the *“advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous”* and to be brought to feel a need of Him.

My advocate did not know me, and I did not know him.

I paid him the fee and gave him a brief outline of the situation and said that I would be pleading guilty. He then turned and said: “You do understand how serious this is, don’t you? You will be banned from driving, and it could be for up to a year.” Suddenly it hit me; this was not going to be just a telling-off and a fine. I needed to be able to drive for my employment: I could lose my job; my wife was expecting our second child. Suddenly it all seemed very serious. He went off to see some other defendants and my wife and I waited to be called in.

My hearing was the first of the day’s proceedings. I entered into the court with my wife, but we were separated at that point as I had

to stand in the dock on my own. That is how we will appear before God – on our own, no earthly acquaintance can help.

The Judge came into court: he did not look friendly at all. I was asked to confirm my name, which I did. He then asked for the advocate for the prosecution to make themselves known, to which they stood up and gave their name. The Judge then asked for the advocate for the defence to make himself known – there was silence. He asked again – no one spoke. The Judge turned angrily to me and asked: “Do you have an advocate – someone to speak for you?” I replied: “Yes, I do.” “Well, who is it?” he asked. “I am not sure of his name,” I replied. The Judge was an older man who seemed to be enjoying the event, especially as he saw me getting more and more uneasy. I have been through a few things in my life and am not afraid of many things, but this was dreadful. I was guilty, standing before this fierce Judge, on my own and no one to speak for me. Will that be the case with us when we stand before God? Guilty and on our own, or will we “*have an advocate with the Father*,” to speak for us?

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

The Judge then turned to the court and asked: “Is anyone going to speak for him?” At this moment, the door at the back of the court burst open, and my solicitor hurried in, and said: “He is one of mine, your Honour; sorry I am late.” I turned to look at the Judge, and saw to my astonishment that he was smiling! What a change! What a relief! They exchanged pleasantries, and from what I could gather, the duty solicitor was well-known to the Judge and had been off sick for a while: this was his first day back.

What an unspeakable mercy it will be if we have at that Great Day “*an advocate with the Father*”: someone who will speak for us, to claim us – “He/she is one of Mine.”

John Newton's Hymn 128 in Gadsby's comes to mind:

"I read my name upon His breast,  
And see the Father smile."

The whole atmosphere changed from that moment onwards: what a difference my advocate made. I pleaded guilty and received, through his pleadings on my behalf, a small fine and a six-week driving ban.

My advocate that day was qualified with a degree in Law – the child of God has an Advocate who will stand at that Judgment Day and rightly claim this qualification – Jesus Christ the righteous!

I had to pay my advocate that day – there is nothing for the child of God to pay!

My advocate was late: I didn't know him and he didn't know me – what a contrast with the Lord Jesus Christ and His children! *"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His"* (2 Timothy 2. 19).

I had to suffer the ban and pay the fine – the glorious Advocate, Jesus Christ, suffered for His children and paid the price for their sins. *"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5. 8).

My advocate was only able to plead for a reduction of sentence based on my good behaviour – although they are guilty, the Lord Jesus obtains for His children complete exemption from punishment based on His spotless life, sin atoning death and glorious resurrection. *"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit"* (1 Peter 3. 18).

"There is an Advocate above,  
A Friend before the Throne of Love."

T.J. Parish

## **SEVEN REASONS WHY WE SHOULD NOT ACCEPT MILLIONS OF YEARS**

There is an intensifying controversy in the church all over the world regarding the age of the earth. For the first eighteen centuries of church history, the almost universal belief of Christians was that God created the world in six literal days, roughly 4,000 years before Christ, and destroyed the world with a global Flood at the time of Noah.

But about 200 years ago, some scientists developed new theories of earth history, which proposed that the earth and universe are millions of years old. Over the past 200 years, Christian leaders have made various attempts to fit the millions of years into the Bible. These include the day-age view, gap theory, local flood view, framework hypothesis, theistic evolution, progressive creation, and so on.

A growing number of Christians (now called young-earth creationists), including many scientists, hold to the traditional view, believing it to be the only view that is truly faithful to Scripture and that fits the scientific evidence far better than the reigning old-earth evolutionary theory.

Many Christians say that the age of the earth is an unimportant and divisive side issue that hinders the proclamation of the gospel. But is that really the case? AiG (Answers in Genesis) and many other creationist organisations think not.

### **1. The Bible clearly teaches that God created in six literal, 24-hour days a few thousand years ago.**

The Hebrew word for day in Genesis 1 is *yôm*. In the vast majority of its uses in the Old Testament (OT), it means a literal day; and where it doesn't the context makes this clear.

Similarly, the context of Genesis 1 clearly shows that the days of creation were literal days. First, *yôm* is defined the first time it is used in the Bible (Genesis 1. 4-5) in its two literal senses: the light portion of the light/dark cycle and the whole light/dark cycle. Second, *yôm* is used with "evening" and "morning." Everywhere these two words are used in the OT, either together or separately and with or without *yôm* in the



context, they always mean a literal evening or morning of a literal day. Third, *yôm* is modified with a number: one day, second day, third day, and so on, which everywhere else in the Old Testament indicates literal days. Fourth, *yôm* is defined literally in Genesis 1. 14 in relation to the heavenly bodies.

That these creation days happened only about 6,000 years ago is clear from the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 (which give very detailed chronological information, unlike the clearly abbreviated genealogy in Matthew 1) and other chronological information in the Bible.

### **2. Exodus 20. 11 blocks all attempts to fit millions of years into Genesis 1.**

This verse gives the reason for God's command to Israel to work six days and then take a Sabbath rest. *Yôm* is used in both parts of the commandment. If God meant that the Jews were to work six days because He created over six long periods of time, He could have said that using one of three indefinite Hebrew time words. He chose the only word that means a literal day and the Jews understood it literally (until the idea of millions of years developed in the early 19th century). For this reason, the day-age view or framework hypothesis must be rejected. The gap theory or any other attempt to put millions of years before the six days are also false, because God says that *in six days* He made the heaven and the earth and the sea and *all that is in them*. So He made everything in those six literal days and nothing before the first day.

### **3. Noah's Flood washes away millions of years.**

The evidence in Genesis 6-9 for a global catastrophic flood is overwhelming. For example, the Flood was intended to destroy not only all sinful people but also all land animals and birds and the surface of the earth, which only a global flood could accomplish. The Ark's purpose was to save two of every kind of land animal and bird to repopulate the earth after the Flood. The Ark was totally unnecessary, if the Flood was local. People, animals and birds could have migrated out of the flood zone before it occurred, or the zone could have been populated from creatures outside the area after the Flood. The

catastrophic nature is seen in the nonstop rain for at least forty days, which would have produced massive erosion, mud slides, hurricanes, and so on. The Hebrew words translated "*the fountains of the great deep broken up*" (Genesis 7. 11) clearly point to tectonic rupturing of the earth's surface in many places for 150 days, resulting in volcanoes, earthquakes and tsunamis. Noah's Flood would produce exactly the kind of complex geological record we see today worldwide: thousands of feet of sediments clearly deposited by water and later hardened into rock and containing billions of fossils. If the year-long Flood is responsible for most of the rock layers and fossils, then those rocks and fossils cannot represent the history of the earth over millions of years, as evolutionists claim.

#### **4. Jesus taught a young-earth creationism.**

Jesus consistently treated the miracle accounts of the Old Testament as straightforward, truthful, historical accounts (e.g., creation of Adam, Noah and the Flood, Lot and his wife in Sodom, Moses and the manna, and Jonah in the fish). He continually affirmed the authority of Scripture over men's ideas and traditions (Matthew 15. 1-9). In Mark 10. 6 we have the clearest (but not the only) statement showing that Jesus taught a young-earth creationism. He states that Adam and Eve were at the beginning of creation, not billions of years after the beginning, as would be the case if the universe was really billions of years old. So, if Jesus taught a young-earth creationism, then how can His faithful followers have any other view?

#### **5. Belief in millions of years undermines the Bible's teaching on death and on the character of God.**

Genesis 1 says six times that God called the creation "good," and when He finished creation on Day Six He called everything "very good." Man and animals and birds were originally vegetarian (Genesis 1. 29-30, plants are not "living creatures," as people and animals are, according to Scripture). But Adam and Eve sinned, resulting in the judgment of God on the whole creation. Instantly Adam and Eve died spiritually, and after God's curse they began to die physically. The serpent and Eve were changed physically and the ground itself was cursed

(Genesis 3. 14-19). The whole creation now groans in bondage to corruption, waiting for the final judgment.

**6. The idea of millions of years did not come from the scientific facts.**

It was developed by deistic and atheistic geologists in the late 18th and early 19th century. These men used anti-Biblical philosophical and religious assumptions to interpret the geological observations in a way that plainly contradicted the Biblical account of Creation, the Flood, and the age of the earth. Most church leaders and scholars quickly compromised using the gap theory, day-age view, local flood view, and so on, to try to fit “deep time” into the Bible. But they did not understand the geological arguments, nor did they defend their views by careful Bible study. The “deep time” idea flows out of naturalistic assumptions, not scientific observations.

**7. Radiometric dating methods do not prove millions of years.**

Radiometric dating was not developed until the early 20th century, by which time the whole world had already accepted the millions of years. For many years creation scientists have

**Prominent young-earth creation scientists**

There are thousands of PhD and MS scientists around the world (and the number keeps growing) who believe the earth is only about 6,000 years old, as the Bible teaches. It is simply false to say that creation scientists do not have reputable degrees, do not do real scientific research and do not publish in the peer-reviewed scientific journals.

cited many examples in the published scientific literature of these dating methods clearly giving erroneous dates (e.g. a date of millions of years for lava flows that occurred in the past few hundred years or even decades). In recent years creationists in the “RATE project” have done experimental, theoretical and field research to uncover more such evidence (e.g. diamonds and coal, which the

evolutionists say are millions of years old, were dated by carbon-14 to be only thousands of years old) and to show that decay

rates were orders of magnitude faster in the past, which shrinks the millions of years dates to thousands of years, confirming the Bible.

### **Conclusion**

These are just some of the reasons why we believe that the Bible is giving us the true history of the creation. God's Word must be the final authority on all matters about which it speaks: not just the moral and spiritual matters, but also its teachings that bear on history, archaeology, and science.

What is at stake here is the authority of Scripture, the character of God, the doctrine of death, and the very foundation of the gospel. If the early chapters of Genesis are not true literal history, then faith in the rest of the Bible is undermined, including its teaching about salvation and morality.

*Adapted from Dr Terry Mortenson (Answers in Genesis)*

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

### **THE 'I AM'S' OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (7)**

In Isaiah 45 verse 5 we read: *"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside Me."* In verse 6 we read: *"That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me. I am the LORD, and there is none else."* Then in verse 18 we read: *"For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else."* In this chapter the Holy Spirit instructs us about the uniqueness of Almighty God and in so doing the Holy Spirit uses this term *"I am."* He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and there is no God beside this Almighty God; or as the Scripture here declares: *"...there is none else."* There are many supposed gods in the imaginations of men, but there can only be one true God. The word true means, "in reality": what is real.

Verses 20 and 21 pour disdain on idols and idol worship. My dear beloved friends, if we worship any thing but the only true

God in and through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, then we are idolaters. We are instructed in God's Holy Word: *"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"* (1 Timothy 2. 5-6). How this word displays the uniqueness of the only true God and His way of salvation.

One of the remarkable features of Isaiah 45 is that it prophesies the deliverance of the children of Israel from Babylonian captivity by the Persian king Cyrus, by actually naming him. This prophecy was given 210 years before by Isaiah: it reveals to us the prescience of Almighty God. Prescience means foreknowledge: God knows the end from the beginning. Not only does He know it, but also He foreordained all things: nothing happens by chance. The city of Babylon was reckoned to be impregnable, that is, it was thought that its defences could never be breached. God gave Cyrus the wisdom to drain the river Euphrates so that his army could pass over: *"That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers"* (Isaiah 44. 27). He then attacked the city where it was more vulnerable, and the great two-leaved gates of the city were opened before him and thus he overthrew the Babylonian kingdom and facilitated the return of the children of Israel to Jerusalem: something that looked utterly impossible, but not with God.

The other remarkable thing in this chapter is that though Cyrus was a heathen king yet he is a beautiful type of Jesus Christ. Look at Isaiah 44. 28: *"That saith of Cyrus, He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."* What a lovely type of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep. How He came to this earth and performed all the pleasure of His heavenly Father and became the great Shepherd of Israel. He is now building His spiritual kingdom from every nation, kindred, tongue and people. This was prophesied by Daniel: *"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a*

*kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever"* (Daniel 2. 44). Just as Cyrus brought deliverance unto the children of Israel in an impossible situation, so our heavenly Cyrus, Jesus Christ, brings a complete deliverance to His spiritual children when they are shut up under the law and its curse and condemnation; the Holy Spirit works precious faith in their hearts and Jesus Christ is revealed: instead of darkness there is light, instead of bondage there is liberty, instead of condemnation there is peace. So we read here in this chapter: *"I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel"* (Isaiah 45. 2-3). So He exhorts poor lost, ruined, helpless sinners to look alone to Jesus Christ for justification, righteousness and redemption. *"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to Him shall men come; and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory"* (Isaiah 45. 22-25).

May Jesus Christ, by grace, become your precious Saviour: *"For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Luke 19. 10).

J. R. Rutt

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Whatever Christ has commanded His people to do, He has promised them grace to enable them to do.

Romaine

**BIBLE QUESTIONS**

*This month the questions are about BAPTISM. The word "baptize" simply means to dip or immerse. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 146 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.*

1. Which places where John (the Baptist) baptized are mentioned in Mark 1. 4-5?
2. John also baptized in Ænon, near to Salim. Why? (John 3. 23)
3. In what name did Jesus command His disciples to baptize? (Matthew 28. 19)
4. The Ethiopian eunuch said to Philip: "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" What did Philip reply? (Acts 8. 36-37)
5. Complete the words of Peter: "Can any man forbid water ..." (Acts 10. 47)
6. When many came to be baptized by John, he solemnly warned them. What did he say they should "bring forth" and what false confidence were they trusting in? (Luke 3)
7. Jesus asked the scribes and chief priests a question which they said they could not answer. What was the question? (Luke 20)
8. When Jesus came to be baptized, John demurred saying: "I have need to be baptized of Thee." What did Jesus reply? (Matthew 3)
9. When Jesus was baptized, what two things happened? (Matthew 3)
10. When Philip preached to the Samaritans, who was baptized and when? (Acts 8)

**ANSWERS TO JUNE QUESTIONS**

1. That they might be seen of men.
2. He had a beam in his own eye so he couldn't see clearly to remove the mote in his brother's eye.
3. Ahab.
4. "...when God taketh away his soul."

5. They honoured God with their lips but their hearts were far from Him.
6. The wisdom that is from above. (James 3. 17)
7. Ahithophel. (2 Samuel 15. 31; 2 Samuel 17. 23)
8. If the Pharisees really believed what they said, they would have followed the Lord Jesus and kept His word. (Mark 12. 14)
9. Judas Iscariot. (John 6. 70-71)
10. Matthew 23.

*Contributed*

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### THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

"I lived a life of loneliness  
Ashamed to show my face  
Until I gained a righteousness  
Entirely won by grace.

"A strange encounter with a Man  
Who asked me for a drink  
Was part of God's eternal plan,  
The chain of love's first link.

"He spoke of living water drawn  
From an eternal well.  
He knew my life, broken and torn,  
And all my guilt could tell.

"Yet He revealed himself to me,  
As God's beloved Son.  
Now I have brought the town to see  
This Man, the promised One.

"This fountain made on Calvary's hill,  
Was brought by Jesus' pain.  
And all who drink this water will,  
Not ever thirst again."

*J Hughes (slightly adapted)*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“Set me as a seal upon Thine heart.”  
(Song of Solomon 8. 6)

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*August 2016*

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### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

If you are able to travel to the little chapel at Allington in Wiltshire, as you approach the chapel, on your right, 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. Unlike their first cousin, the crow, which prefers its own company, the rooks' nests are so close together that they seem not to want any privacy! It has been said to distinguish between these two very similar birds that: "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 very common. Perhaps this teaches us that those who cannot find rest in the world, or are like the sparrow, according to their own estimation, 'no-one special,' nonetheless 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 in the mountains on 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 reach of God's hand. The Puritans used to say: "He builds too low, who builds beneath the sky." In other words, as the Lord Jesus Christ exhorts us to "*seek ... first the kingdom of God and His righteousness*"; 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: "*Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the*

*Son of Man bath not where to lay His head."* When He was born, all that could be offered Him was a manger, and when He died, 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 make no preparation for eternity, where will our soul be found when we die? How sad and how solemn if it be not with Christ!

May God lay these things to our hearts.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

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### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Our front cover this month shows a 'seal ring.' These were often referred to in the Bible and were an important part of Jewish life. The ring, usually of silver, was worn on the little finger of the right hand. Attached to the ring was another stone, called the cornelian, upon which was engraved the wearer's name. This name was often accompanied by the words "His servant" or other such words signifying the professed trust of the wearer in Israel's God,

The seal was used as a signature, which was often regarded as more valuable than the written signature. So if one gave the ring to another person, it expressed the utmost confidence. So when Pharaoh gave to Joseph his ring, it immediately sent a message to all that Joseph had the trust of the king, and moreover was to be respected as the king's governor.

Even more wonderful perhaps was the way in which the father of the prodigal son put his ring on his son's finger, intimating, no doubt, that he was received back into the family and was to be accepted as one of his sons.

The occupation of seal-cutter was one of great

trustworthiness. On each seal, the name and title of the person was engraved, and also the date when it was cut. A register was kept of every seal that was cut. If one was lost or stolen, the cutter was not permitted to make a replica. To do so was a criminal offence. Rather, the person who had lost it had to write, citing two most respectable witnesses, of the occurrence to all his friends and business associates, and declare that all accounts and business which had his former seal inscribed from the day it was lost, to be null and void.

The impression on the paper or parchment was made by dabbing ink on the cornelian, and then pressing it down on a moistened surface. The scribes who were often signing documents for others carried a supply of ink with them in a little silver or brass case.

The Scriptures speak of a deeper engraving and seal: the words of Isaiah, speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ and His love for His people: "*Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands.*" This reminds us of the nail prints in His holy hands which signify His undying love for His people.

The hymn writer prayed for yet another seal: "Jesus engrave it on my heart, that Thou the one thing needful art."

May we seek from God, the witness of being engraved on the hands of Jesus, and His Name engraved on our hearts. These witnesses once given can never be rendered null and void.

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### A CONTENTED SPIRIT

A gentleman, travelling on a misty morning, asked a shepherd what weather it would be. "It will be," said the shepherd, "what weather pleases me." Being requested to explain his meaning, he said: "Sir, it shall be what weather pleases God, and what weather pleases God, pleases me."

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

David was thirty years old when he became king. For a few years he reigned over the tribe of Judah at Hebron. Then the other tribes of Israel came to David. They remembered that he had led Israel in battle from his youth. They also knew the LORD had told him: “... *thou shalt be ruler over My people Israel.*” Then they anointed David king over all the land of Israel, “*according to the word of the LORD by Samuel.*”

David and his men went to live at Jerusalem. It was a strong fortress built on a high hill. They made it the royal city. Jerusalem became known as the city of David. Sometimes it was also called Mount Zion.

Hiram, the king of Tyre, sent cedar trees and carpenters to David. They built a fine palace for him. Sons and daughters were born to David. “*And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him.*”

**QUESTIONS:**

1. How old was David when he became king?
2. Where did he go to live? (1 word)
3. What did it become known as? (4 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. Jonathan.
2. Hebron.
3. Judah.

*Contributed*

*“So David  
dwelt in the  
fort, and  
called it the  
city of David.”*

*2 Samuel*

*5. 9.*

## BIBLE LESSONS

## ANTIOCH - BELIEVERS FIRST CALLED CHRISTIANS

Cornelius and those with him desired Peter to stay with them for a number of days. They longed to hear more of the Lord Jesus. Peter likewise longed to tell them more of the miracles and words of Jesus. How busy the days were and passed all too quickly! What a privilege for those early Gentile believers to hear of Jesus from one who (as Peter later wrote in his epistle), was an eyewitness of His majesty!

When Peter and his six companions took their leave of Cornelius, they returned to Jerusalem. The apostles and brethren at Jerusalem had heard that Peter had entered into the house of an uncircumcised man. This so upset them, that as soon as Peter arrived, they began to reprove him for eating with Gentiles.

Peter could sympathize with them, for just a short time before he had been of the same mind. The practice of circumcision had become a way of life to the Jews from the days of Abraham. The Jews who believed and followed Jesus, along with the unbelieving Jews, both held firmly to their rite of circumcision. In the Old Testament era, a Gentile longing to join with the Jews in their worship of God, had to be circumcised.

The apostles and believers at Jerusalem did not yet understand that under the Gospel, God has taken away this separation. The circumcision of the New Testament era is described by the Apostle Paul when he wrote: *"... neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but ... circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."*

Circumcision under the Old Testament required a cutting away of the flesh and was very painful. Circumcision under the New Testament is described further by Paul when he wrote: *"In whom also (Jesus) ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ."*

Peter began to tell the apostles and brethren how God revealed this great truth to him through the vision of the sheet,



with all the unclean things in it being taken up to heaven. He then told how the Spirit bade him go with the servants of Cornelius: *"nothing doubting."*

Next he told them how Cornelius had been praying and had seen an angel of God who told him to send to Joppa for Peter. But especially Peter told them that when he began to preach the Lord Jesus unto them: *"... the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning."* Peter then reasoned with all those who had rebuked him with a great question: *"Forasmuch (seeing) then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us ... what was I, that I could withstand God?"*

All those of Jerusalem could say nothing against Peter any longer but glorified God, saying: *"Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."*

Do you remember how some of the disciples fled from Jerusalem after the stoning of Stephen and persecution of believers? They had fled to cities such as Phenice, Cyprus, and Cyrene. In this way the Gospel of Jesus was flowing out from Jerusalem into the surrounding cities. Even some of the converts from Cyprus and Cyrene joined with the disciples in bringing the Gospel to the people in Antioch.

Their preaching was not in vain, for the Bible tells us: *"And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."* When the church at Jerusalem heard of these things, they sent Barnabas to go and establish the new converts. When he arrived at Antioch and had seen the grace of God in the lives of the people, he was glad. He exhorted the people: *"... that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."*

The believers at Antioch had the honour of being the first to be called *"Christians."*

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 11 verses 1 to 26, Romans 2 verses 28, 29, and Colossians 2 verse 11.*

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Paul say that circumcision was of? And in what?
2. What did Paul say the circumcision made without hands

consisted in? (15 words)

3. What did Barnabas see in the lives of the believers at Antioch?
4. What did Barnabas exhort them to do? (11 words)
5. What were the believers at Antioch called?

*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. "Go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them."
  2. "To hear all things that are commanded thee of God."
  3. A respecter of persons.
  4. Peace.
  5. Eye witnesses.
- G. L. TenBroeke*

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### MY FIRST PRAYER (2)

I can remember very clearly both my first conviction and I trust my first real prayer. I was brought up under the ministry of a faithful pastor, but sad to say until I was fifteen years old I never listened to the things that were spoken, or if I did, I never thought about them. One day, while my pastor was preaching, instead of listening I thought I would read in the Book of The Revelation. As I read through the chapters, I can remember very clearly set before me the end of the Lord's people, and the dreadful end of all others. It was then that this first arrow of conviction entered my very soul: *I knew I could not claim to be one of the Lord's people.* Such a simple thought in itself, and yet in the Lord's hand "*quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*" (Hebrews 4. 12). At fifteen years old, the depth of my wickedness and rebellion was already very great, but from that point on my desire was changed: a need entered my soul, and with it, soul trouble.

When I lay in bed that night, I remember so clearly a second arrow of conviction entering my soul: *I never prayed.* I had

been taught to pray before I went to sleep, but I realised I never had, and what perplexed me more was that I did not know how to pray. It was then that I remembered a story my pastor had often told, of the prayer a Scottish minister taught a young servant girl to pray: *'Lord, show me myself.'* This then was my first prayer: *'Lord, show me myself.'* In the weeks and months that followed, I trust the Lord in measure answered that prayer, as I suddenly found within myself a conflict which had never been there before. Those thoughts and desires which until a short time ago I had encouraged and fed, I now hated and fought against, and found to my distress: *"The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do"* (Romans 7. 19). This made me cry with the Apostle: *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* (Romans 7. 24). And so it was that at length, in my distress I found a refuge in the second part of the Scottish minister's prayer: *'Lord, show me Thyself.'*

As I look back over nearly twenty-five years since then, I find (to my sorrow) that the Lord is ever more abundantly answering that first prayer: *"Lord, show me myself,"* and as my felt need increases I can only plead for a more abundant answer to that second prayer: *'Lord, show me Thyself.'*

H. Hickman

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### EDWARD SAMUEL (8)

One day, a friend told me of a little chapel near to where I was living. In searching for this place, I was unable to find it. It was my custom to rise early on the Lord's Day morning and walk to Hackney to attend Mr. Hughes' ministry, but this particular day I overslept, it being nearly 10 o'clock before I awoke. By the time I was dressed it was too late to go to Hackney or to go and hear Mr. Denham preach.

I then thought of the little chapel my friend had told me about. Again I could not find it. About to go home, I heard a voice say: "Return." I looked around and saw nobody. So I tried again to find the chapel, but without success. Then I

heard the same voice repeated. It was then I saw an old lady who appeared to be going to a place of worship. I followed her and it proved to be the very place I had been seeking.

The Pastor was away and the supply had not arrived when I entered the chapel. The deacon saw me and asked if I was the man engaged to preach. At first, I could not understand what he meant by it. He left me and returned to his pew and then he came again, asking me the same question. I answered as before. When he left me, these words came to me: *"But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd."* The latter part of the text: *"... as sheep having no shepherd,"* particularly melted me down.

The deacon came the third time, begging me to go into the pulpit, if it were only to read a chapter. After this I could not resist. I went into the pulpit, read the Scripture and engaged in prayer. When I concluded the prayer, the words came into my mind: *"There was no room for them in the inn."* I first showed there is no room for Christ in a graceless heart; how the Holy Ghost empties a sinner before He fills him; strips him before He clothes him and brings him to feel his lost state before salvation is revealed to the soul. These were some of the things I spoke about.

After the service I asked the deacon how it was he pressed me so much to speak. He then called a lady to him and said: "This lady will give you the reason." She said she dreamed the night before that she saw a stranger preaching in the pulpit, and that moment she saw me enter the chapel, she recognised me as the man she saw in her dream.

I was asked to preach in the evening; I told them I could not promise as I had never spoken before in a chapel. The deacon said: "Would you come as a hearer?" I said: "Yes," as the chapel was near to my home. At that time I did not see his reason for that question, but for my word's sake I went in the evening, making it half an hour later than when the service

started. As soon as I took my seat, the deacon came to me and said: "Mr. Samuel, we are depending on you, or rather your Master, to speak to us this evening." I refused at first, but he would hear nothing of the kind. I went into the pulpit and after the singing of the hymn I read and engaged in prayer. While they were singing the second hymn, I thought it pride and presumption of me to attempt to speak in the name of the Lord. I began to tremble; I thought what an awful thing it was to speak in the name of the Lord if He had not called me to preach. Other thoughts also came into my mind, such as: "You have said all you could, to the people this morning." Whilst tossed in my mind, these words came to me: "*Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*" From these words the Lord helped me to preach and to make them a blessing to one lady who had been in darkness many years. Thus, how I found that the Lord's ways are past finding out.

A little while afterwards, the minister at the chapel asked me if I would preach for him while he was away, and to this I agreed, if it was the Lord's will. The Lord having done great things for me in secret, I was willing to proclaim them publicly. I sat up the whole night reading, in order to prepare my sermon.

Now Satan began to work on my pride. On the evening of the service, I went to the chapel as full of pride as any poor wretch could be, thinking what a great sermon I would preach. How the Lord put an end to my pride. When I arrived at the chapel I saw people standing at the door, waiting to get in. Someone came up to me and said: "The chapel opener has gone away and taken the keys with her by mistake." I waited a short time and then the Lord began to work on my mind. I thought of my pride and that it was from the Lord that the door was not opened. As I returned home, I felt what a mercy it was that the dear Lord had broken my snare, also the neck of my pride. When I arrived home, I wept as a child, blessing and praising the name of the Lord for not allowing me to speak that night and prayed that the Lord might preserve me from pride in future. About half an

hour later, a message came to me saying that the chapel was now open, and requesting me to go, but I refused. The Lord overruled this circumstance for my good: none but He could do it and it has left a great impression on my mind.

After I commenced preaching, my employer frequently threw out hints that he who preached the gospel should live by the gospel. One day he told me plainly I must either leave my employment, or leave off preaching. These words were as a dagger to my heart. For a moment I stood speechless: I told him I would consider the matter. Here I was much tossed in my mind as to what I should do. If I gave up my employment I had nothing to live on, and if I gave up preaching, I feared that would be wrong, too.

The next day these words came to me: *"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."* This decided the case for me. Therefore, I told my employer my decision, and shortly after I left his employment. The Lord did not allow my mouth to be closed, but kept opening doors unsought for, in and around the neighbourhood of London.

Disliking my unsettled life, I asked the Lord to open an effectual door of preaching for me. It was whilst being among the people at Hartley Row that the Lord led me to see that believers' baptism was a Scriptural ordinance, and in due time I was baptized there by Mr. David Denham. My preaching was made acceptable both to the people at Hartley Row and in Farnham in Surrey. In 1845 I was called to the pastorate at Farnham, the Lord blessing the preaching of the Word, there.

*This account of Edward Samuel's life ends 50 years before his death. He moved from Farnham to Hitchin and from there to Leicester. In the late 1850s we see him Pastor at the Strict Baptist Chapel at Salford, Manchester, and eventually in 1862 he was called to the work at Sleaford in Lincolnshire for the next 35 years of his life. Mr. Samuel died in 1897 aged 84. During his life he became a well known preacher among the churches.*

*Adapted*

### NATEBY CHAPEL BEGINNINGS

William Dunderdale was born in 1811, and when he grew up he worked on a farm in the Lancashire foothills not far from Morecambe Bay. Like most young lads then, he lived in at the farm, and soon grew like the other lads there, spending the evenings playing cards, and coming more and more to hate the religion of his mother and father. All his mother could do was to pray over her absent son, and at last the Lord answered her prayers; God met with him, and showed him how godless he was, and where his soul would end if he went on as he was – for when God gives our souls eyes, it is amazing how quickly we see so much we need to. So it was William began to pray – in the ditches, away in the fields, far from man, alone with God. And at last he was brought by the Holy Spirit to know and feel that his sins were forgiven by the atoning sacrifice of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and joy and peace came with the believing.

He married, and they settled with his mother, and he began daily reading and prayer from the very start. How thankful his mother was. And in 1834, in a clay pit on Primrose Hill Farm at Nateby, a few miles north of Preston, Lancashire, he was baptized as a believer, and two years later his wife followed him.

He became a tenant of a small farm, and beneath the turf lay peat several feet thick. This could be cut into slabs, and after it was dry it was used as fuel by nearly everybody in the area; it was cut in the summer, dried in open stacks by the roadside all the way down to Knott End on the coast; then when it was dry, a corner was dipped in paraffin, and the fire was soon ablaze. Well, William's farm had much peat, and he worked at it well – once he had a hundred stacks drying, when they all caught fire; it was a loss, and everyone around knew it. Going to the grocer's just after, he found a kind friend had left him five shillings (25p) to help compensate a little; so he told the shopkeeper instead to send half-a-crown's (12½p) worth of meal each, to two people he named, and not to say where it

had come from. It proved later that neither of them had any food in the house when the welcome flour arrived. Incidentally, underneath the peat, feet down, old tree-trunks were often found, proving the origin of these beds at the time of the Flood; and sea-shells there were too on the tops of the nearby hills.

Well, William Dunderdale had a big family, and they all married partners outside the chapel circle, and brought their partners with them. One of the Dunderdale girls married a farmer some miles away who went to church; and they agreed at first to go each alternate Sunday to his church and her chapel. The first part of the road was the same way; then they came to a T junction – left was to church, right to chapel. Coming in their horse and trap to the T one Sunday, the wife, less and less easy with the arrangement, said: “Oh, I wish we didn’t change about like this.” So, coming to the T, her husband said: “Very well: we’ll settle it once and for all. Next week at the T, I’ll throw the reins on the horse’s neck, and whichever way it takes, there we’ll go always, church or chapel!” Oh how the wife prayed that week, and even more so as Sunday arrived. Leaving Longridge, along the road they came; how earnestly she cried to God as they came to the T; and oh, the horse, with the reins thrown on its neck, turned to chapel. So it was that at length the husband came not only under the truth, but to love the truth, and in the end, to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ.

Well, William lived to see a chapel built, wonderfully provided; heard William Gadsby preach the opening sermon from Exodus 3. 14; saw his son William called by grace, and baptized; saw his children’s children, and peace upon Israel. *“Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD”* (Psalm 144. 15).

*Cheering Words*

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### EFFECTUAL CALLING

*One of the doctrines we believe is "effectual calling." That is, that though many hear God's Word preached, to His own people it comes with effectual power. ("Effectual" means it must have an effect). So the way they hear is different from all others. This article on the subject is by Mr. L.S.B. Hyde, the late pastor at Shaw's Corner Chapel, Redbill.*

Mr. Brehaut was a minister of a chapel in Guernsey and died in 1972. He was an engaging personality and had a fund of experiences both in everyday things and also spiritual.

We visited him on one occasion when he recounted with some liveliness of mind his first visit to London Airport when taking his initial flight in an aeroplane. Of course, everything was strange and the hustle and bustle of the airport contrasted acutely with his quiet way of living in Guernsey. He knew the time of his flight departure and as the time was drawing near he sat on a seat in the huge lounge and became a little anxious wondering what he ought to do. Suddenly he heard a voice on the Tannoy system. He had heard the voice before and paid little attention; but this time it was different – *his* name was mentioned giving direction concerning his flight.

Here Mr. Brehaut paused significantly intending that his story should sink in. That lull in the conversation was just sufficient to make room for the impact of the next two words: EFFECTUAL CALLING. All in that airport lounge had heard the voice and the announcement but it meant nothing to them; *one* had heard it and it meant everything.

From his own knowledge this minister of God was relating a personal experience to illustrate an important doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. Does this account remind you of an incident in your life when you were hoping that your name might be called and it wasn't, and you were so disappointed? One young man I know told me of such an incident when he was at college. Prefects were to be chosen and he had a good prospect of being one; but alas, when the names were announced his name was not amongst them. Then the Lord

Himself spoke and dispelled his disappointment: "Trifles are theirs, a kingdom yours." It was an EFFECTUAL CALL which reached the young man's heart. In a moment it was revealed to his soul what we read about in Ecclesiastes 1. 2: "*Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity*" in respect of the things of this life. But with regard to eternal things, "a kingdom is yours":

"A kingdom which can ne'er decay,  
While time sweeps earthly thrones away;  
The state which power and truth sustain,  
Unmoved for ever must remain."

Has the dear Lord given you an EFFECTUAL CALL? You have doubtless heard a number of chapters of the Holy Bible read, or perhaps read them yourselves and heard a number of sermons preached. The prophet Ezekiel says: "*The Word of the LORD came expressly*" to him (Ezekiel 1. 3). To him it was an EFFECTUAL CALL.

EFFECTUAL CALLING in the Scriptures is illustrated when the Lord Jesus called James and John. "*And they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after Him.*" The calling was made effectual by the power of God. Then again: "*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*" (2 Corinthians 6. 17, 18). The first is an example of being called out of the world of profanity and wickedness; the second, being called out of a religion that is idolatrous and not a worshipping of the true God.

May Almighty God work in many hearts in these last days with a call which is irresistible and may our readers be amongst them.

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### AUGUSTUS TOPLADY'S EARLY DAYS

Just a few steps away from the busy shops and traffic in Farnham, up a little lane flanked by cobbles, is the parish church where, in too dark a corner, is a memorial brass telling us that Augustus Toplady, author of the famed hymn "Rock of Ages," was born there in 1740. In the church, too, you may see a "Vinegar Bible" where at the top of the page you can read "vinegar" printed instead of "vineyard" in the parable of the labourers. Here, then, Toplady was brought as a baby, his father having died of yellow fever on Army service a few months before. And here, until recent times, a verse of "Rock of Ages" was sung at the end of every evening service; and at the erstwhile Grammar School nearby, likewise this same hymn, the "Farnham hymn" the boys called it, was often used to open school.

When Toplady as a boy went to Westminster school, he often had no "Sunday best," and money from home could not go very far. It was at Farnham, too, on a later visit, that he nearly lost his life in the river Wey, much deeper then than now. At that time it was the town's water supply.

Just before his sixteenth birthday, Toplady found himself in Ireland, and there at Cooladine in Wexford, with a handful of God's people met together in a barn, he heard a sermon on Ephesians 2. 13: "*Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*" And through the Holy Spirit's blessing, he was brought nigh. It's the only way for sinners like us to be reconciled to God.

Two years later, he was brought to know the truth more perfectly by reading good Manton on John 17, a book last reprinted by the Banner of Truth Trust some years ago. This brought him to see and to speak of God's free and sovereign grace in the election of His people. By the time he was 20, he was learning much from 65-year-old Dr. Gill, that 'great man of God,' as he liked to call his friend.

But almost straightaway, he was called to commence a ministry at Blagdon, in Somerset; and it is said that he was

sheltering from a sudden storm while out in the Mendips taking cover in a great cleft in the rock, when his well-known hymn began to form and take shape. May we seek to shelter in that same Rock of Ages, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose side was pierced, who offered Himself to God an acceptable Sacrifice on behalf of sinners.

Here are some of the things Toplady wrote after speaking on Revelation 5. 7: The gospel key will not fit the souls of the human heart till God makes it effectual. A key made out of a small piece of iron not worth a halfpenny, yet may open the largest treasures. Ministers are like children who try at a hard lock and hurt their hands: they go to their Father and beg Him to open it Himself. Door fast locked, barred and bolted. Christ takes the key, and with one turn of His hand lets Himself in. The iron door of unbelief grates upon its hinges. Christ has an abundant and triumphant entrance.

*Selected*

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

##### **THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (8)**

In John chapter 1 the Lord Jesus Christ, *"the only begotten of the Father,"* means, 'of the same eternal nature as the Father, from everlasting to everlasting.' One of the old hymnwriters puts it very clearly: "begotten not created."

*"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). This light in Christ is life-giving. In the first chapter of John we read: *"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"* (John 1. 4-5). This glorious life in the great "I AM" brings light into this dark world of sin and woe, and light and comfort to the hearts of His people. The Apostle Paul declares: *"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). The Lord Jesus says: "*He that followeth Me.*" Have you seen the light; are we following Him? Has this glorious light shined into our hearts? My dear young friends, these are very vital truths.

In verse 16 of John chapter 8, Jesus says: "*For **I am** not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me.*" This reminds us of words of Jesus to Philip: "*Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me*" (John 14. 10-11). When our precious Redeemer was to suffer, bleed and die for His people, He said: "*Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me*" (John 16. 32). How sacred is that blessed eternal union between the Father and the Son. This sacred union will the Lord Jesus give to His living family in glory: "*That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one*" (John 17. 21-23). The Scripture declares: "*For with God nothing shall be impossible.*"

Let us continue in John 8. 23-24: "*And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath; **I am from above**: ye are of this world; **I am not of this world**. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: **for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.***"

Let us notice the "I AMs" we have highlighted in these verses. He is the great "I AM" who has descended from heaven, as we read later in this chapter: "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, **I am***" (John 8. 58). Then: "***I am not of this world.***" Many that profess the name of Christ in this day do not believe He is the Son of God. Muslims, and many other 'faiths,'

will readily accept that Jesus was a great prophet, but they will not accept that He is the Son of God. Just look at this word to all such people: *"For if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins"* (John 8. 24). This is a fundamental truth of our most holy faith and to reject it is to reject Christ Himself. Let us look at 1 John 4. 15: *"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."* Equally for them to deny that Jesus Christ had a real true human nature is to deny a fundamental truth of our most holy faith. Let us look at the same chapter: *"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world"* (1 John 4. 3). To deny that Jesus Christ had a true human soul is to deny that He was a real, true man.

J. R. Rutt

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### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about METALS. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 170 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.*

1. Which metals were found in the image which Nebuchadnezzar dreamed about in Daniel 2. 32-33?
2. Silver is a metal often associated with gold as a measure of wealth. Who was very rich "in cattle, in silver, and in gold"? (Genesis 13. 2)
3. "How much better is it to get — than gold! and to get — rather to be chosen than silver!" (Proverbs 16. 16). What are the missing words?
4. Lead is a very heavy metal. Of whom was it written: "They sank as lead in the mighty waters"? (Exodus 15. 10)
5. When God sent "fiery serpents" amongst the children of Israel, what did Moses make and put on a pole? (Numbers 21. 8-9)

6. Lead was formerly used in the lettering on stone monuments. Write out the verse in Job 19 which refers to this practice.
7. Iron is a strong metal often used for making cutting tools. In 2 Kings 6 we read: "And the iron did swim." What was the "iron"?
8. Unlike gold, iron rusts in contact with air and water. What did Jesus say which used this as an illustration? (Matthew 6)
9. The refining of silver and gold in the furnace is several times mentioned in the Bible. What other metals (the "dross") had to be separated from the silver? (Ezekiel 22)
10. Gold is the first and last metal mentioned in the Bible. Where was gold first found and what was "pure gold, as it were transparent glass"?

### ANSWERS TO JULY QUESTIONS

1. In the wilderness. In the river of Jordan.
2. "Because there was much water there."
3. "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."
4. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."
5. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"
6. They should bring forth "fruits worthy of repentance" and should not trust to the fact that Abraham was their father. (Luke 3. 7-8)
7. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" (Luke 20. 4)
8. "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matthew 3. 15)
9. The Spirit of God descended like a dove upon Jesus. A voice from heaven said: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3. 16-17)
10. Both men and women were baptized when they believed the preaching of "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ." (Acts 8. 12)

*Contributed*

**“DO AS THOU HAST SAID”**

(2 Samuel 7. 25)

A saint in days of old,  
A promised word received;  
Behold him sit before the LORD  
And thus fulfilment plead.

The word Thy prophet speaks,  
Let me before Thee spread;  
Thy promise, Lord, establish now,  
And “*Do as Thou hast said.*”

The saints of God oft walk  
The path where David led;  
Constrained to plead before the throne,  
“*LORD ... do as Thou hast said.*”

Thy dark and hidden ways  
Oft fill our souls with dread;  
Yet holding fast we’d still repeat,  
“*LORD ... do as Thou hast said.*”

Yea, e’en when in the deep,  
Proud waves go o’er our head,  
This urgent plea our Jesus hears,  
“*LORD ... do as Thou hast said.*”

And as the grace of prayer  
Is poured upon our head,  
When thus enlarged, we can but say,  
“*LORD ... do as Thou hast said.*”

What if His time’s “not yet,”  
Or comes when we are dead?  
His word shall certainly prevail,  
He’ll “*Do as He has said.*”

*Anon*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“And God saw that it was good.”  
(Genesis 1. 12)

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*September 2016*

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### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

It is a sad fact that brothers do not always see eye-to-eye. The Bible gives us several sad examples of disagreements between brothers: Isaac and Ishmael; Jacob and Esau, being two well-known examples. In the very first family on earth disagreements led to tragic consequences!

God had promised Eve that her seed would bruise the head of Satan, and no doubt when Cain was born Eve hoped that this would be the promised Seed. How wrong she was if she thought that, and how much longer the world had to wait until, in God's time, His Son, Jesus Christ, was sent to redeem sinners and to bruise Satan. Until that wondrous event, God left His people in the Old Testament with a continual reminder that He would send the promised Seed. The sacrifices which God ordained when He banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden pointed to the need of the shedding of blood for sin to be forgiven, and the fact that these sacrifices were to continue until Christ came, were a constant reminder that until the blood of Jesus Christ was shed, sin would not be put away for God's believing people. No doubt Adam, as a wise father, told his two sons, Cain and Abel, of the true meaning of the sacrifices, and that blood was essential for forgiveness of sins.

However, Cain thought he knew better than his father (and how many sons have thought that!) but worse, he thought he knew better than God who had commanded the sacrifice with blood. So when he brought his offering of the fruits of the earth, it was an act of disobedience to both his father and God. No wonder, then, that God did not respect Cain's sacrifice.

Abel, who had been taught, not only by his father, but had received the faith of God's true children, knew that blood must be shed. So he brought one of the lambs of his flock and slew it and offered it up to God as commanded. We read that God took notice of Abel's sacrifice, probably by sending fire from heaven to consume it: a sign of acceptance.

How did this affect Cain? Sadly three sins immediately came

to light in Cain's heart and life.

Firstly, Cain was not sorry for his mistake. Instead he sought to justify himself. He even argued with God about it!

Secondly, Cain was jealous of Abel. Jealousy is as cruel as the grave, says Solomon. That is: in its extreme form it wishes the person dead of whom it is jealous. Beware of the first movements of this sin. Who can tell where it may lead if not quenched and conquered by grace? In Cain's case it led to the murder of Abel!

Thirdly, Cain would not listen to Abel's testimony about the need for blood to be shed. Instead, he became so angry that he rose up and slew his brother in a fit of temper. What a sad day that was for Adam and Eve to lose their second son, by their firstborn murdering him. How quickly the curse through the Fall had come into their family.

What was the difference between Cain and Abel? We are told in Hebrews 11 that it was Abel who possessed faith in God's plan of salvation, whereas Cain did not. Cain's behaviour shows us the fruits of unbelief in a man's life, whereas Abel shows us what faith does.

Abel's blood cried out for vengeance, but the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, the Promised Seed, cries out for mercy to all those who by faith come to Him as the only Way to God.

May we seek from God the same faith that saved Abel's soul, even though his body was slain by his brother.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

---

### **"ALL I WANT"**

A little girl was asked if she could recite the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. She tried, but became very muddled. In the end she blurted out: 'The Lord is my Shepherd: that's all I want.'

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### **EDITOR'S POSTBAG**

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from LYDIA HAYDEN.*

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

The picture on our front cover this month is of a handkerchief tree. Its very unusual blossoms resemble white hankies. The actual flowers are small but next to the flowers are large white bracts which give the unusual appearance. The tree is native to China, but in just one or two places in England they may be seen, having been imported by botanists.

What a wonderful demonstration we have here of the diversity of creation. God has made all things for His own pleasure and this unusual species reminds us of God's sovereignty in creating what He will.

But then, perhaps, it is a vivid reminder of something else. Handkerchiefs are used, among other things, for wiping away tears. Man is born to trouble and tears, but it is good to know there is One who sympathises, as He himself wept at the grave of Lazarus, and with His presence and word can wipe away our tears.

Again, handkerchiefs have been used in time of war as an indication of surrender. To wave the white handkerchief was to show that you were ready to submit and cease fighting. When a sinner is called by grace, he is taught by the Lord to cease fighting against God and His ways, although he must never cease fighting against sin, with God's help! How quickly Saul of Tarsus yielded when the Lord Jesus Christ met with him on the road to Damascus. *"What wilt Thou have me to do?"* He had to lay down the sword of persecution and take up the Sword of the Spirit! It is said that when Napoleon went to surrender to the English after his final defeat, he stretched out his hand to shake hands with the General of the English army. But the General said: "Lay down your sword first, and then I will shake your hand."

It is a great mercy when we are helped to lay down our sword of opposition to God and His ways, and seek to become wholly His. This is the path of true conversion, as wrought by the Holy Spirit.

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****THE ARK BROUGHT TO JERUSALEM**

For many years the ark of God was in a far off place in Israel. While Saul was king, the people did not go to the ark to worship God. Now David wanted to have the ark of God near him at Jerusalem.

David and the men of Israel set the ark upon a new cart. As it went along, they sang and played on instruments of music. Suddenly the oxen pulling the cart stumbled. A man named Uzzah put out his hand to hold the ark. At once Uzzah died because he had touched the ark of God. Now David was afraid, saying: *"How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?"*

The ark was carried aside into the house of Obededom.

God blessed the house of Obededom because of the ark. When David heard of it, he went again to bring the ark up to Jerusalem. How careful he was to do it in the right way! This time the priests carried the ark upon their shoulders with the staves, and God helped them. All Israel brought up the ark with great joy and music and singing. They offered sacrifices to God and put the ark in the tent that David had prepared for it.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What did they set the ark upon? (3 words)
2. Uzzah died because he had done what? (3 words)
3. What did the priests carry the ark upon? (2 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. Thirty.
2. Jerusalem.
3. The City of David.

*Contributed*

*“So David  
went and  
brought up  
the ark of  
God ... with  
gladness.”  
2 Samuel  
6. 12.*

*BIBLE LESSONS***JAMES KILLED - PETER IMPRISONED**

Barnabas had been sent to Antioch to help establish the believers in the truth. Soon he went to Tarsus to look for Saul to help him. Together they returned to Antioch and spent a whole year with the church, teaching them the ways of God.

During the year that Barnabas and Saul laboured in Antioch, other prophets arrived from Jerusalem. One of them, whose name was Agabus, declared by the Spirit of God that there would shortly be a great dearth (famine) in the land. The new believers in Antioch were determined to send relief to the brethren in Judæa. This was proof that the gospel of Jesus Christ had not come to them in vain. The gospel had come to them from Judæa, and now they wanted to show their love by sending as much help as they had ability to give.

Although Saul, the great persecutor, had been converted, the church was not free from persecution. The emperor of Rome had replaced Pilate, the governor who had condemned Jesus to death, with a king who was called Herod Agrippa. He was a grandson of Herod the Great who ruled when Jesus was born.

Seeking to win the favour of the Jews, especially the religious leaders, Herod captured the Apostle James (John's brother) and put him to death. What a dreadful blow this was to the church of God! However, the Jewish elders and the Pharisees were filled with joy. When Herod saw how pleased they were, he commanded his soldiers to arrest Peter also.

It was the Jewish Passover season, and the Jews were busy with all their activities. Herod feared that if he killed Peter at that time, it might not be noticed by many of the Jews. Thus, he put Peter in prison and appointed sixteen Roman soldiers to guard him. With four soldiers watching him at all times, there would be no possibility for Peter to escape.

The news of Peter's capture filled the church with sorrow and dismay. The night before Peter was to be killed, the church met in the house of Mary, sister to Barnabas. She had a son called John Mark, who later would be the cause of



Barnabas and Saul going separate ways.

Although it was very late, the church continued together. The Bible tells us: “...*but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.*” Although everything appeared hopeless and seemed impossible, yet they could plead the words of Jesus when He was with them: “... *if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.*”

While the church was praying, the Lord was already answering their prayer. The prison was quiet where Peter was, with Peter sleeping between two soldiers, bound to them with two chains. At the prison door stood more soldiers keeping a vigilant watch. How could Peter sleep, knowing that the next day he would be put to death? The Bible tells us the secret: “... *for so He (God) giveth His beloved sleep.*”

Suddenly a bright light filled the prison. An angel of the Lord had entered the prison. He shook Peter awake, telling him to arise quickly. As Peter arose, the heavy chains fell off his hands. The angel told him to bind on his sandals, put on his coat, and to follow him.

Peter did everything the angel commanded him as if in a trance. It all seemed like a vision. They walked right past the soldiers who were watching the first and second wards of the prison. None of the guards seemed to see them; perhaps they were blinded by the angel. As they came to the great iron gate that led out of the prison and into the city, it opened to them of its own accord.

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 11 verses 22 to 30 and chapter 12 verses 1 to 10.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. Which apostle did Herod put to death?
2. Which apostle did Herod put into prison, intending to kill him after Passover? (*Passover is translated Easter in our Bible.*)
3. In whose house did the church meet? and whose sister was she?
4. What did the church do through the night? (13 words)
5. How did the iron gate of the prison open?

*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. The heart. The spirit.
2. "Putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ."
3. The grace of God.
4. "That with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."
5. Christians.

*G.L. TenBroeke*

---

### THE POOR TINKER

There was once a poor man, a tinker, who used to go round the country villages selling little goods. This simple-minded man, in going round on his journeys, heard some old woman singing the little ditty: "I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all, But Jesus Christ is my all in all." Jack recalled that: "Ah!" said he, "that just suits me." So he began to hum it himself as he went round on his expeditions and, by God's good grace, that little ditty burnt its way into poor Jack's heart.

After some time, by God's grace, he became a converted man, gave up his swearing and drinking, and began regularly to attend the church services. At last he determined that he would join the church; so he went to the minister. The minister said: "Well, friend, what can you say for yourself?" "Not much," he said, "only this: 'I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all, But Jesus Christ is my all in all.'" "Well," said the minister, "you must tell me more than that." "No," said Jack, "I can't, for that is my confession of faith, and that is all I know." "Well, friend," said the minister, "I can't refuse you church fellowship, but you will have to come before the church members, and they will have to see you and judge you."

Jack accordingly went to the church meeting, and there sat some good old-fashioned deacons – some of whom began to see whether they could find fault with him. He stood up, and

on being requested to state his experience, simply said: "I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all, But Jesus Christ is my all in all." One old deacon said: "Is that all you have to say?" "Yes," says Jack, "that's all." The minister said: "You may ask my friend here some questions if you like." So one says: "Brother Jack, have you not many doubts and fears?" "No," said Jack, "I never can doubt but that 'I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all,' for I know I am; and I cannot doubt that 'Jesus Christ is my all in all,' for He has told me that He is, and how can I doubt that?" "Well," said another, "but sometimes I lose my evidences and my graces, and then I get very sad." "Oh," said Jack, "I never lose anything, for in the first place 'I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all' – no one can rob me if I am nothing at all – and in the second place, 'Jesus Christ is my all in all,' – and who can rob Him? He is in Heaven; I never get richer or poorer, for I am always nothing, but I always have everything." Then another began to question him thus: "But my dear friend Jack, don't you sometimes doubt whether you are a child of God?" "Well," said he, "I don't quite understand you; but I can tell you I never doubt but that 'I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all,' and that 'Jesus Christ is my all in all.'"

Always after that in the villages they used to call him "Happy Jack," for he was always happy; and the reason was that you could not drive him from that simple standing point. "There is nothing in me: I believe in Christ; I deserve punishment; I am lost in myself, but by His grace I trust in Him who came into the world to save sinners, and I know He will not let me perish."

"My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.  
On Christ the solid Rock I stand;  
All other ground is sinking sand." *E. Mote*

*Presbyterian Deacon*

### THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON

*John Evelyn was a man who kept a diary at the time of the Great Fire. He was also an ardent Royalist during the Civil War. His journal entry for the 2nd, the day on which Pudding Lane first erupted, contains only the briefest of mentions. By the following day, however, Evelyn was drawn into the unfolding spectacle.*

I had public prayers at home. The fire continuing, after dinner I took coach with my wife and son and went to the Bank side in Southwark, where we beheld that dismal spectacle: the whole city in flames near the water side; all the houses from the Bridge, all Thames Street, and upwards towards Cheapside, down to the Three Cranes, were now consumed: and so [we] returned exceeding astonished what would become of the rest.

The fire having continued all this night (if I may call that night which was light as day for ten miles round about, after a dreadful manner) when conspiring with a fierce eastern wind in a very dry season; I went on foot to the same place, and saw the whole south part of the city burning from Cheapside to the Thames, and all along Cornhill, (for it likewise kindled back against the wind as well as forward), Tower Street, Fenchurch Street, Gracious Street, and so along to Bainard's Castle, and was now taking hold of St. Paul's Church, to which the scaffolds contributed exceedingly. The conflagration was so universal, and the people so astonished, that from the beginning, I know not by what despondency or fate, but crying out and lamentation, running about like distracted creatures without at all attempting to save even their goods; such a strange consternation there was among them, so as it burned both in breadth and length, the churches, public halls, Exchange, hospitals, monuments, and ornaments, leaping after a prodigious manner, from house to house and street to street, at great distances from one to the other; for the heat with a long set of fair and warm weather had even ignited the air and prepared the materials to conceive the fire, which devoured

after an incredible manner houses, furniture, and everything. Here we saw the Thames covered with goods floating, all the barges and boats laden with what some had time and courage to save, as, on the other, the carts, carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strewed with movables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away.

**Oh the miserable and calamitous spectacle!** Such as haply the world had not seen since the foundation of it, nor be outdone till the universal conflagration thereof. All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen above forty miles round about for many nights. God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw above ten thousand houses, all in one flame; the noise and cracking and thunder of people, the fall of towers, houses, and churches, was like a hideous storm, and the air all about so hot and inflamed that at last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand still and let the flames burn on, which they did for near two miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds also of smoke were dismal and reached upon computation near fifty miles in length. Thus I left it this afternoon burning, a resemblance of Sodom, or the last day. It forcibly called to my mind that passage – *non enim hic habemus stabilem civitatem*: the ruins resembling the picture of Troy. London was, but is no more! Thus, I returned.

### **September 4th**

The burning still rages, and it was now gotten as far as the Inner Temple; all Fleet Street, the Old Bailey, Ludgate Hill, Warwick Lane, Newgate, Paul's Chain, Watling Street, now flaming, and most of it reduced to ashes; the stones of St. Paul's flew like [grenades], the melting lead running down the streets in a stream, and the very pavements glowing with fiery redness, so as no horse nor man was able to tread on them, and the demolition had stopped all the passages, so that no help could be applied, the eastern wind still more impetuously driving the flames forward. Nothing but the

Almighty power of God was able to stop them, for vain was the help of man.

### **September 5th**

It crossed towards Whitehall; but oh, the confusion there was then at that Court! It pleased his Majesty to command me among the rest to look after the quenching of Fetter Lane End, to preserve if possible that part of Holborn, whilst the rest of the gentlemen took their several posts, some at one part, some at another (for they now began to bestir themselves, and not till now, who hitherto had stood as men intoxicated, with their hands across) and began to consider that nothing was likely to put a stop but the blowing up of so many houses as might make a wider gap than any had yet been made by the ordinary method of pulling them down with engines; this some stout seamen proposed early enough to have saved near the whole city, but this some tenacious and avaricious men, and aldermen would not permit, because their houses must have been among the first to be levelled. It was therefore now commanded to be practised, and my concern being particularly for the Hospital of St. Bartholomew near Smithfield, where I had many wounded and sick men, made me the more diligent to promote it; nor was my care for the Savoy less.

It now pleased God by abating the wind, and by the industry of the people, when almost all was lost, infusing a new spirit into them, that the fury of the fire began sensibly to abate about noon, so as it came no farther than the Temple westward, nor than the entrance of Smithfield north: but continued all this day and night so impetuous toward Cripplegate and the Tower as made us all despair; it also broke out again in the Temple, but the courage of the multitude persisting, and many houses being blown up, such gaps and desolations were soon made, as with the former three days consumption, that the back fire did not so vehemently urge upon the rest as formerly. There was yet no standing near the burning and glowing ruins by near a furlong's space.

The coal and wood wharfs and magazines of oil and rosin,

did infinite mischief, so as the invective which a little before I had dedicated to his Majesty and published, giving warning of what might probably be the issue of suffering those shops to be in the City, was looked on as a prophecy.

The poor inhabitants were dispersed about St. George's Fields, and Moorfields, as far as Highgate, and several miles in circle, some under tents, some under miserable huts and hovels, many without a rag or any necessary utensils, bed or board, who from delicateness, riches, and easy accommodations in stately and well furnished houses, were now reduced to extremest misery and poverty.

In this calamitous condition I returned with a sad heart to my house, blessing and adoring the distinguishing mercy of God to me and mine, who in the midst of all this ruin was like Lot, in my little Zoar, safe and sound.

*Selected*

---

### **“REMEMBER NOW THY CREATOR”**

*“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth”*; and if you find in your heart a concern to do it, God has given you a new heart to feel like that. The heart you brought into the world with you, the carnal mind, as the Word of God terms it, will never have any God-honouring thoughts whatever about it: as a creature, remembering your Creator – the thing is impossible. *“The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”*

There is a great word in Ezekiel – I look at it, I like to consider it: *“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh”*; and if God, in His great mercy, should be pleased to do that for you, dear young people, then you will find in that new heart, and that new spirit communicated therein, a concern to *“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,”* and that you may live aright in His sight, and have matters made right between

Him and you, and be prepared to meet Him, not only as your Judge, but your Saviour, too.

I think of Josiah – and he was an outstanding character in the age in which he lived – and the Word of God tells us concerning him that, when he was wrought upon to remember His Creator, he was enabled to do that in the days of his youth. Josiah was sixteen years of age, *“while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father.”* Are any of you sixteen years of age? Have you begun to seek after the God of your father, your mother? When Josiah had that feeling born in his heart, when he began to seek after God, and to remember God with whom he had to do, the Word of God tells us later on that it was said of Josiah: *“Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest His words ... and humblest thyself before Me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before Me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD. Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shall be gathered to thy grave in peace.”*

Now that is our concern, our desire, that God will give to you dear young people what He gave to Josiah long ago, a *tender heart*. One of our hymnwriters has got a petition like this:

“Oh, give me, Lord, the tender heart,  
That trembles at the approach of sin,  
A godly fear of sin impart,  
Implant, and root it deep within,  
That I may love Thy gracious power,  
And never dare to offend Thee, more.”

If God is pleased to give you such a heart, then you will be able to heed this injunction: *“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,”* and as long as you live, you will realise what the Word of God declares: *“It shall be well with them that fear God.”*

“Oh, cry we to heaven with one loud accord,  
That to us be given the fear of the Lord.”

H. Dawson



**LORD'S DAY OBSERVANCE  
AT BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER**

The *Daily Telegraph* of June 23rd 2016, reported that a charity rubber duck race, which was arranged to be held on the River Windrush at Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire, on a Sunday, had to be abandoned. What the organisers had failed to check was a bye-law which stated that no events were to be held on the river or green on Sundays. Evidently this dates back to a time when evangelical religion was very strong, largely emanating from the fifty-year pastorate of Benjamin Beddome, one of the hymn-writers in our Gadsby's Hymnbook. He was pastor until his death in 1795.

The village Chamber of Commerce defended reporting the organisers to the police, who forcibly intervened to stop the event. How refreshing to see, despite the ridicule and hatred which ensued, that the council stood its ground, albeit on the matter of abiding by the law. Under the bye-law the only activity allowed on the Lord's Day is that of a brass band. It is good to see that even in these godless days, the godly influence of such a man as Benjamin Beddome has not altogether vanished. Below is one of the hymns he wrote:

“My times of sorrow and of joy  
Great God are in Thy hand;  
My choicest comforts come from Thee,  
And go at Thy command.

If Thou shouldst take them all away,  
Yet let me not repine;  
Before they were possessed by me,  
They were entirely Thine.

Nor let me drop a murmuring word,  
Though the whole world were gone;  
But seek enduring happiness  
In Thee, and Thee alone.”

*Editor*

**“THAT BOOK IS MINE”**

Not many of our readers will have been to Mexico. It is one of the countries of Central America, and like most countries in that part of the American continent which were colonised by Spain, Roman Catholicism is still the dominant religion. (At this time the Trinitarian Bible Society is preparing a sound version of the Holy Scriptures in Spanish which many of God's people in that part of the world are awaiting; in fact, it has recently published its translation of the Spanish New Testament.)

Rogilio was an intelligent Mexican lad in the north of his country in the last century, where, because of the antipathy to the pure Word of God by the Roman Catholic Church, Bibles were scarcely seen and even more seldom read. His father, however, was not a devout follower of the national religion and one day, looking through his library of books, found a Bible! He glanced at the sacred pages and felt that the 'moral teaching' would be good for his son to read. Rogilio, having been given this rare volume, showed it to his local priest, who, most surprisingly, assured him that it was, 'the best Book in the world'! Was he a secret believer like Nicodemus, we wonder?

Sadly, Rogilio's father died soon after, but Rogilio continued to study and read his Bible with increasing delight. He memorised many verses and found much delight in so doing. One day, however, he made the fatal error of taking his Bible to school, to show it to his teacher.

"Oh!" the teacher exclaimed, "where did you get that accursed Book from? It is an accursed Protestant Bible!" By now the older priest, who had commended the Bible to Rogilio, had been replaced by a younger man, who was very zealous for the Roman Catholic Church, and against all Protestants. Having been shown this Bible by the teacher, the priest hurled it into a nearby fire, and Rogilio watched his precious treasure as its pages curled up in the consuming fire. Many days of sadness followed, but eventually the grief subsided and he sought the company of boys of his age who led him astray so that he lost all interest in his Bible and its teachings.

Some years later, Rogilio, now a grown man, had emigrated to the state of Texas in the USA. One night, walking the streets with one of his friends, he saw an advertisement stating that the gospel was to be preached. Out of curiosity, rather like Zacchæus, they entered the room. The service was already in progress. As these two young men made their way to a seat, the preacher was reading from a large Book which he held in his hand. To Rogilio's amazement, words he had learned years ago were being repeated by the preacher. Without thinking, he rushed to the front and confronted the preacher, saying: "Sir, please give me back my Book! That is my Book from which you are reading. They took it from me years ago. It is *mine*."

It had not dawned on Rogilio that there could be more than one copy of the Bible! He stretched out his hand, fully expecting the preacher to give the precious Book to him.

"Why do you say that this precious Book is yours?" the preacher asked. "It is *mine*," said Rogilio, "and I can prove it."

To the amazement of the people listening, he recited verse after verse, which he had learned when a boy. Certainly in his mind, the Scriptures had become his.

After talking further with him, the preacher kindly gave him his Bible, and pointed him to various passages, which, if received into the heart, would bring eternal blessing to his soul. Having the sacred volume once more in his hand, for many days Rogilio read and reread the portions he was recommended to. In God's time he was enabled by true and living faith to say: "That Book is mine," in a saving way.

"*Search the Scriptures,*" said the Lord Jesus Christ, "*they are they which testify of Me.*" *Adapted*

---

### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about THE BREAD OF LIFE from John 6. 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 question did Jesus ask Philip concerning the “great company” that came to Him? (5)
2. What did Jesus use to feed the multitude? (9)
3. How much food was left over? (13)
4. The next day many of the people found Jesus on the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Why did Jesus say they had sought Him? (26)
5. What did Jesus say they should “labour” for? (27)
6. What was the “bread from heaven” which the children of Israel ate during their wilderness journey usually called?
7. Jesus said to the Jews, “Moses gave you not that bread from heaven.” What was the true Bread from heaven?
8. What did Jesus say He was, each time starting, “I am ...”? (Four references)
9. When so many “went back, and walked no more with Him” Jesus said to His disciples: “Will ye also go away?” Who answered, and what did he say?
10. Write down the different ways the Lord Jesus describes those who will be raised up at the last day? (Four answers)

### ANSWERS TO AUGUST QUESTIONS

1. Gold, silver, brass, iron.
2. Abram.
3. Wisdom, Understanding.
4. Pharaoh’s chariots and his host who perished in the Red Sea.
5. A serpent of brass.
6. “That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!” (Job 19. 24)
7. An axe head. (2 Kings 6. 5-6)
8. “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” (Matthew 6. 19-20)
9. Brass, iron, lead, tin. (Ezekiel 22. 18-22)
10. The land of Havilah. The street of the city (the new Jerusalem).

*Contributed*

**BIBLE STUDY FOR THE OLDER ONES****THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (9)**

We read in God's Holy Word what can only be termed 'sweet and precious promises,' which are spoken to a particular people. In the beautiful prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ we read: *"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). This precious prayer of Jesus, the Son of God, reveals to us sacred doctrine. A people have been given by the Father unto the Son: *"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). There is a divine certainty in the salvation of the Lord's chosen people: *"they shall come"*: no ifs, buts or maybes. Those divinely chosen will be divinely called.

This brings us to the subject matter of this article. The Lord Jesus Christ is the great "I AM" of His people. He has covenanted with His Father to redeem them from the curse of the law. It is only He, the great King and head of the church that is able to do this. The Son of God became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh to redeem us: *"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father"* (Galatians 4. 4-6). We do not become the sons of God because we are called or because we are born again or because we believe. No! *"Because ye are sons...."* That is why you believe; that is why you are called; that is why you are born again.

We read in Isaiah of a people that the eternal King calls, and this eternal King is Jesus Christ: *"One shall say, I am the LORD'S; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the LORD, and*

*surname himself by the name of Israel. Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the First, and I am the Last; and beside Me there is no God. And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for Me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them. Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even My witnesses. Is there a God beside Me? yea, there is no God; I know not any"* (Isaiah 44. 5-8). This great King declares that He is the first and the last. We read in Hebrews 13. 8: *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."* Then we read concerning this glorious King: *"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen"* (1 Timothy 1. 17). In Colossians we read that He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead and that He is before all things and by Him all things consist.

All these descriptions speak of Him as in Psalm 90. 2: *"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."* This gives us some idea of this word: *"I am the First, and I am the Last."* This is confirmed for us by the words of Jesus Christ Himself when John, the divine, was exiled to the Isle of Patmos and persecuted for his faith in Jesus Christ: *"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty"* (Revelation 1. 8). Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet and Omega is the last letter, so this is the equivalent of saying, the first and the last. He confirms this blessed truth when John was overcome with a sense of the glory and majesty of King Jesus: *"And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the First and the Last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death"* (Revelation 1. 17-18).

J. R. Rutt

# LIST OF NAMES

*The following young people have answered questions during the months January to June 2016. The total number is 235, for which we would thank God.*

Oliver Alderman; Daryl and Jared Aldridge; Ben, Jessica, Megan and Tom Aldridge.

Ellie and Matthew Baker; Katie and Tommy Baker; Anna and Jethro Baldwin-Jones; Barney, Daisy, Josiah, Lily, Noah and Poppy Barker; Abigail and Katie Barnett; Joshua and Samuel Broome; Isaac, Jemima, Josiah, Kezia, Phebe and Tabitha Burden; Amelia, Caleb, Kezia and Olivia Burgess; Emily Buss; Sophia Buss.

Benjamin, Bethany, Daniel, Elizabeth and Victoria Chapman; Anna-Louise, Isaac and Sophie Clark; Phebe Collins; Sebastian Cooper; Alice, Beth, Isaac, and Katy Cottingham; Evie Cottingham; Freddie, Grace, Isobel, Jude and Oliver Cottingham; Nancy and Owen Cottingham; Alicia and Emma Cottingham; Daniel, Elsie, Esther and Penny Crowter; James, Rebecca and Thomas Crowter.

Edward and Harry Dadswell; Louise Dadswell; Eliza and Noah de Voogd.

Ruby Field.

Abigail, Cornelia and Luke Hayden; Job, Rosalie and Susanna Hickman; Katharine Hills; Caleb and Joseph Hydon.

Benjamin and Joshua Ince; Joshua Izzard.

Emily Janes; David and George Jempson.

Henry and Jemima Kerley; Joshua and Susanna Kerley; Annabel and Alfie Kinderman.

William Lucas.

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

Amy and Jethro Northern; Freya and Jessica Northern.

Emelia and Florence Ottaway.

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

Eddie, Jessica and Oliver Raymond; James Rice; Thomas Riche; Jonathan Richardson; Susanna Risbridger; Andrew, Daniel, Joseph and Nathanael Rosier; Chloe, Isabella and John Rosier.

Grace and Karen Sadler; Timothy Salkeld; Abigail, Isaac and Leah Saunders; George and Harry Saunders; Clemantine, Maria, Nicholas and Tabitha Sayers; Jessica, Matthew and Rachel Scott; Chloe and Jessica Seymour; James and Rosie Shaw; Matthew Stearn.

Harry, James, Jemima and Phebe Tarbin; Joel Taylor; Elizabeth Topping.

Alec, Emma and Joshua Wigley; Chloe, David, Jonny and Lydia Wilkins; Bethany, Caleb, Jemima and Nathanael Wiltshire; Abigail, Kate, Joseph, Matthias, Polly and Thomas Woodhams; Ellen, George, Jessica, Naomi and Thomas Woodhams; Maisie and Rosanna Woodhams; Percy and Ben Woodhams; Sophie Woodhams.

*Overseas Names:*

Bryce de Blieck; Sophie Bruere; Austin and Eloise Christian; Scott Easterhoff; Calvin and Dennis Glass; Jarrod and Montanalee Greyn; Kilee and Jaydan Greyn; Daniella Kaat; Jared and Seth Klop; Brennan, Donovan, and Cayley Knibbe; Isaac Knol; Luke Linna; Hannah, Heidi, Kevin and Mariah Muis; John Murphy; John, Luke and Sandra Seymour; Abigail and Michaela Teunissen; Frank VanGemert; Jonathan, Laura and Rebekah Wesdyk; Tyler White; Carissa, Carolyn, Hannah, Janna and Leah Ymker.

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**AN EVENING PRAYER**

All praise to Thee, my God, this night  
For all the blessings of the light;  
Keep me, O, keep me, King of kings,  
Beneath Thine own almighty wings.  
Forgive me, Lord, through Thy dear Son,  
The ill that I this day have done;  
That with the world, myself, and Thee,  
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.  
Teach me to live, that I may dread  
The grave as little as my bed;  
Teach me to die, that so I may  
Rise glorious at the Judgment Day.  
O, may my soul on Thee repose,  
And may sweet sleep mine eyelids close;  
Sleep, that shall me more vigorous make  
To serve my God when I awake.  
If in the night I sleepless lie,  
My soul with heavenly thoughts supply;  
Let no ill dreams disturb my rest,  
No powers of darkness me molest.  
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*Thomas Ken*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“The LORD shall preserve thy going out  
and thy coming in from this time forth,  
and even for evermore.” (Psalm 121. 8)

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*October 2016*

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### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand is recorded in each of the four gospels, which is a voice to us of the importance of this mighty work of the Lord Jesus. We are apt to forget in this account, the wonderful faith of the lad with the five barley loaves and two small fishes.

His faith was rather the same as that of the captive girl in the Old Testament, who was convinced that Elisha's God would heal Naaman of his leprosy. So it would appear that in giving his scanty provision to the disciples, and then to Jesus, he was persuaded, unlike the disciples, that the Lord was able to use them for His honour and glory. We read in Isaiah of how "*a little child shall lead them.*" Here is an example of the Lord working in this way. We are told not to despise the day of small things. The disciples were in danger of doing this, when they said: "*But what are they among so many?*"

There is something else that is very attractive in this little lad's faith. He was willing to relinquish all he had for the use of the Lord Jesus. The Scriptures tell us of a woman who put just two mites (the smallest coin of the realm in our Lord's day) into the collection box, compared with the rich who were putting in much larger sums. The Lord Jesus, who knows the hearts of all men, said that she had given more than the rich. They had only given a fraction of their wealth, but she had given all of her income. You can be sure that He who knew her true circumstances did not let her suffer for her generosity in the Lord's cause.

Then finally, we are not told the name of either the little captive maid, or the woman with two mites, or the little lad. They were content to remain in the background while God was exalted. John the Baptist said: "*He must increase, but I must decrease.*" However, their names, though unknown to man, were known to God, and He knows all His people by name, and they are led to know Him.

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Some of our readers will be familiar with our chapel at Swanwick Shore, which stands near the estuary of the River Hamble, which is shown on our front cover this month. Many years ago, a godly man was given the opportunity of a day out, being rowed up the river from Burlesdon Bridge to Botley, which is about five miles. Being of an enquiring nature, he was not slow to ask questions and during his voyage he learned four important lessons.

The first lesson was at the boathouse, where the rowing boat was moored, surrounded by other boats of all shapes and sizes. In a barge was stacked a large pile of lead nuggets. Apparently these were used as ballast on regatta days when yachts raced each other on the river. The lead had to be placed in strategic places and the more sails a yacht had the more lead was needed to keep it stable. Sometimes God sees fit to increase the ballast in our lives (by bringing more cares and burdens) to keep us stable amidst the storms of life.

The second lesson was that the trip up the river had to start at a certain time. On that day the tide was most favourable at 10.00 a.m. This meant that the person rowing would be aided by the incoming stream, and further, on their return as the tide ebbed, would be helped later to retrace their way. Here the wisdom of using opportunities was very evident, just as a merchant likes to buy in a falling market and sell in a rising market. In past times when windmills were a common way of grinding corn, the miller had to make best use of the wind when it blew; likewise the blacksmith wields his hammer when the iron he has heated, is hot. Paul says: *"Be not slothful ..."* and in another place: *"Redeeming the time,"* which means making good use of the time God has given us. Isaiah 55 has good instruction for us here.

The third lesson he learned was the skill the rower had learned by many years of experience on the River Hamble. He knew where the dangerous cross currents were, and also the hidden sandbanks to be avoided. So God's infallible Word is our guide, containing in it warnings about dangerous currents,

rocks and sandbanks, which if not heeded will cause us to make shipwreck of our lives.

Fourthly, because the River Hamble is tidal as far as Botley, the sea water flows up this far and meets the fresh water flowing down and at such times the river is very wide and deep. Because of the many twists and turns it is often difficult to actually see where the next bend will take you, either to the right or the left. At times there does not seem to be a passage through. So sometimes in our lives there may seem no way out, but if the Lord is guiding us, He knows the way out and onwards. The lives of God's children, like the River Hamble, rarely flow in a straight line, but each turn of the way is both known and ordered by God.

---

### PIGS IN THE BIBLE

*A few days ago, someone asked me the question: "Why did they keep pigs in the Bible times?" I do not know the answer myself and we have had various discussions at home and with other people and have not managed to come to a conclusion. I feel that a lot of people probably do not know the answer and I think it would be of interest to many young people in particular. Many thanks, S.P.*

Although the Jews were forbidden to eat the flesh of pigs (swine) as they were considered unclean, Gentiles and heathen nations had no such inhibition. So they would have been kept for meat, but also their foraging habits made them good ground clearers! There may have been a health issue among the Jews as well as a moral lesson in that pork very quickly deteriorates in heat. I can remember when I was young, before the introduction of refrigerators, hearing it said that the rule was that you do not eat pork in a month without an 'r' in it. Although pigs had cloven feet like other 'clean' animals, they did not chew the cud, and this classed them as not fit for Jewish diet. Of course, the Muslims are as strict on this as the Jews. I suspect with the passing away of the Levitical law in New Testament times, eventually this rule was relaxed among believing Jews.

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****DAVID DESIRES A HOUSE FOR GOD**

As David sat in his palace, he thought of the ark of God that was in a tent. He longed to build a beautiful temple for it. But God sent Nathan the prophet to tell David that he should not build the house of the Lord because he had been a man of war. God said that He would bless the house of David and give him a son to rule after him. *"He shall build an house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever."*

By this promise, God also spoke of the Saviour who would come from the family of David. His kingdom alone endures for ever. How humbled David felt at the goodness and mercy of God! He worshipped God and said: *"Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?"*

David was not allowed to build the house for God, but he prepared for it with all his might. He gave gold and silver, brass and iron, cedar wood, and precious stones. God also gave him the pattern for the temple and showed him the place where it was to be built.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the ark of God in? (2 words)
2. What did David long to build for it? (3 words)
3. God gave him the \_\_\_\_ and showed him where it was to be built? (1 word)

*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. A new cart.
2. Touched the ark.
3. Their shoulders.

*Contributed*

*“Now I have  
prepared  
with all my  
might for  
the house  
of my God.”*

*1 Chronicles  
29. 2.*

**BIBLE LESSONS****PETER DELIVERED - HEROD DESTROYED**

On the night the children of Israel departed from Egypt, the Lord declared: *"But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast."* On the night the angel led Peter out of prison, not one of the soldiers guarding him moved his tongue. All were silent. What a miracle it was! The angel led Peter through one street and then vanished out of his sight.

As Peter stood in the dark street, he came to himself and realised the great wonder of what had happened. He said: *"Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent His angel, and hath delivered me out of the band of Herod, and from all the expectation ... of the Jews."*

While Peter considered everything, he thought of what he should do and where he should go. He knew that the mother of his good friend John Mark lived in the city. He was sure that she would gladly receive him into her house even though it was the middle of the night.

Peter could not have known that many of the believers had come there to pray for his release. As he stood at the door knocking, a young girl named Rhoda came to answer. When she heard Peter's voice, she was so overcome with joy that she forgot to open the door. She ran in to tell the others that Peter was standing outside the door. Those inside did not believe her. They told her that she was only imagining it.

How sad that those who had been praying for him seemed so weak in faith! When Rhoda kept insisting that it was Peter, they told her: *"It is his angel."* This too they did not really believe or they would have hastened to the door and opened it.

The Bible tells us that Peter continued knocking. When at last they opened the door and saw Peter, they were astonished. They could hardly believe their eyes. Before they could let out shouts of joy, Peter motioned with his hands that they should be quiet, lest they draw the attention of authorities to the house.

Peter then told all those present how the Lord had brought



him out of prison. Peter did not attribute his deliverance to the angel. No, he wanted all the brethren to understand the mercy and power of God. He told them to send a messenger to the brethren at Jerusalem, so they would also know what the Lord had done. It would not be safe for Peter to remain at the house of Mary, so while it was yet dark he went to another place secretly.

You can imagine how surprised and troubled the soldiers were in the morning when they could not find Peter. They must have looked at each other with amazement. Where had Peter gone? Herod called for Peter to be brought out and killed. When he learned that Peter had escaped, he became furious. Herod questioned the keepers and commanded that they should be put to death. King Herod was a very proud man, and Peter's escape seemed like a defeat in battle. In great rage Herod left Jerusalem and went down to Cæsarea.

The inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon had offended the proud Herod, so that he intended to destroy them. Realising their danger, they sought for peace and made Herod's chamberlain their friend, no doubt by paying him a good sum of money. They arranged a certain time for Herod to speak to them.

On the set day Herod was arrayed in royal apparel and sat upon his throne to address the people. As Herod gave his oration, the people shouted: *"It is the voice of a god, and not of a man."* Proud Herod basked in their praise.

Immediately the Lord sent an angel to smite Herod because he did not give glory to God, and he was eaten of worms. What a solemn judgment it was! Thus another enemy of the church was removed.

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 12 verses 10 to 23.*

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Who answered the door when Peter knocked?
2. Who did those in the house say was knocking at the door?
3. Who did Peter say had brought him out of prison?
4. What did the people say when Herod began to orate? (12 words)
5. What happened to Herod because he did not give glory to God? (First 9 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.*

### ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS

1. James.
2. Peter.
3. Mary. Barnabas.
4. "But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."
5. Of its own accord.

*G. L. TenBroeke*

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### WAS IT WORTHWHILE?

In the early years of the Trinitarian Bible Society, one of its most able speakers, Dr. Bullinger, had promised to give an address at a town in the Midlands, in England. An old lady, who was unable to attend herself because of her weakness, sent a young girl named Jane, in her place with strict instructions to remember what was said and to relay it to her later.

Accordingly Jane set out to go to the meeting, which had been advertised in several local churches, expecting that there would be a number of other supporters there also. When she arrived, to her consternation she found that no-one else apart from herself, other than Dr. Bullinger and the Chairman of the meeting, were present. They waited for some time, hoping that more friends would turn in, but their hopes were dashed.

"We had better abandon the meeting," said the Chairman.

"Oh, no!" said the Doctor, "the meeting has been properly advertised and must go ahead."

"Then you need not give so long an address": to which the Doctor replied, "I shall speak as though all the seats were full."

How lonely Jane felt. She kept looking towards the door of the hall, in the hope that someone else might turn in, but no-one did.

Soon the two men took their places at the front, while Jane sat solitarily in the middle of the rows of seats. The meeting started, and how strange it seemed to Jane to be the only listener as the meeting took its usual course. However, she

was faithful to her charge, so that when it came to the address she listened very intently so that she could tell the old lady what was said about the work of the Society.

Amongst other things mentioned, was the need to print a portion of the New Testament in Hebrew for distribution among the Jews. The cost of this would be £64 (a large sum in the early years of the Society). When Jane, on her return, told this to the old lady, she decided that she would meet the cost of this out of her own pocket. So she very quickly wrote out a cheque for the full amount, and put it in the post to Dr. Bullinger. He was astonished to receive the exact amount so speedily after the meeting.

So through Jane's faithful memory and patient listening, the Trinitarian Bible Society was able to begin the task of printing the Holy Scriptures in Hebrew, in thankfulness to God for moving the heart and purse of the old lady. Let us "*not despise the day of small things*," for God is even able to use an empty hall and a young girl to further His work.

In recent years the Society has been engaged in faithfully translating the whole of the Scriptures into Hebrew, a project which we trust, under God, will be a means to hasten the day of the taking away of the veil from the heart of the Jewish people concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour.

*Editor*

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### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from WILLIAM LUCAS, EMILY PESTELL, PHOEBE RAMSBOTTOM and BARNABAS WOODHAMS.*

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QUESTION: Is man, in a state of nature, bound to obey this [God's] law?

ANSWER: Yes; and every act of disobedience deserves God's righteous wrath and indignation; for the law is holy, just and good.

(Ezekiel 18. 4, 20; Matthew 5. 19 & 22. 37-40;

Romans 6. 23 & 7. 12; Hebrews 2. 2.)

**MY FIRST PRAYER (3)**

When I was about three years old my mother taught me the words of the hymn:

“Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,  
Look upon a little child;  
Pity my simplicity;  
Suffer me to come to Thee.”

I prayed this every night until I was about sixteen. As the youngest in the family, I was given the responsibility to say the grace before each meal.

At about seventeen, I began seriously to consider my own life with its weaknesses and failures. Reaching twenty years, I went down to London to work and stayed in a hostel, sharing a large room with two other boys. One of the boys, a Christian, being aware that I was wanting to know more about God, said that I wouldn't get to God except through Jesus Christ, sharing with me John 14. 6. My room-mate explained that I needed to get to know my Bible, and now for about fifty years I've been reading my Bible.

Perhaps my greatest difficulty was obtaining assurance and this was done through my later years. In short, an old Gospel writer in his tract on Assurance said: “Seek to obtain a simple childlike confidence in God's promises.” This all occurred in fairly recent years, when also I started to read the *“Friendly Companion.”* How eagerly I waited for the end of the month when I would read an episode about Leen Potappel: *“A Boy from Stavenisse [in the Netherlands].”*

A Christian friend I have known for forty years shared with me in May 2008, John 1. 17: *“For the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”* The Law was given by Moses – I have not kept the Law – I was guilty, condemned. But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ – and I rest on this alone for my salvation. I'm pardoned, forgiven.

“Who is a pardoning God like Thee?  
Or who has grace so rich and free?” *(Samuel Davies)*

*Roy A Gibson, Edinburgh*

### **MORE ABOUT HANDKERCHIEFS**

A true story is told of a young man who, as he had grown into adulthood, caused his godly parents much grief. Casting aside their kind warnings and reproofs, he determined, like the prodigal son, to have no more to do with God's Word, His people or His worship. Running away, he ventured out into life with so many dreams of so-called freedom and pleasure, all of which he unjustly claimed he had been denied in his upbringing.

However, God, who is rich in mercy, had purposes of grace towards him, and through a succession of troubles, his conscience was awakened to see the perilous road on which he was travelling, and to reflect on his disgraceful treatment of his kind parents, who wished him well for eternity as well as time. Brought to sincere repentance and a sense of the forgiving love of Christ Jesus, his thoughts turned back to his parents. He wanted them to know that this great change had taken place, but realised that his past behaviour might be a severe stumbling block to any reconciliation.

With this in mind, and not wishing to give his parents further pain, he wrote a letter to them relating the great change that grace had wrought. He told them that he planned to return to his home town on a certain day, and that if they were willing to receive him back into the home, would they hang out a white handkerchief from the window. If he should not see this, he would not embarrass them by knocking the door, but would pass straight on. With many conflicting thoughts and memories, he made his way home. As he turned into the street, what did he see: not just one handkerchief, but hundreds of them and also white towels hanging from the windows and hedges around the house! What a welcome he received when he knocked the door, very similar to the reception the prodigal received on his return home.

Here is a faint picture of the welcome there is in the heart of God for repenting sinners. Isaiah tells us: *"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and*

*let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55. 7).*

(The margin reading for abundantly pardon is “*multiply pardons.*”)

*Editor*

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## HISTORY OF A DOMINICAN MONK

### A Colleague of John Knox

Towards the close of what are called “the dark ages,” when ignorance abounded, especially upon religious subjects, a traveller, determined on “a religious life,” entered Bologna. Born in Scotland, and educated at the University of St. Andrews, he first went to England as tutor in a noble family; but returning to his native land in consequence of the war between England and Scotland, and ignorantly thinking that God could be served more acceptably in the gloomy cloister than in the busy scenes of life, he applied for and gained admission to the Dominican order of monks. Entering the convent, he devoted himself to the wearisome forms and austere manners of his profession there, till, falling under suspicion of “heresy,” he suffered a short imprisonment; but as the accusation could not be substantiated he was set at liberty, and then, disgusted at the bigotry and ignorance of the Scottish clergy, he left his native land, and, after visiting England and France, settled in Italy, where, at the recommendation of the celebrated Cardinal Pole, he was received into the Dominican order at Bologna.

Being of a more inquiring disposition than most of his companions, he sought in his new home to acquaint himself more fully with the truths of religion; and, in turning over the antiquated volumes of “Catholic” authors in the library of the Inquisition, which was attached to the monastery, he happened upon “Calvin’s Institutes.” The style of the stern Reformer interested him. He read, he thought, he wept. Truth

was presented to his mind as he had never before seen it. An unseen, but real power was guiding him, and unveiling to him the religion of One who is "the Light of men," but whom he had hitherto known only through the obscuring medium of priestly misrepresentation and gorgeous, but vain ceremony. He felt that he needed a sacrifice greater than the "mass" to atone for his sins, and prayers more fervent than the numberless "Aves" and "Paters" which he had so often formally pronounced, to bear his spirit to God on the wings of devotion. He was convinced that he needed intercession more prevalent than that of a surpliced ecclesiastic to avail for him above, and a power greater than that of "the sacrament" to enable him to pursue the heavenly journey.

The more he thought, the more fully convinced did he become that his life hitherto had been a great mistake. Though often he had flattered himself that a "religious" life conveyed superior merit, and that, if any were certain of salvation, it must surely be those who had devoted themselves wholly to "the Church," he now felt the necessity of starting anew. He sought the Saviour's grace, not through the intercession of "the blessed Virgin," but by immediate intercourse with Himself; and as a sinner he sought acceptance with God through the merits of Christ alone, who *"is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."*

As light diffuses its influence, so the existence of true religion soon becomes apparent to others. The monk unbosomed his convictions to his brethren, and, but for the advice of a "father" in the monastery, would have been at once seized as a heretic. Acting under that advice, he procured his discharge from the convent, and again became a tutor. But his liberty was short; for, with his worthy host, he was seized by the familiars of the Inquisition, and carried to Rome, there to await the common fate of those who dared to exercise "the right of private judgment" in opposition to the teachings of the "Church."

The day appointed for his execution (August 20th, 1559), approached, but he awaited it with calmness. True religion can give the best, the only true consolation. The Christian not only can triumph over the sorrows of life, but can meet death itself with joy, trusting in his Lord, who has *“abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”*

On the night before the fatal morning, the subject of our history was awaiting in his cell the moment fixed to translate him into eternity. He felt the stern reality of his position, but his unshaken faith gave him the assurance that, ‘though the earthly house of his tabernacle might be dissolved,’ he had *“a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”*

Suddenly news reached the prison – sad, yet joyful news. The Roman Pontiff (Paul IV) had just died. It was sad to think that he had gone to his account, but the prisoners were to be released – this was joyful. But stay: not all the prisoners. Thieves and murderers might depart and rejoice in their new-born liberty, but the “heretics,” though permitted to go outside the prison walls for a short time, were reconducted to their cells. There they lay – perhaps for the time envying their more favoured fellow-prisoners; yet, nevertheless, submitting to the will of the Lord, who had counted them worthy *“not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”*

The excitement caused by the death of the Pontiff and the release of prisoners did not, however, easily subside. It extended within the gloomy walls of the prison, and amidst the confusion the prisoners of “the Church” perceived an opportunity of escaping, which they embraced. Leaving the city with all possible expedition, they at length arrived at a small inn at some distance from it, which they entered, and began to hope that at last they were secure. But, alas! the heavy, measured tread of soldiers was heard, and before they could escape they were confronted by the military. The prisoners quietly surrendered themselves. They had done no wrong in leaving the prison when opportunity offered, for they had broken no law of the state to make their imprisonment



just. And they did right in calmly submitting when Providence appeared to dictate that they were to suffer for their principles.

But all the prisoners were not retaken. One, the escaped monk, was set at liberty. "Do you remember," said the rough captain of the band which had pursued them – addressing him – "do you remember once relieving a poor wounded soldier in the neighbourhood of Bologna?" The monk had forgotten it. Yes, they who do the most good usually think the least of what they effect. To boast of good works is an indication that we have none to boast of. The full corn bends the lowest, and the most fruitful Christian is the most humble.

"I am the man," continued the captain; "I shall requite your kindness – you are at liberty. Your companions I must take with me, but for your sake I shall treat them with all possible lenity."

Acts of kindness are never lost; their echoes return to us. When we serve God and man the most, we are most benefited ourselves, although to make this our motive would be to turn virtue into vice, and an acceptable sacrifice into an abomination.

Liberty – great as was the gift, was not all the favour he received. The soldier gave him all the money he had, and the fugitive committed himself to the providence of God. But this money was soon spent, and the suffering Christian to whom it had been given, weary with his journey, was lying by the side of an Italian wood, tempted to give himself up to despondency. Penniless and footsore, he knew not whither to turn. Like a sheep in the midst of wolves, he was justified in fearing that most whom he met would willingly have earned an unrighteous gain by delivering him up to death. To whom could he go in his distress, but to God?

Yes, there was one ear open to his complaint – one hand ready for his help – one heart which still beat in tender sympathy for him; and to his Heavenly Father he betook himself. Nor was his cry in vain: He who fed Elijah by ravens, and increased the widow's meal and oil, supplied the wants of

His servant in this extremity. Looking up, he saw a dog making towards him with something in his teeth. Naturally suspecting some evil, he sought to frighten the beast away. But the animal approached nearer, and his attention was still more attracted by the article he carried. The dog showed no signs of anger, but suffered and even courted the stranger's interference – allowing him to take the treasure from his mouth. It was a purse, and within it was a sum just sufficient to supply his wants till he reached Vienna!

He arrived there, and announcing himself as a Dominican, he was employed to preach before the Archduke of Austria (afterwards Maximilian II), who was so much pleased with his service that he was desirous of retaining him. But the new Pope (Pius IV), hearing of his favourable reception at Vienna, applied for his apprehension as a condemned heretic. The Archduke, however, overruled the papal application by dismissing him with a safe conduct.

Setting out from Vienna, he came first to England, and then arriving in his native country, Scotland, he was appointed (having almost forgotten his native tongue) to preach in Latin to some of the learned in Magdalene Chapel. But afterwards, receiving the charge of the parish of Canongate, he became the colleague of one whose name Scotland will never forget – John Knox; and in connection with that eminent reformer, John Craig (for it was he) laboured amidst persecution and danger to spread the knowledge of the truth which had made him what he was; and now he has gone to the full enjoyment of it in the world of glory.

Dear young friends, may our hearts be thankful for the liberty we yet enjoy, and may the day be far distant when it will be a punishable crime to search, find, and proclaim the truth that maketh wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

But remember, dear young friends, an open Bible without an opened heart will never take you to heaven.

*Selected*

## ALWAYS A “BUT”

My neighbour, Mr Cross, is very fond of writing the affirmative, “Yes,” with the disjunctive, “But.” He never assents to anything without immediately filing a protest. If you say to him: “This is a fine day,” he replies, “Yes, *but* it’s a little too warm, or a little too windy.” He has formed this habit, and does not realise how disagreeable it is.

As we were going home together last Lord’s Day, I said: “Well, friend, that was an excellent sermon the minister preached this morning.”

“Yes, but he ought to have made the application more direct and personal.”

“For my part, I thought he was quite personal enough. I know that he hit me fairly hard in what he said about formalism – doing Christian duties from habit, without any heart in the service.”

“Well, he hit me there, too; *but* then he ought to have dealt with those who don’t have even a form of godliness.”

“Perhaps their turn will come next Lord’s Day. A minister can’t crowd everything into one sermon. It was quite long enough as it was.”

“Yes, quite long enough – indeed, too long. *But* ....”

“Look here, Mr Cross, you have been *butting* at me ever since we started. You remind me of a pet that I had when I was a boy. My father brought home a little kid, and gave it to me for a playmate, as I had no brothers. The kid became very fond of me. *But* the kid grew to be a goat, and his nature grew with his growth. If we were playing, he would suddenly turn and *butt* me off. And so he became a nuisance. If visitors came, he would rush round to the front door and *butt* them. It was all in fun, and I did not blame Billy – he was born a “*butter*”; but I don’t think that we ought to imitate him. We ought to be able to talk with each other without incessant *butting*.”

Mr Cross did not relish my story, but I hope that it will do him good. I have no patience with people who are continually finding fault. Large natures are magnanimous. It is only little

souls that watch for and see little things. The habit of finding fault on all occasions is a very bad one. Let us leave *butting* to the goats, and try to appreciate and enjoy what good there is in the world, not expecting to find perfection in anything or anybody – *but* we do not object to all aiming at it! That effort would result in universal humility.

*(The Psalmist sums it up: "I have seen an end of all perfection: but Thy commandment is exceeding broad." (Psalm 119. 96) Ed.)*

*Selected*

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I had an aunt – she was quite a simple soul; she never married, she died when she was only forty, and there was a headmaster in my native town when I was a little boy. He said: "Rhoda, I have never heard such a complicated religion as you people have at your chapel." She looked bewildered. She said: "There is nothing complicated in my religion." She said: "My religion is this:

"The vilest sinner out of hell,  
Who lives to feel his need,  
Is welcome to the Throne of Grace,  
The Saviour's blood to plead."

*B.A. Ramsbottom*

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

##### **THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (10)**

The "I AM" that we are to look at this month is found in a most sacred and solemn context in Mark 14. 62. We have a description given by Mark of Jesus Christ arraigned before the chief priests, elders and the scribes: so all the leading people of the Jewish nation. All manner of accusations were falsely brought, by them, against Jesus Christ. We read in verse 59 "*But neither so did their witness agree together.*" My dear

friends, we must never be surprised when people falsely accuse us and tell lies about us. This is very hurtful and if it is hurtful to us as poor fallen sinners, how much more painful and hurtful to the Lord Jesus Christ who was without sin or any imperfection. The Word of God witnesses to us of Jesus Christ: *"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth"* (1 Peter 2. 22).

After this we read in Mark 14. 61-65: *"Again the high priest asked Him, and said unto Him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned Him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face, and to buffet Him, and to say unto Him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike Him with the palms of their hands."* Notice the answer of our Lord Jesus Christ to the question of the high priest: *"Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am."* This gives us a sacred witness to the divinity of Christ, the great I AM, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Ghost. Consider the words of John the divine. We read in 1 John 5. 7 *"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."*

The true believer is united by faith to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. A person becomes a true believer when the Holy Spirit dwells in their heart, this is how the Father and Son visit His people, by the Holy Spirit: *"and these three are one."* To confirm this let us look at John 14. 22-23: *"Judas saith unto Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto Him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* This is the wonder of the Christian gospel that God dwells in the hearts of His people.

Consider the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 3. 16: *"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"* What a wonder of wonders the great I AM dwells in the heart of a poor fallen son or daughter of Adam.

Now my dear beloved friends, does God dwell in your heart? How unspeakably solemn if He does not. Did the Lord Jesus give His life a ransom for you? Did He suffer, bleed and die for you? These are absolutely vital questions.

J. R. Rutt

### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about SEEKING GOD. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 8 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 218 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.*

1. Of whom is it said, he "will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." (Psalm 10. 4)

*Write out the following texts which are an encouragement to seek God.*

2. Isaiah 55. 6.
3. Matthew 7. 7.
4. "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after..." (Psalm 27. 4). What was the "one thing"?
5. What should we seek first? (Matthew 6. 33)
6. "...they will seek me early" (Hosea 5). When?
7. "And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when..." Complete the sentence. (Jeremiah 29)
8. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and..." Complete the sentence. (Hebrews 11)
9. What word of comfort did the angel speak to the women who were early at the sepulchre of the Lord Jesus? (first sentence only) (Matthew 28)
10. Of some God said: "They seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways" (Isaiah 58. 2). But why did God not regard them?

**ANSWERS TO SEPTEMBER QUESTIONS**

1. "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?"
2. Five barley loaves and two fishes.
3. Twelve baskets full.
4. They sought Jesus because they had eaten of the loaves and were filled.
5. "That meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give you."
6. Manna. (John 6. 31)
7. "He that cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." (John 6. 33)
8. "I am the Bread of Life." "I am the Bread which came down from heaven." "I am that Bread of Life." "I am the living Bread which came down from heaven." (John 6. 35, 41, 48, 51)
9. Peter answered saying, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John 6. 68, 69)
10. "All which He [the Father] hath given Me." "Every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him." Those that the Father draws to Him. "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh my blood." (John 6. 39, 40, 44, 54)

*Contributed*

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**AN AFFECTIONATE HINT RESPECTING PUBLIC WORSHIP**

*"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Hebrews 10. 25.*

The great Jehovah, from His glorious throne,  
Stoops down to make His love and mercy known;  
And bids the chosen tribes of Israel meet,  
Where He reveals the glories of His feet.

He sends His heralds forth, in Jesus' name,  
To publish peace, and pard'ning love proclaim;  
Yea, He goes with them, and applies His Word,  
And makes it life, and health, and joy afford.

Where, then, is that ungrateful sinner found  
Who slights and disregards the gospel sound?  
Who, when Jehovah in His courts draws near,  
Neglects within those holy courts t'appear?

Can those who once have tasted Jesus' grace,  
Choose to be absent when He shows His face?  
Shall a few drops of rain, or dirty road,  
Prevent their public intercourse with God?

Shall gossip calls, or some inferior things,  
Detain when summon'd by the King of kings?  
Blush, brethren, at the God-insulting thought,  
And prove in conduct you are better taught.

Remember, every time the house of prayer  
Is open for the saints, the Lord is there,  
To hold communion with the heav'n-born race,  
And give them, from His fulness, grace for grace.

Let not such sacred seasons be forgot;  
Say to each worldly care: "Detain me not!  
A feast is held, and I must share a part,  
I'll not be robb'd, nor grieve my pastor's heart."

See! Satan's slaves to scenes of riot go,  
By day and night, through rain or hail or snow;  
And shall some visitor, or worldly care,  
Detain believers from the house of prayer?

Forbid it, Lord! revive Thy people's zeal;  
The lukewarm plague among Thy children heal;  
Ye heirs of bliss, whom Jesus often meets,  
Whene'er His house is open, fill your seats.

Jehovah loves the temples of His grace  
More than the tents of all His chosen race:  
Blest is the man whose seeking spirit waits  
On all the means of grace in Zion's gates. *Joseph Irons*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“In the beginning God created the heaven  
and the earth.”  
(Genesis 1. 1)

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*November 2016*

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Front Cover photograph courtesy of Dean Franklin (Wikipedia).

### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

One of the most well-known prophets in the Old Testament, is Jeremiah. He is often called the weeping prophet because, so often his tears are mentioned in his prophecy. He did not cry because he was a “cry-baby” as some children may be, but he wept because he was a very sad man.

He was sad because the Word of the Lord he preached was not listened to by most of his hearers. That is something which sometimes makes a minister or a pastor sad also. Again he was sad because he saw the impending destruction of his beloved Jerusalem and the temple. He loved his nation as Jesus did when many years later He also wept over Jerusalem.

Jeremiah was also sad because he was a suffering man. Now sometimes you might get into trouble because you have done something wrong at home or at school. Then you should patiently bear it, remembering that you have brought it on yourself. But Jeremiah suffered for doing what was right in God's sight. In this he walked like the dear Saviour would, many years later. Jeremiah was often imprisoned and at least once was thrown into a dungeon by his enemies. God has a special regard for those who suffer in this way.

Now, children, one of the wonderful things about prayer is that it does not matter where we are, God can hear prayer. Even though Jeremiah was cast out of the sight of his fellow men, deep down in a dungeon, God's ear and eye was attentive. We read that he prayed unto God “*out of the low dungeon,*” and the Lord heard him, and said: “*Fear not.*” In answer to Jeremiah's prayer, the Lord sent a kind Ethiopian, called Ebed-me-lech. He besought the king for permission to rescue Jeremiah, and taking thirty men with him, they let down some ropes and gently lifted Jeremiah up out of the mire and filth in which he lay. Evidently this foreign man in Jerusalem feared God, rather as another Ethiopian did, of whom we read in Acts chapter 8. This kindness has been left in God's Word as an example. The Lord Jesus Christ tells us that such actions of kindness towards His

people are “done unto Him.” What a privilege to have the opportunity of helping one of God’s dear children!

Many years ago, a prayer meeting was being held in a certain chapel. A very wealthy man in the course of his prayer, prayed for a poor widow who was struggling financially after her husband’s death. On the way home, his daughter who had listened to his prayer, said: “Daddy, don’t you think you could have answered the prayer?” We would hope that the gentle enquiry had a practical effect!

May we watch for opportunities to “*do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*”

With best wishes from your sincere friend and Editor.

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### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Mount Rushmore, in the Black Hills of South Dakota, USA, is a spectacular memorial to the four famous United States Presidents: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt.

Sculpted from a massive granite bluff, the memorial covers about five square kilometres (two square miles), with each head measuring about eighteen metres (sixty feet) from forehead to chin – making the individual sculptures twice as high as the head of the Great Sphinx of Giza in Egypt.

To suggest these images just happened to appear on the granite face as the result of millions of years of rain, wind and frost would of course be ludicrous. It is impossible to imagine that the recognizable images of four great American leaders could appear by accident, regardless of the time allowed for such a process.

In fact, hundreds of thousands of tonnes of rock were blasted and chiselled from the rim of Mount Rushmore as the heads were painstakingly sculpted from 1927 to 1941 by famous American sculptor Gutzon Borglum and his workers.

It is obvious then, that the Mount Rushmore National Memorial is the product of an intelligent designer, as surely

design points to a designer?

How is it then that those who subscribe to the theory of evolution can believe the memorial itself was deliberately designed, when the very men it honours were not?

They will tell you man's existence – and the existence of the Presidents immortalized in rock on Mount Rushmore – is nothing more than the result of a series of unexplained, chaotic, biological accidents, interacting with whatever environments happened, by chance, to be there!

No one doubts the memorial is the work of an intelligent designer, yet much greater design and laws in the universe are overlooked, or disregarded, by people who believe that evolution produced everything in existence, with no intelligence or design behind it.

This makes no sense. History tells us Gutzon Borglum was the designer of the Mount Rushmore National Memorial; the Bible tells us God is the Designer of the universe, and man was made (designed) in His image (Genesis 1. 26).

*Paula Weston*

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### THE BAIRNS

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

*Selected*

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****MEPHIBOSHETH**

David remembered a promise he had made to his friend Jonathan, the son of Saul. He asked a servant of Saul: *"Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?"* The servant told David that Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth. He was lame and could not walk.

How did Mephibosheth become lame? When Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle, the family of Saul fled in fear. Mephibosheth was five years old, and his nurse took him up in her arms to flee. As she ran, he fell from her arms and became lame on his feet.

As soon as David heard about the son of Jonathan, he sent for him. With great fear Mephibosheth fell on his face before David. Did the new king want to kill him because he was from the house of Saul? No, David spoke so kindly to him: *"Fear not: I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, ... and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually."*

Mephibosheth was brought to live at Jerusalem and ate at the table of the king as one of his sons. David had promised that he would be kind to the family of Jonathan because they both loved and feared God.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the name of the son of Jonathan?
2. How old was he when he became lame?
3. He ate at the table of whom? (2 words)

*Please send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail. (See page 242 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and to write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.*

**ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS**

1. A tent.
2. A beautiful temple.
3. Pattern.

*“He shall  
eat at my  
table, as  
one of the  
king’s sons.”*

*2 Samuel*

*9. 11.*

**BIBLE LESSONS****BARNABAS AND SAUL SENT TO THE GENTILES**

Following the wonderful deliverance of Peter, the Holy Ghost leads us back to the church at Antioch. You may remember that Barnabas had been sent there by the apostles at Jerusalem to see how the new believers were getting on. After arriving, Barnabas went to find Saul, who joined him. Along with many other teachers, they helped to establish the church in Antioch. Upon hearing of the poverty of the believers at Jerusalem, the church in Antioch sent Barnabas and Saul with a gift of money to help them. When they returned to Antioch, John Mark (a nephew of Barnabas) went with them.

The Holy Spirit greatly blessed the preaching of the gospel by His servants, so that many souls were added to the church. One day as they met for prayer and worship, the Holy Ghost said: *"Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."*

Prayerfully the church at Antioch commended them to God. Then Barnabas and Saul left Antioch to go to new places and unto the Gentiles, taking John Mark with them. Not far from Antioch was the seaport city of Seleucia, from where they sailed to the Island of Cyprus. Cyprus was the country from which Barnabas had come. Perhaps he had suggested to Saul that they should go there first. They came to the city of Salamis, where they found Jewish synagogues into which they entered to preach the Word of God.

As they made their way across the Island, they came to the city of Paphos. A Roman deputy named Sergius Paulus lived in the city. The Bible tells us that he was a very prudent man. Having heard of Barnabas and Saul, he called for them to come to him. His great desire was to hear from them the Word of God. With joy they must have told him of the great salvation of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit blessed the Word to the heart of the Roman deputy, but sadly there was an enemy of the truth standing beside him. He was a Jew who claimed to be a prophet. The



Bible tells us that he was a false prophet. His name was Bar-jesus, which by interpretation was Elymas. He had great influence over the deputy and tried to persuade him not to believe what Barnabas and Saul said of Jesus Christ. With strong arguments he reasoned against the light of the gospel.

Elymas came under the same judgment as the Jewish lawyers. The Lord Jesus spoke against them: *“Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.”*

At one time Saul would have agreed with Elymas, but now he was stirred with holy zeal against him. Saul, being *“filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him.”* With the Roman deputy looking on, Saul spoke to Elymas: *“O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?”*

Saul further told Elymas that the hand of the Lord would be upon him, striking him with blindness so that he would not see the light of the sun for a season. How sovereign are the ways of God! Saul was struck blind by seeing a great light, while Elymas was struck blind preventing him from seeing the light.

The Roman deputy, Sergius Paulus, must have looked on with wonder, as his former counsellor sought for someone to lead him by the hand. The Bible tells us that when the deputy saw what was done, he was astonished and **believed the doctrine of the Lord.**

From that time onwards Saul would no longer be known by his old name of Saul of Tarsus but rather as Paul the Apostle. *You can read about this in Acts chapter 13 verses 1 to 12.*

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did the Holy Ghost say to the church at Antioch? (13 words)
2. Who did Barnabas and Saul take with them?
3. Who opposed the preaching of Barnabas and Saul?

4. What did the Roman deputy do when he saw what happened to Elymas? (6 words)
5. What name did Saul become known by?

*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. Rhoda.
2. His angel.
3. The Lord.
4. "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man."
5. Immediately the Lord sent an angel to smite Herod.

*G. L. TenBroeke*

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### THE GUNPOWDER PLOT

The Gunpowder Plot, remembered on November 5th in England, was an audacious attempt by those who wanted to reimpose the Roman Catholic religion upon Great Britain, and its thwarting was undoubtedly a divine intervention of God, and was a significant milestone in the cause of Protestantism and freedom of worship. The article below, which has been slightly amended, shows how sophisticated the plotters were, and what far-reaching consequences for the nation there would have been had they succeeded. Sadly, the behaviour of men such as Guy Fawkes is being ruthlessly replicated today by others who have an agenda of their own to impose a false religion upon the nations.

*QUESTION: If the barrels of gunpowder under the Houses of Parliament had been set off by Guy Fawkes, how much damage would have been done?*

The Conspirators who schemed to blow up James I and Parliament had, by November 4, 1605, managed to stow thirty-six barrels of gunpowder in a cellar underneath the Parliament Building, in the old Westminster Castle. Explosive expert, Dr.

Sidney Alford, calculated that the three dozen barrels they stockpiled would have contained one metric tonne (2,205lb) of gunpowder.

A replica of the original 17th-century Houses of Parliament was constructed at Spadeadam test and research site in Cumbria. Parliamentary curator, Simon Carter, provided drawings of the original buildings, which were built to size. The second floor was a massive hall spanning 36ft by 75ft and 52ft high, which gives an idea of the size of the set. The explosives were loaded into identical barrels and fused in the same way Guy Fawkes would have done and placed in a concrete vault under the structure.

The dramatic experiment proved without doubt that the explosion would have obliterated the Houses of Parliament. Its power was such that 7ft deep solid concrete walls were reduced to rubble. Measuring devices placed in the chamber to calculate the force of the blast were destroyed. The skull of the mannequin representing King James – which had been placed on a throne inside the chamber surrounded by dummy courtiers, peers and bishops – was found some distance away from the site. It was concluded that the plotters had at least twice the amount of gunpowder required to do the job.

*Selected*

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QUESTION: Wherein does disobedience to God's law consist?

ANSWER: Disobedience to God's law consists in sinful thoughts, words and deeds.

(Deuteronomy 27. 26; Proverbs 24. 9; Jeremiah 17. 9; Matthew 12. 36 and 15. 18-20; Romans 6. 23; Galatians 3. 10; 1 John 3. 4.)

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#### EDITOR'S POSTBAG

*First answers to the monthly questions have been received from ISOBEL CLARK; STEPHEN LUCAS and VICTORIA SHAW.*

### SEPARATION

In the April *Friendly Companion*, an older reader related how he was brought out of an ungodly partnership. Another reader kindly asked whether we should be against all such partnerships as being unscriptural, his point being that many of God's people have indeed had to work closely with those who fear not God. We would not wish to be judgmental, nor to lay down a line for others in what is a very personal exercise, but the older reader was asked to give his reasons for taking this position and here is his answer:

"Thank you for forwarding a copy of the letter. I have pondered the contents and would offer the following comments. We should endeavour to follow the Word of God and not rely on other people's walk or directions. I believe the Lord's response to Peter is apposite: *"Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me"* (John 21. 21, 22).

The issue really revolves around separation from the world. *"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"* (Amos 3. 3). So if there is not agreement how can we operate? It is only when we are in a majority position that we can, by God's grace, control the situation. If we are in a minority position, we have to submit to situations which may not be tenable. This is really confirmed by the words Paul addresses the Corinthians with, as follows: *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"* (2 Corinthians 6. 14). *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you"* (2 Corinthians 6. 17).

The Old Testament gives us a number of instances when separation was clearly pointed out. Some of these are as follows: *"Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Maresbah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Abaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships*

*were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarsbish” (2 Chronicles 20. 37).*

*“For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth” (Exodus 33. 16).*

*“But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people” (Leviticus 20. 24).*

*“Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites” (Ezra 9. 1).*

*“And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers” (Nehemiah 9. 2).*

I have been a slow learner and although the occasion referred to in my email to you showed me the error of my ways, I have since been involved in enterprises which have proved unsuccessful when I have been joined with unbelievers.

Investing money in companies, banks or government bonds in my view falls into a different category. Probably in all these situations the running of such would be principally by unbelievers. In such situations individuals do not normally have control over the running of the company, bank or government etc., and do not therefore have a direct responsibility.

I trust these comments are helpful. I cannot say I have drawn definite conclusions but only as I feel I have been directed in my own business life and I feel that Scripture is on my side.”

*An Older Reader*

**ONE OF THE CARES OF PROVIDENCE****John Brown of Haddington**

The ferry boat was crowded. A great annual fair was about to be held at a place on the opposite side of the water, which was several miles broad. The company on board, numbering about two hundred, were mostly men whose business was to buy and sell, and get gain, or to make gain in less reputable ways. Almost all were ignorant, depraved, vicious, and profane. Oaths and curses polluted the ear, and contaminated the dark souls of utterers and listeners alike. But among this herd of wicked men was one who, though with them, was not of them. His business was not at the fair. Of one thing we may be sure – he utterly loathed the company in which he found himself, for his righteous soul, like that of Lot in Sodom, *“was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.”* The name of this godly and God-fearing man was John Brown, a faithful preacher of the Gospel at Haddington.

He was alone, but not alone, for, withdrawing himself as much as he could from the crowd on deck, he communed with God in prayer, secretly and silently, but with a full and sorrowful heart, praying for the wicked men around him. He had not long been on board, however, before he was recognised; and while some, probably, declared with oaths that if they had known a parson was among them before the boat had started, either he or they should have remained behind; others made up their minds to have some sport out of “the black coat,” since he was there. The sport was rough, for they were rough men, even had their intentions been playful and good-humoured, which they were not. Stirred up by hatred of religion and teachers of religion, they proceeded in every possible way to annoy and insult their fellow-passenger, whose only offence was his daring to show himself among them. They hustled him from side to side of the boat, mocked at his garb and his office, and poured their filthy jests and blasphemies into his ears. The good man bore all with patience and meekness. Resistance, indeed, would have been

not only vain, but would have brought upon him more serious bodily injury; and remonstrance would at that time have been useless also; so 'he held his peace, even from good, though his sorrow was stirred.'

But now a sudden change came over the whole scene. On leaving Newhaven the sun was bright, the water calm, and the wind gentle. The boat was half-way across the firth, four miles from either shore, the wind rose to a storm, and the waves began to roll with a violence which threatened destruction to the boat. In addition to its having too many passengers it was very old, clumsy, and awkward to manage, and also, it was insufficiently manned. The storm increased to a terrible tempest. Rain fell in torrents, and the wind blew with a fury that struck terror into the hearts of all on board. It is needless to say that the sport was over for that time.

The captain of the ferry boat came forward presently. "I and my men have done all in our power," he said to the frightened crowd of passengers, who, pale and prostrated by sickness, were huddled together in every variety of attitude on the wet and slippery deck. "We can do no more," he explained, adding that there had never, to his knowledge, been so furious a storm before on the firth; and that there was no hope of reaching the shore on either side, and that a short quarter of an hour, even if the old battered boat should hold together for so long – was all they could reckon for life.

We may imagine, if we cannot describe, the scene which followed this announcement. Horror-stricken countenances on every side; muttered prayers for mercy; shrieks of terror and despair; mute misery; wringing of hands in hopeless agony; embraces; foolish and extravagant offers of reward for impossible rescue; the wind howling the while around; the water washing over the deck; the boat timbers strained and creaking with every angry blow of the waves; blackness above; a dark seathing caldron below, and a thick mist all around.

There were no loud curses now to be heard; but presently

arose a bitter cry which gave utterance to the thought.

"The minister – the minister – can he do nought for us?"

The minister of the Gospel, whom, in utter despite, for the Gospel's sake, they had abused and insulted both with deeds and words, was now all at once the greatest man on board.

"Pray for us! Oh, minister, will you not pray for us?"

And stretched out to him in supplication were hands which a short half-hour before were ready to buffet him, but now would have touched him, "as though," says the narrator, "mere contact with the person of a human being could shield another – and that other an unpardoned sinner – from the righteous vengeance of a holy God."

A man of like passions, and also of like infirmity, with his fellow-passengers, Mr. Brown was suffering from the effects of the terrible storm, when the loud, agonising shrieks of the despairing wretches reached his ear from every quarter of the deck, for the cry had been caught up and repeated as soon as heard.

"Oh, sir, pray! Pray for us! Pray for us! I am a great sinner! Oh, minister, pray for me! Pray, pray!"

And forgetting his own weakness; banishing, too, from his thoughts all recollection of the taunts and insults and persecutions he had just before suffered, or, rather, bearing in mind the injunctions of his Master, "*Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you,*" that godly man, standing in the midst of the terrified passengers, who had eagerly gathered around him, lifted up his voice to God in earnest and urgent supplication.

Amid the noise of the elements, the howling of the wind, and the beating of the waves, his voice was heard, praying that God would have mercy upon the miserable sinners on whom His hand was now evidently laid; that He who rules over all things, who holds the winds in His fist, and the waters of the sea in the hollow of His hand, would be graciously pleased to say to the storm: "*Peace, be still.*"



He prayed and prayed, and still the apparently doomed vessel rolled fearfully; yet it held together. He continued in prayer, and his prayer was accompanied by the deep groans and convulsive sobs of many a fearful sinner, who, it may be, for the first time for many a day, if ever, witnessed and listened to *"the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man."*

Effectual! Yes; for while he prayed a marvellous and utterly unlooked-for change commenced. The wind began to moderate its force, the waves, though still rough, abated in their fury. The pelting rain ceased, and gleams of sunshine broke through the murky atmosphere, bringing with them some rays of hope, which brightened and strengthened, until at length the voice of prayer became the voice of praise for so prompt an answer, and so wonderful a deliverance from imminent danger and threatened death. Never before had any on board that old ferry boat witnessed so literal a fulfilment of the Psalmist's words: *"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the LORD, and His wonders in the deep."*

*"For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven."*

Brighter and brighter grew the hopes of captain, crew, and passengers, as the yet labouring boat slowly made way towards the landing-place which they had despaired of ever reaching. The wind and the waves, which had seemed ready in their fierceness to overwhelm and engulf them, now, in their abated strength, speeded them onward to safety, and ere long the *"desired haven"* was reached. The Lord had brought them to it.

Delivered now from the fears, and with the full tide of

worldliness again rushing in upon them, the passengers hastily disembarked, and were making towards the fairground, when the clear voice, whose tones and accents had yet scarcely died away from their hearing, called upon them to remain where they were.

It was the voice to which they had so eagerly listened amid the wild revelry of howling winds, surging waves, and deluging rain. It was the voice of the man of God, who, in the hour of their sore peril, forgetting the insults they had offered him, had complied with their request to act the part of intercessor for them in the court of that Omnipotent and Omniscient Being whom storms and tempest obey. It was the voice of one whom all present felt assured they would never forget; and nearly all of those who had been in the boat clustered around him.

Then, raising himself above them on a timber-balk, the minister preached to them the Saviour whom they had despised, the God whom they had so lately defiled, and whose power, both to punish and to deliver, they had just experienced – preached to them the Gospel of Him who came to call, not the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. He faithfully unveiled to them their guilt and danger, and warned them to flee for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The preacher ceased, and the audience dispersed. Would the effect be lasting? He had cast the bread upon the waters; would it be seen after many days?

*“My Word,” said Jehovah, “shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I have sent it.”*

In after years John Brown was gladdened by many proofs that by honouring his Master on that day, his Master had honoured him in giving him many souls for his hire. By such testimonials as this, true Christians are confirmed in the reality of their own experience, that God is the hearer and answerer of prayer.

*Selected*

### ENQUIRY AND ANSWER

*What does the Word of God mean when it says of the Lord Jesus Christ: "He could there do no mighty work" (Mark 6. 5)? Surely the Lord Jesus, as God, can do anything: He could not be hindered by the unbelief of those that heard Him?*

It is very clear that "*with God nothing shall be impossible*," and all Scripture unites in testifying that Jesus is true, almighty God.

In the text quoted, it is clear that the Lord had power to perform miracles if He pleased. The simple meaning is that He *could* not because He *would* not. It was a manner of speech with the Jews that, when a person felt it not fit and proper that something should be done, they would say he *could* not do it. (Similarly in everyday speech today expressions are heard such as: "He cannot open his mouth without talking about his holiday" – in other words, he does not want to.)

Similar texts are: "*I cannot do anything till thou be come thither*" (Genesis 19. 22 – the Lord speaking to Lot); "*They could not speak peaceably unto him*" (Genesis 37. 4 – Joseph's brethren); and, "*So that the LORD could not longer bear*" (Jeremiah 44. 22 – the anger of God against the Jews.)

Because of this Hebrew method of speech, the Jews have no reason to use this text against the divinity of Christ.

*B. A. Ramsbottom*

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### MY FIRST PRAYER (4)

I read with interest the article entitled "My First Prayer" in June's *Friendly Companion*. It reminded me of the first prayer I really made from my heart, and it was encouraging to see your comment regarding readers' experiences. When the Lord first began to work in my heart at the age of fourteen, the articles I found most helpful were often the testimonies of other young people. Some of them may have been written a long time ago, but to know the Lord did work in people of my age and to read of the troubles they faced (which were often specific to the young, such as school) was very encouraging. I particularly remember the series of articles detailing the life of

Leen, a Dutch boy.

When I was fourteen, a boy at school began bullying me. He would try to hurt me during football and kept teasing me because I was a Christian. I didn't know what to do or how to respond. Another friend had also been bullied and in the end had thrown the bully on the floor in frustration. This had stopped the trouble and I had made up my mind to do the same, although I knew it wasn't right. I prayed for guidance, and went to the weeknight service hoping for an answer. Mr. Rowland Wheatley spoke about Peter's question of how many times to forgive his brother, and Jesus' response: *"I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven"* (Matthew 18. 22). I knew this was the answer to my prayer and didn't use violence the next day, as I had planned. Immediately, the trouble stopped and the boy and I became good friends.

This was the first time I really prayed with a desire to be given an answer.

*T. Warboys*

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

##### **THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (11)**

This month I am going to continue with the word we looked at last month which is found in Mark 14. 61-62: *"Again the high priest asked Him, and said unto Him, Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."*

Jesus here openly and emphatically declares His divinity and this is the principal reason why these ungodly religious professors condemned Him to death. Notice He declares Himself to be the "Son of man." In the Book of Daniel, Daniel had a vision and he declared: *"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion,*

*and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed*" (Daniel 7. 13-14). Mainly because of this Scripture the Jews rightly considered that the title "Son of man" in this context referred to the Messiah, which means "The Christ": the anointed one. So when Christ uses this title referring to Himself they rent their clothes and condemned Him to death for blasphemy.

Let us look at this answer of our Lord Jesus Christ. He declares His second coming, and sitting at the right hand of His Father. This solemn statement of Holy Scripture is made to each one of us, for we must all appear at the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul makes a solemn statement of truth: *"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to My gospel"* (Romans 2. 16). Jesus Himself said: *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father bath life in Himself; so bath He given to the Son to have life in Himself; and bath 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 bear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation"* (John 5. 25-29).

All will then see Him as the great "I AM," the King of kings and the Lord of lords. We will either see Him as the dreaded Judge of all the earth with great fear and trembling, or we shall see Him as our beloved Saviour who loved us with an everlasting love and redeemed us from all our sins. If this is the case, we will rejoice with joy unspeakable. In Matthew 25 the Lord Jesus gives us a graphic account of the Day of Judgment, when all nations shall be gathered before Him. Firstly, He will separate the sheep from the goats. The sheep represent His own blood-bought children, whom He has saved

from their sins through the shedding of His precious blood on the cross. They were called by divine grace here on earth and live by faith in the Son of God, and they die in faith in Him. *"Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"* (Matthew 25. 34). Then He will turn to those on His left hand: the goats. *"Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"* (Matthew 25. 41).

My dear young friends, the only evidence that you or I can ever have that we are going to heaven; that we are delivered from the condemnation of God's holy, righteous law, is to be born again of the Holy Ghost and brought to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Listen to the words of Jesus Christ the great 'I AM': *"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"* (John 3. 5).

J. R. Rutt

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### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about GOOD AND PROFITABLE THINGS. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 10 and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by e-mail (see page 242 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.*

1. What two things did Jeremiah say in his Lamentations are good for a man? (Lamentations 3. 26-27)
2. Jesus said: "What shall it profit a man if..." Complete the sentence. (Mark 8. 36)
3. Proverbs 10. 2 and 11. 4, both end with "but righteousness delivereth from death." Write down the two things which do not profit, which the verses start with.
4. In 1 Timothy 4. 8, what "profiteth little" and what is "profitable unto all things"?

5. The psalmist writes of two things, each of which he says “is good for me.” What were they, and why was the second thing good for him? (Psalm 73. 28 and 119. 71)
6. What did Paul speak of as vital, without which “it profiteth me nothing”? (1 Corinthians 13)
7. Paul speaks of the gospel being preached to many, but it did not profit some who heard. Why? (Hebrews 4)
8. In Hebrews 13 Paul says, “It is a good thing that ....” What is the “good thing”?
9. What does God do to His people “for [their] profit, that [they] might be partakers of His holiness”? (Hebrews 12)
10. What “is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”?

#### **ANSWERS TO OCTOBER QUESTIONS**

1. The wicked, through the pride of his countenance.
2. “Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near.”
3. “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”
4. “That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple.”
5. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness.”
6. In their affliction. (Hosea 5. 15)
7. “And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.” (Jeremiah 29. 13)
8. “He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11. 6)
9. “Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.” (Matthew 28. 5)
10. God did not regard them because, despite their outward pretention to seeking God and worshipping Him, their conduct (anger, contention, smiting one another, seeking their own pleasure first) was dishonouring to God. (Isaiah 58. 3-4)

*Contributed*

**THE SCRIPTURES**

Say, Christian, would'st thou thrive,  
In knowledge of thy Lord?  
Against no Scripture ever strive,  
But tremble at His Word.

Revere the sacred page;  
To injure any part,  
Betrays, with blind and feeble rage,  
A hard and haughty heart.

If aught there dark appear,  
Bewail thy want of sight;  
No imperfection can be there,  
For all God's words are right.

The Scriptures and the Lord  
Bear one tremendous name;  
The written and the Incarnate Word  
In all things are the same.

For Jesus is the Truth,  
As well as Life and Way;  
The two-edg'd sword that's in His mouth,  
Shall all proud reasoners slay.

Why dost thou call Him Lord,  
And what He says resist?  
The soul that stumbles at the Word,  
Offended is at Christ.

The thoughts of men are lies;  
The Word of God is true;  
To bow to *That* is to be wise:  
Then hear, and fear, and do.

*Joseph Hart*



# *The Friendly Companion*



“And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes,  
and the birds of the air have nests;  
but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.”  
(Matthew 8. 20)

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*December 2016*

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### OUR MONTHLY MESSAGE

Dear Children and Young People,

We come to the last month of another year; the last time for 2016 to write a short message to you. John, the Apostle, was the author in God's hand of five books in the Bible. I wonder if you could name the five? In one of these books, he says: "*Little children, it is the last time....*" No doubt John, in saying this, had in view that his readers were to be reminded that the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ was to be the next and final act on God's part in His purposes on the earth. How much nearer that day are we, nearly two thousand years later, than John's hearers were!

The prayer our late friend Mr. Clement Wood so often repeated comes to mind:

"Then, O my God, prepare  
My soul for that great day.  
O wash me in Thy precious blood,  
And take my sins away."

This is a prayer suitable, and indeed necessary, for the youngest as well as the oldest of our readers.

But the words, "*the last time*," remind us of other things also. We are continually coming to changes in our life. Soon we shall write for the last time "2016," as the year we are living in. We will not be able to turn the clock back as 2017 begins. Time always moves forward. Moses tells us: "*We spend our years as a tale that is told.*" You know how a book has a first chapter, then several other chapters, until the last one. At the very close, you read the words: "The end." Our life is one of succeeding chapters. Some books are longer than others, so some lives are longer than other people's but even if we lived as long as Methuselah (which was how many years?) the year will come when, unless Christ comes first, it will be said: "He died," or, "She died." There were two men in the Old Testament who were told the exact year they would die. Could you tell who they were?

The great point with us should be that while God gives us time, we should seek His grace to use it well, so that when time shall be no more, we will be found with Him in glory. Moses tells us again: *"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."*

Remember there will be a last sermon you hear, a last opportunity for prayer, and a last time to read or hear the Word of God. May that last time not find us like the foolish virgins with no oil with their lamps.

*"Seek ye the LORD while He may be found; call ye upon Him while He is near."*

May the Lord give you each, dear friends, as many chapters as He sees fit in which to prepare you to be with Him when time shall be no more.

With every best wish from your sincere friend and Editor.

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### OUR FRONT COVER PICTURE

Our front cover shows a well-known creature, but not always loved by farmers: the fox. Here we see a vixen (a mother fox) looking down on her young foxes emerging from the den.

The Lord Jesus Christ mentioned foxes more than once in His time on earth. On one occasion He called King Herod, *"that fox,"* no doubt referring to his cunning, deceitful and cruel nature. But on another occasion He made a gentler reference to foxes when He said: *"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head"* (Matthew 8. 20). This He said to a man who said that he would follow Jesus wherever He went. By so saying He reminded His hearers that followers of Him should not expect an easy or smooth path.

One of the most striking features of the life of Jesus is that although, as God, He made the heavens and the earth, and thus all belongs to Him as its rightful King, yet as the Man,

Christ Jesus, He humbled Himself to become dependent on others by apparently borrowing from them those things He had ordained to use for His honour and glory.

Joseph, the husband of Mary His mother, was not His real father, but was raised up by God to be the guardian of the child Jesus as He grew up to become a man. In that sense Christ borrowed him for that honoured service.

He lay in a borrowed manger in which to lie as a new-born Babe.

He preached in a borrowed boat of Peter's as a pulpit, and then later filled it with so many fishes that the boat began to sink! God is never in the debt of those from whom He borrows for His own use.

He rode on a borrowed ass, and a foal to ride into Jerusalem, and further borrowed an upper room in which to celebrate the Passover feast for the last time with His disciples. While there, He borrowed a towel to wipe the disciples' feet.

He borrowed Simon the Cyrenian who was compelled by the soldiers to help Him bear His cross after Him to Calvary. And just as at His birth, no man was ready to give Him a place to lay His head, so at His death, there was no pillow for His head as He suffered on the cross.

While He suffered on the cross, He borrowed John the Apostle, and appointed him to be the guardian of His mother, Joseph no doubt having died, and as none of His brothers or sisters believed on Him at that time.

He lay in a borrowed tomb, that of Joseph of Arimathæa, in which His holy body lay until He rose again from the dead.

He does not, however, now sit on a borrowed throne in heaven. It is His by the sovereign gift of His Heavenly Father.

It would be a wonderful thing for you and me, if for His eternal praise, He should say of us as He did of the ass and the foal he rode upon: "*The Lord hath need of them.*" We would then be as willing as the owner was to release them, and the beasts for the Saviour to ride upon, without them rebelling!

**FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES****THE SIN OF DAVID**

Once David sent his army out to fight, but he stayed home at Jerusalem. One evening he got off his bed and walked upon the top of his palace. From the roof he saw a very beautiful woman at a home nearby. Her name was Bathsheba. David was told that she was the wife of Uriah, one of the soldiers who was away fighting.

David sent messengers to bring Bathsheba to him for a while. It was wrong of David to do this, since she was married to Uriah. Later on David wrote a letter to his captain, asking him to put Uriah in a place of great danger in the battle. Soon he was killed by the enemy. Then David took Bathsheba to be his own wife, and a baby son was born to them.

God saw what David had done. He sent Nathan the prophet to tell him: *"Thou hast killed Uriah ... with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife. ... Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house."* Oh how sorry David was! He said: *"I have sinned against the LORD."* Although the sin of David was forgiven, he was still punished. The son that was born to him died, and evil began to come from his own family.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the name of the beautiful woman David saw?
2. Who saw what David had done?
3. What happened to the son that was born to him?

*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.*

*Contributed*

**ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS**

1. Mephibosheth.
2. Five
3. The king (or David).

“... *my sins*  
*are not*  
*hid from*  
*Thee.*”

*Psalm*  
*69. 5.*

**BIBLE LESSONS****PAUL AND BARNABAS AT ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA**

When Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark left the Island of Cyprus, they sailed toward the city of Perga which was in Asia Minor. They must have wondered what would befall them and how they would be received. Paul and Barnabas believed the Lord would be with them and deliver them from all the dangers they would meet.

After arriving at Perga, Paul and Barnabas suffered a disappointment when John Mark decided to return to Jerusalem. We wonder if he became so afraid of hardships they might endure, that he turned back.

Paul and Barnabas departed from Perga and journeyed to Antioch. This was not the Antioch in Syria from which they had been sent out. This Antioch was in the region of Pisidia where many Jews had migrated and built a synagogue.

On the Sabbath day Paul and Barnabas went into the synagogue and sat down. They listened quietly while part of the law and the prophets were read. The ruler of the synagogue then asked the two strangers if they had a word of exhortation for the people.

Without delay Paul stood up and began to speak. He reminded the Jews how God had chosen their fathers and brought them out of Egypt, bearing with their manners through forty years in the wilderness. He reminded them how God gave them the land of Canaan. Likewise, He had raised up mighty judges to deliver them from their oppressors.

Afterward when they desired a king, God gave them Saul for forty years. Then He removed Saul and gave them David the son of Jesse.

The Jews listened intently as Paul rehearsed their well-known history. Thus far the Jews in the synagogue were well pleased with the preaching of this stranger! He had said nothing to upset or disturb them. How often we may feel the same while listening to a minister, until he says something that convicts us.

Paul then continued his address, saying: *"Of this man's*



*(David's) seed bath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: ... Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent."*

Paul told those in the synagogue that the Jews in Jerusalem, along with their rulers, were ignorant of the words of the prophets whom they read every Sabbath day. Though they found no sin in Him, yet they prevailed upon Pilate to crucify Him. Paul added that His death was not the end, for God raised Him from the dead and He was seen of many witnesses.

As Paul drew to the end of his address, he said: *"Be it known unto you therefore ... that through this Man (Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."* Paul also warned them of what the prophets had written: *"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."* This word cut to the heart the unbelieving Jews.

Suddenly there was a great commotion as some of the Jews rose up in disgust and walked out of the synagogue. After everyone had gone out, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them further of the Lord Jesus and urged them: *"... to continue in the grace of God."*

The Gentiles then came and asked Paul and Barnabas to preach the same words on the next Sabbath. They agreed to this request by the Gentiles. During the week, word spread through the city of all that Paul had said. Further, the people reported one to another that the strangers who had come from Jerusalem were going to speak again of the great events that had happened in Jerusalem.

*You can read about this in Acts chapter 13 verses 13 to 43.*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. Who forsook Barnabas and Paul?
2. What did Paul say God had raised from the seed of David?
3. What did Paul say was preached through the name of Jesus?
4. What did Paul and Barnabas urge the Jews to continue in?

5. What did the Gentiles ask them to preach the next Sabbath?

*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. "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."
  2. John Mark (the nephew of Barnabas).
  3. Elymas (or Bar-jesus).
  4. Believed the doctrine of the Lord.
  5. Paul the Apostle.
- G. L. TenBroeke*

---

### MY FIRST PRAYER (5)

Dear Editor,

On reading the June 2016 *Friendly Companion*, I noticed that you asked readers to write to you about their first prayer and the answer received. I realise that I am an "old" reader, but thought I would tell you about when I believe I really first prayed to the Lord as a child, and you can decide if you would like to use the recollection or not. I only want it to be to God's glory.

As children we were taught to "say our prayers" before bedtime, starting with reciting the verse: "Prepare me, gracious God, to stand before Thy face..." followed by asking the Lord to bless each member of the family and to make us good girls. This was good teaching, in that it taught us that we could pray to the Lord even as children, and that verse has remained very special to me – especially as I now understand it! However, often I simply repeated the words as a matter of rote, with no thought as to the real meaning.

When I was nine and a half years old, I was in hospital facing the fourth major operation of my life. I had been too young previously to really understand the risks of the operations I had been through, but now I understood that I could die in surgery. On the evening before the operation my Mum had to leave me and I would not see her again until after the

operation, so I had to face this time alone. I remember sitting reading a book when I felt a real urge to pray, and I believe this was my first real prayer – that the Lord would bring me safely through the operation. I did not pray for my soul, as I still did not really understand how awful my dying would be, but the Lord Jesus was very precious to me at that time (I remember asking for a child's book on the life of Jesus and for an LP of hymns).

The next day I had a seven-hour operation and then had to return to theatre twice as I bled internally. I do not know what happened, but my Mum was told by the surgeon that it was a miracle that I had come safely through the operation, as something had happened that I should not have survived. So the Lord very abundantly answered my prayer! After this operation I was much healthier and able to lead a normal life, with some limitations.

Sadly, through my teens I did not remember the Lord's goodness and went on my own way, living as I wanted to and going to places I should not have gone. However, the Lord continued to spare my life and in my early twenties really began (I hope) a work of grace in my heart, and taught me how to pray. I have never been able to forget that first prayer though and reading your request brought it straight back to mind. The Lord has kept me through many dangers both before and after I knew Him, and above all He has shown me the way of salvation and my need of it. "Praise the Lord, O my soul."

*H.W.*

---

A father and son were travelling along a road in the U.S.A. when they came across a water melon field. The father said to his boy: "Keep a look out while I go and get a water melon." He sneaked into the field and lifted a beautiful melon from the branch, and then called to the boy: "Is anyone coming? Look both ways." The boy wisely replied: "But Daddy, shouldn't we look up too?"

### 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*

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### HOW MANY WISE MEN WERE THERE?

I suppose most of you will say, “Three.” Did you know that the great Augustine said there were *twelve*, in this agreeing with others of the ancient Fathers – though another tradition numbered them as *fourteen*?

It has become customary to speak of “the three wise men” (no doubt because they brought three gifts) – but it was the Roman Catholic church that decided there were three. Even their names have been given: Melchior, Caspar and Balthasar (though another tradition calls them Annonson, Allytar and Kyssad). Melchior is described as an old man with white hair and long beard; Caspar, a ruddy and beardless youth; and Balthasar, swarthy and in the prime of life.

The Roman Catholic church has even claimed to have their graves (in Cologne) and, even less than a hundred years ago, their skulls could be seen in Cologne Cathedral!

But all this is quite tradition. Nothing at all of it is certain. Neither does it matter. What is certain is that they did live (however many) and they did come.

May we avoid the foolish questions and ask the important question: do I have the same wisdom and faith as the wise men?

1. THEIR WISDOM. *“There came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He ...?”*
2. THEIR FAITH. *“And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child ... and fell down, and worshipped Him.”*

There can be no greater act of faith than this, to see a helpless Child, born in poverty, and to worship Him as God.

May we be blessed with the wisdom and the faith the wise men possessed, for it was given them from heaven.

O what a mystery it is that the dear Babe of Bethlehem is true, almighty God! And what matchless love and condescension that He should be born that He might die; that He should come to Bethlehem that He might go to Calvary.

“This God-like mystery we will gladly sing,  
And own the virgin’s Babe our God and King;  
Jehovah Jesus, we will Thee adore,  
And crown Thee Lord of all for evermore.”

*B.A. Ramsbottom*

**“YES BUT ... YOU WOULD NOT HAVE IT SO”**

The piece, “*Always a ‘but’*,” in the October *Friendly Companion* brought to mind a lesson I learnt over thirty years ago when I was a young deacon at Zion Chapel, Melbourne.

Some of us used to stay at the chapel between the services, having our dinner in the vestry. One Lord’s Day a man and his daughter came to the door asking if they could take photos inside the chapel for the daughter’s university studies.

I said that as it was the Lord’s Day, I did not want to give them a tour of the chapel, taking photos. I said that the afternoon service would be starting soon and they were welcome to attend and so see the inside of the chapel. Then I added – “but I would be sad if the only reason you were attending was to see the inside of the building.”

The man then said: “We might come in for that reason, and God bless us while we attend.” Then I started to say, “Yes, but ....” I don’t really know what I was going to say as an objection, and I didn’t get the opportunity to get past “Yes but” because the man finished the sentence with, “You would not have it so!” then turned and walked away and I have never seen him again. The words however have rung in my ears ever since. “Yes but you would not have it so.” You would not have the Lord work in this way! How I have regretted being the cause of their turning away.

We might say we believe the Lord works in many ways to bring His people to hear the Word of God and bring them to saving faith in Jesus. But do we really believe it or do we put stumbling blocks and hindrances in the way of those that would hear the word? Zacchæus only came “to see Jesus who He was.” But the Lord spoke of a divine appointment in the matter.

Dear friends, encourage all that show an interest in attending our services to do so, especially for the first time, regardless of their motives or clothing.

*R. Wheatley*

### COLD FEET

*Try standing barefoot on a pile of snow and see how long you last. Ducks do it all the time and aren't bothered. How is this possible?*

The cold morning mist rises off the winter pond, as quacking ducks paddle playfully around the chilly water. On the bank nearby a mallard watches contentedly, its bare feet planted firmly on a thick layer of snow. If ducks are warm-blooded like we are, why don't they freeze to death?

Their feathers provide excellent insulation for the rest of their bodies. But even if we bundled up in the warmest down coats in the world, we wouldn't last more than a few minutes in bare legs and feet.

The answer revolves around heat loss. In humans, the heart heats our blood and then pipes it straight down our legs to our feet, where a good deal of that heat passes through our skin into the snow. Cold blood then returns by another pipe up to the heart, where it is reheated. But ducks and other winter birds take advantage of physics designed to minimize heat loss.

Chemical engineers have long understood that you can transfer heat between two pipes that are touching each other. Experiments show that if fluids in two different pipes move side-by-side in the same direction, about one-half of the heat is gradually exchanged between the two pipes. However, if the two fluids move in opposite directions past each other, nearly one hundred percent of the heat is transferred from the warmer pipe to the other.

That's what happens in ducks, before the blood ever reaches their feet. As the pipe for warm blood (the artery) leaves the heart and runs down toward the feet, it passes next to the pipe for cold blood (vein) coming back from the feet. Their arteries don't just touch each other. They are closely woven together by a web of tiny branching blood vessels that brings the warm and cool blood into close contact.

As a result, the blood transfers most of its heat before it ever reaches the feet. When the blood does reach them, it is often

just above freezing temperature. Conversely, the returning blood is re-warmed before it even reaches the duck's heart.

Virtually no heat is lost. In fact, the duck loses twenty times more heat through its feathers than through its feet!

Scientists call this engineering principle by the technical term *counter-current exchange*. But the Creator not only knew all about it from the beginning. He also put it to use in His creatures – long before modern human engineers discovered the principle and applied it to industry.

Perhaps you're still wondering why duck feet don't get frostbite from the cold. Unlike our legs, the legs on ducks are mostly hard parts, which don't get hurt when frozen. Most of their muscles and soft parts are safely stored farther up the body.

Next time you see a mallard splashing contentedly in freezing water, stop and remember the wisdom of its Creator, and tell the person next to you about how wonderful He is!

*Don DeYoung (President Creation Research Society)*

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

### **THE "I AMs" OF HOLY SCRIPTURE (12)**

In this final instalment for 2016, I want to look at a word that we have done before, but I want to look at it in its context. *"And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely"* (Revelation 21. 6). In the context He is speaking of the eternal glorification of the church, the bride of Christ. *"I am Alpha and Omega,"* the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet: the meaning is then explained: *"the beginning and the end."*

We also have these beautiful words: *"It is done."* What a fulness here: the church is redeemed; sanctified; glorified. Christ has fulfilled that precious word: *"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). Here in this vision we see the place prepared: the new Jerusalem.

Then the metaphor changes from a city to: *"...prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."* Let us look at the sacred view that David had of the bride of Christ. There is a divine call to the bride of Christ: *"Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him"* (Psalm 45. 10-11). Then she is revealed as clothed in the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness and washed in the sin-atonement blood of her Beloved: *"The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto Thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace"* (Psalm 45. 13-15).

Of course this vision in the Old Testament is far clearer in the New Testament especially in the chapter we are looking at: *"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, 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. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful"* (Revelation 21. 3-5). How precious to have such a testimony in Scripture for the encouragement of the Lord's poor and afflicted people and all this is possible because of the finished work of Christ and the glorious divine Person that He is. *"And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely"* (Revelation 21. 6). The great "I AM," the

mighty God, the Saviour of sinners.

It is our desire that you will think on these things and that the Holy Spirit will open your eyes. All the worth of the holy life of Jesus Christ, the awful sufferings of Jesus, the sacred sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is in this that He is the eternal Son of the Father.

*J.R. Rutt*

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### THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

The Book of Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon, probably in the later years of his life, and is one of the more unusual books of the Old Testament with some things difficult to grasp unless we understand how it came to be written. God had promised King David that He would give him a son to reign after him who would build the temple for worship at Jerusalem, and we are told from Solomon's birth "*the Lord loved him.*" He was still young when he came to the throne, and in answer to his request, God promised to give him wisdom and understanding above anyone before or after him.

In the fourth year of his reign he began to build the temple as his father David had commanded him. This took seven years, and at the dedication of the temple God bore witness that He had heard Solomon's prayer. (2 Chronicles 7. 12). He was evidently a godly, gracious king. It seems that after this there was a gradual backsliding from the ways of God. Solomon became very rich, as God had promised, and subsequently spent thirteen years building his own house during which he took every opportunity of indulging every whim as he describes in Ecclesiastes 2. 3-9. He had superior natural wisdom, but it seemed the early tender fear of God had been lost in the midst of the outward prosperity which he enjoyed, to the extent that he disregarded some of the commands which God had given to Moses (see Deuteronomy 17. 15-17 and compare this to 1 Kings 4. 26 & 11. 1-4). Having married many wives from the heathen nations round about who turned his heart away from God, he was sadly left to prove

that neither riches, honour nor natural wisdom, can give satisfaction, contentment and peace.

Solomon was inspired by God to write the Book of Ecclesiastes against this background. Having been permitted to possess everything naturally that could be wished for, Solomon could only say: *"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."* In some places he seems to write viewing things only from the standpoint of natural wisdom, which may be very good, and often there is a deep spiritual meaning as well, and at others it is as though he looks back to former days when the fear of God ruled in his heart and he realises the value of what he has lost. Let us consider just two examples.

1. *"There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God"* (Ecclesiastes. 2. 24). As regards this life, it is right that we should work and enjoy the food and drink and other lawful things bought with the money we earn. But is this all? Is there nothing better? For those who have no fear of God, this is indeed all such can ever look forward to. But it is poor comfort for those who are brought to seek their treasure *"where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal,"* whose only hope is the Lord Jesus. For, *"if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."*
2. *"Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time? It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all"* (Ecclesiastes 7. 16-18). Solomon looked upon the godly, righteous men around him. He saw that with all their strictness of life, their self-denial, they were no better off outwardly than anyone else, and often suffered on this account. As much as if he would say: "Don't be so strict as

to deny yourself the lawful pleasures of this life; if you do, you will only make yourself more trouble and will gain nothing by it." Then Solomon looks at the wicked, and how plain it is that many outward sins such as theft, murder, drunkenness, lying and adultery carry with them in measure their own reward, so that those who are guilty of them cannot live in the natural enjoyment of the blessings of God's providence. As if to say, "Keep away from such sins and don't be so foolish as to indulge them, otherwise you will not be able to live peaceably and comfortably with others, nor to enjoy the fruits of your labour in peace." All this is good advice for those who only seek to "*eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all [their] labour.*"

Then Solomon says: "*It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand.*" That is, consider these things carefully, and the advice which is given. Then comes the solemn comparison: "*For he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.*" Here is the clue to the unravelling of the whole matter. It is as though Solomon would say: "According to the utmost of my wisdom, if you have no fear of God before your eyes, this is the best advice I can give you. But if you fear God, whatever you lack, you will have something better than anything this world can give."

What an inestimable blessing is the fear of God in the heart, a tender reverence and awe of God which makes a poor, unworthy sinner to tremble at His sovereignty and adore Him for His mercy. Those things which were such mysteries to the natural wisdom of Solomon became as nothing. Godly fear looks at the prosperity of the wicked and despises it, knowing that "*the wicked ... shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.*" It looks at the troubles of the righteous, and sees that they are all that they shall ever know, that they are sanctified to their own real good to prepare them for their portion in the world to come, where they shall see, love and worship Him who is their chief

desire. Even death itself is no longer an enemy or the end of their pleasures, but is become the entrance to their eternal happiness. No wonder Solomon, showing things in their right perspective, says: *“Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long”* (Proverbs 23. 17). How much better to be esteemed by the world as “righteous overmuch,” to flee from all sin and wickedness, to live *“as strangers and pilgrims on the earth”* and yet to know our sins are all forgiven.

Another thing we need to bear in mind when reading the Book of Ecclesiastes is that Solomon sometimes uses figures of speech. Again we will just give two examples, though no doubt readers can find many others.

1. *“Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment”* (Ecclesiastes 11. 9). Here Solomon uses what is known as irony, where a person says the very opposite of what he means, although his real meaning is very clear from the context. Perhaps a mother may see a child playing with matches even after warning of their danger and shouts out: “Go on, strike a match and burn yourself then!” She doesn’t literally mean what she says, but speaks as she does to reinforce all her previous warnings which seem to have been disregarded. So in this verse Solomon advises a young man to do just what he pleases, to enjoy himself and to go on regardless of the consequences. But then he pauses and warns him that God will bring him into judgment for all that he does. In other words, that he should not *“walk in the ways of [his] heart, and in the sight of [his] eyes.”*
2. Verses 2 to 7 of chapter 12 refer to the infirmities of old age in unusual picture language. The writer learnt this chapter by heart when a child, but no-one explained the meaning to him, and it was many years before he realised what some verses meant. We will just mention a few of the expressions

and perhaps the reader can guess the rest having been given the clue. *"The grinders cease because they are few,"* refers to when teeth decay and food cannot be chewed as before. *"Those that look out of the windows be darkened,"* refers to eyesight becoming poor, often due to cataracts or other eye diseases. *"All the daughters of music shall be brought low,"* refers to the voice becoming weaker such that a person can no longer sing. *"The grasshopper shall be a burden,"* refers to little things which earlier in life were of no consequence now becoming a trouble to us because we cannot do things we formerly did.

Perhaps if we were to summarise the Book of Ecclesiastes, we can say that it gives many wise and helpful precepts, and yet it shows that the wisest of men can never find God (Ecclesiastes 8. 17). Everything in this world has an end, and in the light of eternity is utter vanity. In the end Solomon says there is one thing that matters: *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil"* (Ecclesiastes 12. 13-14).

*Contributed*

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### BIBLE QUESTIONS

*This month the questions are about THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES from which all references are taken. Younger children need only do five questions. Please give references for questions 6 to 12, which are all in sequential order, and send your answers to the Editor either by post or by email (see page 266 for the address). Remember to give your name and address and write the word ANSWERS on the envelope.*

Complete the following well-known sayings from Ecclesiastes:

1. "To everything there is a season..." (3. 1)
2. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do..." (9. 10)
3. "Consider the work of God: ..." (7. 13)
4. "Two are better than one: ..." (4. 9)

5. "Cast thy bread upon the waters: ..." (11. 1)
6. "For in much wisdom is much grief..."
7. "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow..."
8. "It is better to go to the house of mourning..."
9. "Yet surely I know that it shall be well with..."
10. "A bird of the air shall carry the voice..."
11. "He that observeth the wind ..."
12. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: ..."

### ANSWERS TO NOVEMBER QUESTIONS

1. "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD." "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth."
2. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"
3. Treasures of wickedness; riches in the day of wrath.
4. Bodily exercise, godliness.
5. "To draw near to God," "that I have been afflicted." David learnt more of God's Word (His "statutes") through affliction.
6. Charity (love). (1 Corinthians 13. 3)
7. The word was not mixed with faith in them that heard it. (Hebrews 4. 2)
8. "For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." (Hebrews 13. 9)
9. God chastens, or corrects, His own children. (Hebrews 12. 10)
10. All Scripture. (2 Timothy 3. 16)

*Contributed*

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The same God who prepared a great fish to save Jonah, can make a little fish as effectual to that end as a whale, if He please so to order it. I remember reading of a ship that had sprung a leak. Some godly passengers prayed; whilst others unsuccessfully worked the pump, until at last all of a sudden they saw the water within the boat to be at a standstill. They took heart and worked the pump with good success. They reached the harbour; the ship was put into dock, and upon search there was found a hole with a fish sticking in it, exactly the size of the hole. God shows Himself great with even a little fish.

*Flavel*

**THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST**

Twice welcome, O Thou heavenly Guest,  
To save a world with sin distressed;  
Com'st Thou in lowly guise for me?  
What homage shall I give to Thee?

Ah Lord, eternal, heavenly King,  
Hast Thou become so mean a thing?  
And hast Thou left Thy heavenly seat,  
To rest where colts and oxen eat?

Were this wide world much wider made,  
With gold and costly gems arrayed,  
E'en then by far too mean 'twould be  
To make a little crib for Thee.

No silken robes surround Thy head –  
A bunch of hay is all Thy bed;  
Where Thou, a King so rich and great,  
Art bright as in Thy heavenly state.

All this, my Lord, has come to Thee,  
That Thou might'st show Thy truth to me  
Thou who hast made the earth and sky,  
Hast deigned a helpless Babe to lie.

Jesus, my Saviour, come to me –  
Make here a little crib for Thee;  
A bed make in this heart of mine,  
That I may aye remember Thine.

Then from my soul glad songs shall ring –  
Of Thee each day I'll gaily sing:  
The glad Hosannahs will I raise  
From hearts that love and sing Thy praise.

*Martin Luther*



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### **OUR MAGAZINES**

Through the mercy of God we are brought to the end of another volume of the Friendly Companion, the 142nd. We acknowledge the invaluable and unfailing support of our many helpers, who behind the scenes ensure the smooth running and publication month by month, of the magazine. Our desire is that the truths set forth month by month may be used of God to instruct our readers (young and old) and that His kingdom may be extended through the humble means of this publication.

The prices for 2017 remain the same as for 2016.

May the Lord grant His indispensable grace, so that this small witness to the truths we love may be continued for this and succeeding generations, according to His will. "Brethren pray for us".

G.D. Buss