

PERCEPTION



In all their affliction he was afflicted,
and the angel of his presence saved
them. Isaiah 63:9

SPRING 2012

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Cover Picture: The Franz Josef Glacier, South Island, New Zealand taken by David Baker.

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PERCEPTION

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EDITORIAL

“For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory...” (2 Cor. 4.17)

Ever since Adam fell affliction has been the lot of mankind. Adam went out in sorrow from the garden to suffer for sin. But the afflictions of the godless and the afflictions of the Lord’s people differ. The afflictions of the world lead to sorrow but the afflictions of the godly, as sanctified by the Lord, are profitable and lead to eternal life. No affliction comes by chance and the afflictions of the godly are ordered by the Lord, as was Job’s, and bring God’s people into fellowship with Christ in His sufferings. We see this in the case of Job, especially when he could say, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, (Job 9.25) and “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear but now my eye seeth thee” (Job 42.5).

The Scriptures speak in many ways of affliction. It is described as the “water of affliction” (Isa. 30.20), “the bread of affliction” (Deut. 16.3), “the furnace of affliction” (Isa. 48.10). It is to be drunk, eaten, and the fire is to be passed through, and there is to be profit in it; much prayer for help to endure it and to be bettered by it.

Afflictions make us see,
What else would ’scape our sight,
How very vile and base are we,
And God how pure and bright.

Also the Lord Jesus in His sacred humanity suffered affliction in body and soul in His life here below and now in heaven He understands “Each tempted members pains, for our affliction’s His.” From heaven He looks down and is touched with the feeling of the infirmities of His people. Thus the prophet Isaiah could write, “In all their affliction he was afflicted” (Isa. 63.9).

A whole book of the Bible, The Lamentations of Jeremiah, is given over to affliction. Jeremiah prays, "O Lord, behold my affliction, for the enemy hath magnified himself against me." Here we see Satan involved in the afflictions of God's people and permitted of the Lord, "Hast thou considered my servant Job. All that he hath is in thy hand, but touch not his soul?" Yet we have seen the fruit of that affliction in bringing His servant closer to Himself. Jeremiah says, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath" (Lam.3.1). The Psalmist says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes" (Psa. 119.71). Jeremiah speaks of profiting from his affliction. He says, "Remembering my misery, the wormwood and the gall, my soul hath them still in remembrance and is humbled within me" (Lam. 3.19,20). Humility was the fruit of it, a broken and contrite heart. Jonah in the belly of the whale, after his great rebellion, profited. He said, "I cried by reason of my affliction unto the Lord and he heard me..." (Jonah 2.2). Disobedience was changed to submission by affliction. The Psalmist said, "Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction" (Psa. 88.9). Here was repentance as a fruit of affliction.

The Lord lays affliction on His people. The Psalmist says, "Thou broughtest us into the net: thou laidst affliction upon our loins" (Psa. 66.11), and Job says, "Although affliction cometh not forth out of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5.6,7). But in the midst of it all we read, "Nevertheless he regarded their affliction when he heard their cry" (Psa. 106.44). Afflictions lead to fervent prayer and answers from the Lord in help, strength, promises given, never to be forgotten, divine communion with one who was Himself "smitten of God and afflicted" (Isa. 53.4).

So God's people "endure a great fight of affliction" (Heb. 10.32). Always in the church there will be an afflicted people, as Zephaniah records, "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people and they shall trust in the name of the Lord" (Zeph. 3.12). But in the midst of their afflictions we read, "The Lord hath comforted his people and will have mercy on his afflicted" (Isa. 49.13). The Psalmist David prayed, "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us and the years wherein we have seen evil" (Psa 90.15). There is an end to affliction in joy and peace. Paul tells Timothy to "endure afflictions" (2 Tim. 4.5) and James writing to the twelve tribes scattered abroad says, "Take my brethren the prophets, who have spoken in the

name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and patience” (Jam. 5.10). As the Psalmist records, “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Psa. 30.5). Afflictions are the lot of God’s people and when sanctified they are profitable.

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CURRENT ISSUES

Climate Change Scepticism

By J. E. Kerley

The theory of climate change has had a very mixed reception amongst people. Some seem to reject it outright without due consideration while others (including many leading scientists) greatly over-exaggerate it and prophesy doom. Some still talk of global warming, but this is an insufficient term to describe the current climate changes as global warming will not be the whole story, even if it is fairly universal. What I wish to do is present some of the irrevocable indicators of climate change so that readers may gain an appreciation of the theory of climate change.

Many see the abundance of snow during winter 2009-10 as a clear disproof of climate change and, indeed, America had the coldest winter for ninety years. Ironically this is most likely a sign of climate warming. Increased temperatures create more evaporation and recharge the atmosphere with more moisture. This then increases precipitation, especially rain and snow. While overall trends have shown a rise in annual average temperature and atmospheric carbon dioxide levels, cold spells are completely consistent with climate change. Climate change does not necessitate warming in all places all year round. Some areas will warm significantly, but others will cool, depending on latitudinal and longitudinal position amongst other factors. Climate change encompasses an increase in the volatility of weather systems, including cold low pressure cyclones. As temperature gradients change and steepen between the equator and the poles, energy transfer will become more erratic.

Others use Genesis 8. 22, (“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease”) as an argument against climate change. But there is nothing in this verse which the theory of climate change contravenes.

First, I believe that this verse means the world as a whole because there are already many areas and even whole countries where harvests fail. Therefore small scale disruptions are consistent. Secondly this text is in measure. Climate change will affect frequency, distribution and intensity of cold and heat. We will still have summertime; it will just be different to how we have known it. The Earth will still be tilting towards the sun in June and July (Northern Hemisphere) yet summer may be attended by cold spells, rainstorms and flooding, as we have begun to see in the last decade. As outlined before, greater fluctuations are expected. Cooler winters and yet warmer summers, cooler nights and yet warmer days are perfectly consistent with the theory of climate change. Thirdly, if these things are beginning to fail, is it not a clear sign that we live in the last times?

Despite local variances and areas that have seen some cooler-than-usual months, the general trend for global temperature is upwards, due to the warming of the Earth coming out of the last cold period, *The Little Ice Age* (1550-1850). But it is the *rate* of temperature increase that is most serious. The ending of the Little Ice Age coincides exactly with the Industrial Revolution and especially the Second Industrial Revolution circa 1850, when fossil fuel use exploded. This corresponds with the melting of glaciers and ice shelves, predominantly observed since 1850.

Leaving aside the paleoclimatological predictions from “millions of years” of rock records, the Government’s raising of green taxes and the future scenario predictions and cherry-picked data used by the IPCC, let us observe the past decade with respect to one of the greatest and most unequivocal indicators of climate change: ice melt. Ice melt occurs due to one or more of the following things:

- Increase in temperature
- Increase in pressure
- A lowering of the freezing point of ice by application of chemicals such as salt.

As the pressure of the atmosphere is relatively constant and the application of de-icing chemicals has not occurred across the entire world, there is one option left. Temperatures must have risen across the world for the wide extent of ice melt observed to have occurred.

There are two important types of ice melt. The first is ice shelf (floating ice) melt. Ice shelves are found in Antarctica, Greenland and Canada only. While ice shelf melt has no effect on sea level, as floating

ice displaces its own mass of water, it has other catastrophic consequences such as habitat loss and albedo reduction. (Sea water reflects less solar energy than an ice surface, thus absorbing more heat into the troposphere). Furthermore, the influx of cold freshwater (salt is locked out of seawater as it freezes) has the potential to alter the thermohaline circulation of the oceans, affecting nutrient and weather cycles. Summarized below are a few examples from across the range of ice shelf occurrence:

Antarctica

The Larsen Ice Shelf lost 2,500 km² of its area between 1995 and 2001.

The Prince Gustav Ice Shelf has gone from an area of 1600 km² in 1950 to 11 km² in 2008.

The Wilkins Ice Shelf had an area of 16,000 km² in 1998 when 1,000 km² was lost. In 2007 and 2008 significant rifting developed and led to the loss of another 1,400 km².

Greenland and Canada

Overall, between 1995 and 2000, ice caps in the Canadian Arctic lost 25 km² of ice per year.

Between 1960 and 1999, the Devon Ice Cap lost 67 km³ of ice, mainly through thinning.

The second type of melting is glacial ice melt, and is responsible for sea level rise, as well as all the other problems that ice shelf melt causes. Because glaciers are based on land, excessive melt water contributes directly to sea level rise via rivers. The worldwide retreat of mountain glaciers has been used to provide qualitative evidence for the rise in global temperatures since the late 1800s.

Europe

Between 2000 and 2005, 115 of 115 glaciers in Austria retreated, 50 of 53 in Italy were retreating and all 7 glaciers observed in France were in retreat. Switzerland's glaciers have lost 9 km³ of ice since 1999, including 2.6 km³ in the summer of 2003 alone.

America

Only 27% of the 99 km² area of Glacier National Park covered by glaciers in 1850 remained covered by 1993. The larger glaciers are now approximately a third of their former size when first studied in 1850, and numerous smaller glaciers have disappeared completely.

Asia

In India the Gangotri Glacier lost around 30m per year since 2000.

In China between 1950 and 1970, 53% of the glaciers studied were retreating. After 1990, 95% of these glaciers were measured to be retreating.

Glaciers in the Mount Everest region of the Himalayas are all in a state of retreat. The Rongbuk Glacier, draining the north side of Mount Everest into Tibet, has been retreating 20 m per year since 1990.

Africa

The glacier cover on the summit of Kilimanjaro is now 80% less by volume than it was a century ago due to both retreat and thinning.

There were 18 glaciers atop Mount Kenya in 1900, and by 1986 only 11 remained. The total area covered by glaciers was 1.6 km² in 1900, however by the year 2000 only about 25% or 0.4 km² remained.

A minority of glaciers are advancing, but at a slower rate than over the last few decades. Rivers fed by glaciers are essential sources of freshwater to millions of people around the world for drinking, washing and irrigation. Glacier melt in summer is essential for the maintenance of base flow in streams and their associated biodiversity. Without glaciers many rivers would not reach the sea in summer while excessive melting can cause mudflows and flooding.

Factor in thermal expansion of the oceans due to rising temperatures and the predicted minimum sea level rise is 0.9 m over the 21st century. This would displace ten percent of the world's population without even beginning to consider the loss of agricultural and high biodiversity value land. Major river deltas, coastal wetlands and coral islands would be drowned. The real threat from sea level rise is posed by storm surges, which could increase in severity and frequency. Episodic flooding by storm waves and surges would penetrate even further inland. Beach and cliff erosion will be accentuated. Saltwater penetration into coastal aquifers and estuaries could contaminate urban water supplies and affect agricultural production. Average sea level rise has been >3 mm per year since 1993. This is not due to land subsidence as these measurements are taken using orbital satellite altimetry.

Many, even if they believe in climate change, strongly disagree with Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW), the theory that it is human activity that is predominantly responsible for global warming. How can the enormous emission of greenhouse gases not be playing a part? Our

rate of burning fossil fuels and our clearance of forests are causing greenhouse gases to accumulate in the atmosphere. The science behind greenhouse gases is proven, as they absorb and emit thermal infrared radiation. I do believe that the biosphere will be able to absorb much of the excess carbon we emit and that the Earth may be able to combat climate change through negative feedback systems. But to what extent no one knows, and we have already seen climate changes. God has said that man shall not destroy the Earth, but man may certainly change it, as far as is consistent with God's will. Climate change cannot be attributed entirely to anthropogenic origins as slight variations in solar radiation and Earth's proximity to the sun amongst other factors affect the climate, yet we have surely had some effect.

The weather and climate are complicated, and man cannot describe or predict them using his simple theories. How much less then, when it is an omniscient God that controls the weather and the climate. If climate change is an instrument in God's hand then what are we to refute it? If He deals with us as we deserve, it will certainly get a lot more uncomfortable. While England is mercifully kept from earthquakes and other natural hazards, who is to say that we will not suffer from climate disruption? We certainly deserve it as a nation.

A balance is required. It is not acceptable to completely dismiss climate change, yet we must remember that all things are subject to the will of God. Let us consider the responsibility of our actions and may this be a matter of concern to each of us, committing it unto the Lord.

Glossary:

Aquifer: The freshwater saturated zone below the water table from which most water for domestic and industrial use is abstracted.

Biodiversity: The number and variety of species in a region.

Biosphere: The zone of life on the Earth in air, soil and water.

IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Paleoclimatology: The reconstruction of past climates using records from ice sheets, tree rings and the rock and sediment record.

Thermohaline circulation: Ocean circulation system due to density gradients of temperature and salinity, an example being the Gulf Stream.

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Thoughts on Evolution

By J. C. Philpot

Writing in the Gospel Standard in February, 1864, five years after the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Philpot stated that there were three fixed points regarding creation which are vital:

1. That there is a God who, by the exercise of a divine power, created man on earth.
2. That in so doing he breathed into him a rational and immortal soul.
3. That by this act of creative power he made man capable of knowing him, worshipping him, and obeying him.

Philpot then spelled out the implications of these "fixed points", in a way which is so accurate that it almost seems as if he had seen a glimpse of the future we now live in.

If these three simple propositions are denied or questioned, there is at once an end to all further argument. Revelation and religion fall at once to the ground, and man has no pre-eminence over the beasts that perish. To this point modern science is fast tending; for the fashionable theory at present is that there was no special creation of man at all, but that by progressive advancement from a lower state of being, he was at last fully evolved out of an ape, and in fact is a kind of improved gorilla: much in the same way as a Ribstone pippin [a species of apple] is an advanced crab [a wild and bitter apple], or a greengage plum an improved bullace [a type of wild plum].

Our readers may disbelieve our assertion, or smile at our illustration, but they may depend upon it that this is the theory which is fast advancing in recognition amongst scientific circles, where it is first elaborated and ripened by the highest intellect of the country. Being thus countenanced and popularised, it will gradually spread itself downwards, until it will fully leaven the minds of thousands, and among them doubtless very many who now profess to believe the Scriptures. It is, in fact, with all its evident absurdity, an attempt to explain the inexplicable, and to account for the presence of man in this world, without his special creation at a definite moment by God himself, according to the testimony of the Scriptures.

Now in direct opposition to this ape-into-man theory, which destroys at a blow the immortality of the soul and indeed the possession of a soul altogether by man, the Bible, as a revelation from God, gives us the

history of man's creation, and that God not only formed his body of the dust of the ground, but "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" which he did not to any of the lower animals, and thus "man became a living soul" (Genesis 2. 7) Between this statement and infidelity we have no alternative. (p 64).

One wonders what Philpot would have thought if he were still alive today, and could see the fulfilment of his words, that the theory of evolution would "spread itself downwards, until it will fully leaven the minds of thousands, and among them doubtless very many who now profess to believe the Scriptures." Yet although the theory of evolution is almost universally accepted, it still cannot convincingly explain any of Philpot's three points:

1. How there is something rather than nothing.
2. How the soul is formed in man.
3. That there is no satisfaction outside true spiritual knowledge, obedience and worship of God.

Rather than attempt to explain the evolution of the soul, modern theorists in the field of evolution find it easier to deny the existence of the soul in man.

Later, in May 1864, Philpot again wrote in the *Gospel Standard* on the same subject, this time pointing out how evolutionary theory denies the dignity of human beings, as created by God in a way that makes us distinct from and higher than the animals:

The creation of man in the image of God speaks for itself as an inspired declaration. How different from the disgusting, derogatory ape-into-man theory! Look at man formed in the image of God, possessed of godlike purity and holiness, of an immortal soul, of noble reasoning, intelligent faculties, able to know, worship, adore, and serve his divine Creator. And now view him as just a little beyond a gorilla; a large ape, by some happy accident become somewhat advanced before his brother apes, first learning how to make a fire, then to put a few logs together, next to click, click a few rude signs, as the beginning of language, until, by gradual improvement, he at last becomes a Newton [Isaac Newton, the discoverer of gravity] or Milton [John Milton, the poet and author of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*]! But this is the theory of the present day, advancing everywhere by rapid strides, and likely to become soon the accepted explanation of man's existence on earth.

How disgusting a theory! And how, even as a theory, beset with objections to which the difficulties of revelation are as a molehill to a

mountain! Apes have been known since the time of Solomon (2 Chronicles 9. 21) and monkeys are represented in the Egyptian tombs of still an earlier date; but has any improved ape ever made his appearance? The monkeys in the Zoological Gardens [London Zoo], after years of observation of their numerous visits, have never shown any disposition to learn to talk, or improve themselves into gentleman and ladies (p. 157).

Today man still rails against the doctrine of creation. Truth is truly fallen in the streets and man thinking himself to be wise has become a fool. Our comfort is that God's Word still stands sure, and when the sceptic has passed away forever, the Lord's people will live in the full comfort of the knowledge and truth of God.

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Symptoms of Bodily Pride:

An extract from *The Life and Death of Mr Badman*

By J. Bunyan

WISE. There are two sorts of pride: pride of spirit, and pride of body. The first of these is thus made mention of in the scriptures. "Every one *that is* proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD" (Prov. 16. 5). "A high look, and a proud heart, *and* the ploughing of the wicked, *is* sin" (Prov. 21. 4). "The patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit" (Ecc. 7. 8). Bodily pride the scriptures mention. "In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of *their* tinkling ornaments *about their feet*, and *their* cauls, and *their* round tires like the moon, the chains and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the vails" (Isa. 3. 18-23). By these expressions it is evident that there is pride of body, as well as pride of spirit, and that both are sin, and so abominable to the Lord. But these texts Mr. Badman could never abide to read; they were to him as Micaiah was to Ahab, they never spake good of him, but evil.

ATTEN. I suppose that it was not Mr. Badman's case alone even to malign those texts that speak against their vices; for I believe that most ungodly men, where the scriptures are, have a secret antipathy against

those words of God that do most plainly and fully rebuke them for their sins.

WISE. That is out of doubt; and by that antipathy they show that sin and Satan are more welcome to them than are wholesome instructions of life and godliness.

ATTEN. Well, but not to go off from our discourse of Mr. Badman. You say he was proud; but will you show me now some symptoms of one that is proud?

WISE. Yes, that I will; and first I will show you some symptoms of pride of heart. Pride of heart is seen by outward things, as pride of body in general is a sign of pride of heart; for all proud gestures of the body flow from pride of heart; therefore Solomon saith, "*There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eye-lids are lifted up*" (Prov. 30. 13). And again, there is "that exalteth his gate", his going (Prov. 17. 19). Now, these lofty eyes, and this exalting of the gate, is a sign of a proud heart; for both these actions come from the heart. For out of the heart comes pride, in all the visible appearances of it (Mark 7). But more particularly -

1. Heart pride is discovered by a stretched-out neck, and by mincing as they go. For the wicked, the proud, have a proud neck, a proud foot, a proud tongue, by which this their going is exalted. This is that which makes them look scornfully, speak ruggedly, and carry it huffingly among their neighbours.

2. A proud heart is a persecuting one. "The wicked in *his* pride doth persecute the poor" (Psa. 10. 2).

3. A prayerless man is a proud man (Psa. 10. 4).

4. A contentious man is a proud man (Prov. 13. 10).

5. The disdainful man is a proud man (Psa. 119. 51).

6. The man that oppresses his neighbour is a proud man (Psa. 119. 122).

7. He that hearkeneth not to God's word with reverence and fear is a proud man (Jer. 13. 15, 17).

8. And he that calls the proud happy is, be sure, a proud man. All these are proud in heart, and this their pride of heart doth thus discover itself (Jer. 43. 2; Mal. 3. 15).

As to bodily pride, it is discovered that is something of it, by all the particulars mentioned before; for though they are said to be symptoms of pride of heart, yet they are symptoms of that pride, by their showing

of themselves in the body. You know diseases that are within are seen oftentimes by outward and visible signs, yet by these very signs even the outside is defiled also. So all those visible signs of heart pride are signs of bodily pride also. But to come to more outward signs. The putting on of gold, and pearls, and costly array; the plaiting of the hair, the following of fashions, the seeking by gestures to imitate the proud, either by speech, looks, dresses, goings, or other fools' baubles, of which at this time the world is full, all these, and many more, are signs, as of a proud heart, so of bodily pride also (1 Tim 2. 9; 1 Pet 3. 3-5).

But Mr. Badman would not allow, by any means, that this should be called pride, but rather neatness, handsomeness, comeliness, cleanliness, &c., neither would he allow that following of fashions was anything else, but because he would not be proud, singular, and esteemed fantastical by his neighbours.

ATTEN. But I have been told that when some have been rebuked for their pride, they have turned it again upon the brotherhood of those by whom they have been rebuked, saying, Physician, heal thy friends, look at home among your brotherhood, even among the wisest of you, and see if you yourselves be clear, even you professors. For who is prouder than you professors? scarcely the devil himself.

WISE. My heart aches at this answer, because there is too much cause for it. This very answer would Mr. Badman give his wife when she, as she would sometimes, reprove him for his pride. We shall have, says he, great amendments in living now, for the devil is turned a corrector of vice; for no sin reigneth more in the world, quoth he, than pride among professors. And who can contradict him? Let us give the devil his due, the thing is too apparent for any man to deny. And I doubt not but the same answer is ready in the mouths of Mr. Badman's friends; for they may and do see pride display itself in the apparel and carriages of professors, one may say, almost as much, as among any people in the land, the more is the pity. Ay, and I fear that even their extravagancies in this hath hardened the heart of many a one, as I perceive it did somewhat the heart of Mr. Badman himself. For my own part, I have seen many myself, and those church members too, so decked and bedaubed with their fangles and toys, and that when they have been at the solemn appointments of God in the way of his worship, that I have wondered with what face such painted persons could sit in the place where they were without swooning. But certainly

the holiness of God, and also the pollution of themselves by sin, must need be very far out of the minds of such people, what profession soever they make.

I have read of a whore's forehead, and I have read of Christian shamefacedness (Jer. 3. 3; 1 Tim 2. 9). I have read of costly array, and of that which becometh women professing godliness, with good works (1 Peter 3. 1-3). But if I might speak, I know what I know, and could say, and yet do no wrong, that which would make some professors stink in their places; but now I forbear (Jer. 23. 15).

ATTEN. Sir, you seem greatly concerned at this, but what if I shall say more? It is whispered that some good ministers have countenanced their people in their light and wanton apparel, yea, have pleaded for their gold and pearls, and costly array, &c.

WISE. I know not what they have pleaded for, but it is easily seen that they tolerate, or at leastwise, wink and connive at such things, both in their wives and children. And so "from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land" (Jer. 23. 15). And when the hand of the rulers are chief in a trespass, who can keep their people from being drowned in that trespass? (Ezra 9. 2).

ATTEN. This is a lamentation, and must stand for a lamentation.

WISE. So it is, and so it must. And I will add, it is a shame, it is a reproach, it is a stumbling block to the blind; for though men be as blind as Mr. Badman himself, yet they can see the foolish lightness that must needs be the bottom of all these apish and wanton extravagancies. But many have their excuses ready; to wit, their parents, their husbands, and their breeding calls for it, and the like; yea, the examples of good people prompt them to it; but all these will be but the spider's web, when the thunder of the word of the great God shall rattle from heaven against them, as it will at death or judgment; but I wish it might do it before. But alas! these excuses are but bare pretences, these proud ones love to have it so. I once talked with a maid by way of reproof for her fond and gaudy garment. But she told me, The tailor would make it so; when alas! poor proud girl, she gave order to the tailor so to make it. Many make parents, and husbands, and tailors, &c., the blind to others; but their naughty hearts, and their giving of way thereto, that is the original cause of all these evils.

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Amir's Quest

Amir grows up in a little village in Galilee, in the north of Israel. So he is an Israeli, for he was born in Israel and he has an Israeli passport. At the same time Amir is an Arab, and to make it even more complicated, he can also be called a Palestinian, although he does not live on the West Bank or Gaza. Amir was born in a Muslim village. All his family are Muslims, but when Amir is 16 years old a far-reaching incident takes place in his young life. This brings about a significant change.

Amir walks around in school. He is bored. For his lessons in Arabic he needs an expensive dictionary. He is from a poor family. Where can he quickly get money from to buy such a dictionary? Suddenly he has an idea! In the library he has seen such thick books. Undoubtedly there will be dictionaries among them. Casually he walks into the library. There is nobody. He goes to one of the bookcases, takes a large, thick dictionary, looks about him and in double quick time he puts it in his school bag. There! He has got a dictionary. That was an easy job.

That evening Amir is in his room, he is going to do his homework. Suddenly he thinks of the dictionary. It is still in his bag. He takes the thick book out of it, opens it and looks in it. But, where are we now? This is not a dictionary at all. His eyes scan a few sentences. It looks like the Koran. The book mentions Allah, but when he continues reading he notices that it cannot be the Koran. He looks at the front page and sees that he has not taken an Arabic dictionary, but a Bible! He is very disappointed. He feels terribly silly. Whoever would steal a Bible? That is the book of the Christians and Christians are no better than dogs. What has to be done now? Will he take the book back? No, that is too risky, imagine he will be caught? Throw it away then?

But in fact Amir is curious to know what is in that Bible. He is not able to throw this book with its beautiful hard cover, into the bin. He opens the Bible again and starts reading. He finds it all very confusing. He does recognize some notions such as the law, sin and holiness. After having read a few pages here and there, he closes the Bible. Everything is so different from the Koran. Amir hides the Bible in his wardrobe so that nobody will find it.

But it seems as if this book has a certain appeal. Late at night, when he is sure that everybody in the house is asleep, he takes the Bible from his wardrobe and starts reading again. In secret, for just imagine that his

father or mother should catch him red-handed. Then he will be in for a serious row and the worst would be a family trial with his uncles present as well. In this way several months pass. Amir reads in the Bible every day, he just cannot stop. He has many questions, but he does not know who to turn to with them. He does not know any Christians; in his village there are only Muslims. When he has read the whole Bible he begins to compare it with the Koran. Now he has only more questions. Amir has a lonely struggle; he cannot and dare not express himself to the people around him. For two years he keeps it a secret, but the Lord is at work.

In a peculiar way He leads Amir to Haifa. When he is 18 he goes to college there. He tries to find a room and somebody shows him an inner courtyard with a few houses surrounding it. He might try there. The owner lets rooms to students. Amir knocks on the door and is surprised to find that the landlord is an Arab minister. He is kindly received and can rent a room. For Amir it is clear that the Lord has heard his prayer! At last there is someone to whom he can secretly ask his questions.

In fact Amir is still a Muslim, but when he looks deep into his heart he does not feel a Muslim any more. In his mind he has already taken leave of Islam many times. But he does not dare to call himself a Christian either, everything is not clear to him yet. Many evenings and nights the minister and Amir sit at the table, with the Bible open and sometimes the Koran too. Amir puts his questions, about the existence of God, about man's fall, hell and heaven, about the Lord Jesus; whether he is truly God and man. Is He not more like a prophet like Mohammed? Patiently the minister answers all his questions.

One night the minister looks Amir in the face and with a look full of love he asks him, "Amir, shouldn't you ask Jesus Himself who He is? The Koran calls Isa, the Lord Jesus, a great prophet and says that He did not die on the cross but that somebody else died on the cross in His stead and Jesus went to heaven, alive. The Bible tells us that Jesus actually died on the cross to atone for sin, but rose again and now lives and sits at the right hand of His Father. Ask Jesus Himself which is the truth – what's in the Bible, or what's in the Koran. Ask Him who He is. He will certainly answer your question! For the Lord says "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

That night, in Haifa, a young man kneels before God, and prays Him to show him the truth. He prays that God would reveal Himself to him. And then he does not pray to Allah of the Koran any more, but to the

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to the Father of the Lord Jesus. And when he pronounces that Name, tears run down his cheeks. Amir can only weep. He pours out his soul before the living God. He confesses his sins and comes to the feet of the Lord. Deep peace fills his soul. In all his sorrow he is granted to experience something of the love of Christ. Many questions are solved and vanish into thin air.

Light goes up in his soul!

For reasons of security Amir's name is fictitious. The Lord has led him further. He studies theology now. He still has to keep up his guard against his family and his circle of acquaintances. This often causes loneliness. In our prayers let us not forget the difficult position of Amir and numerous ex-Muslims, both in Gaza and on the West Bank.

Translated specially for Perception by Rein de Korte from the Dutch in Israelbode March 2011.

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BIOGRAPHY

The Experience of Joseph Hart, the Hymnwriter

As I had the happiness of being born of believing parents, I imbibed the sound doctrines of the gospel from my infancy; nor was I without touches of heart, checks of conscience, and meltings of affections, by the secret strivings of God's Spirit with me while very young; but the impressions were not deep, nor the influences lasting, being frequently defaced and quenched by the vanities and vices of childhood and youth.

About the twenty-first year of my age I began to be under great anxiety concerning my soul. The spirit of bondage distressed me sore; though I endeavoured (as I believe most under legal convictions do) to commend myself to God's favour by amendment of life, virtuous resolutions, moral rectitude, and a strict attendance on religious ordinances. I strove to subdue my flesh by fasting, and other rigorous acts of penance and mortification; and whenever I was captivated by its lusts (which indeed was often the case) I endeavoured to reconcile myself again to God by sorrow for my faults, which, if attended with tears, I hoped would pass as current coin with heaven; and then I judged myself whole again, and to stand on equal terms with my foes, till the next fall, which generally succeeded in a short time.

In this uneasy, restless round of sinning and repenting, working and dreading, I went on for above seven years; when, a great domestic affliction befalling me (in which I was a moderate sufferer, but a monstrous sinner), I began to sink deeper and deeper into conviction of my nature's evil, the deceitfulness and hardness of my heart, the wickedness of my life, the shallowness of my Christianity, and the blindness of my devotion. I saw that I was in a dangerous state, and that I must have a better religion than I had yet experienced before I could with any propriety call myself a Christian. How did I now long to feel the merits of Christ applied to my soul by the Holy Spirit! How often did I make my strongest efforts to call God, *my God!* But, alas, I could no more do this than I could raise the dead! I found now, by woeful experience, that faith was not in my power; and the question with me now was, not whether I *would* be a Christian or no; but whether I *might*: not whether I should repent and believe; but whether God would give me true repentance and a living faith.

After some weeks passed in this gloomy, dreadful state, the Lord was pleased to comfort me a little, by enabling me to appropriate, in some measure, the merits of the Saviour to my own soul. This comfort increased for some time; and my understanding was also wonderfully illuminated in reading the Holy Scriptures, so that I could see Christ in many passages where before I little imagined to find Him, and was encouraged to hope I had an interest in His merits and the benefits by Him procured to His people.

In this blessed state my continuance was but short; for, rushing impetuously into notions beyond my experience, I hasted to make myself a Christian by mere doctrine, adopting other men's opinions before I had tried them; and set up for a great light in religion, disregarding the internal work of grace begun in my soul by the Holy Ghost. This liberty, assumed by myself, and not given by Christ, soon grew to libertinism; in which I took large progressive strides, and advanced to a dreadful height both in principle and practice. In a word, I ran such dangerous lengths both of carnal and spiritual wickedness, that I even outwent professed infidels, and shocked the irreligious and profane with my horrid blasphemies and monstrous impieties. Hardness of heart was, with me, a sign of good confidence; carelessness went for trust, empty notions for great light, a seared conscience for assurance of faith, and rash presumption for Christian courage.

My actions were in a great measure conformable to my notions; for, having (as I imagined) obtained by Christ a liberty of sinning, I was resolved to make use of it; and thought the more I could sin without remorse, the greater hero I was in faith. A tender conscience I deemed weakness; prayer I left for novices and bigots; and a broken and contrite heart was a thing too low and legal for me to approve, much more to desire. Not to dwell on particulars, I shall only say (what, though shocking to hear, is too true) that I committed “all uncleanness with greediness.”

In this abominable state I continued, a loose backslider, an audacious apostate, a boldfaced rebel, for nine or ten years, not only committing acts of lewdness myself, but infecting others with the poison of my delusions. I published several pieces on different subjects, chiefly translations of the ancient heathens; to which I prefixed prefaces and subjoined notes of a pernicious tendency; and indulged a freedom of thought far unbecoming a Christian. But God, who is rich in mercy, and whose grace is, like Himself, almighty, did not altogether give me up to hardness and impenitence; I felt, from time to time, meltings of heart, and inward compunction; and had a secret hope at the bottom (which often rose above my gross corruptions) that I should not always go on in this abandoned manner, and run as reprobate to final perdition.

About seven or eight years ago I began by degrees to reform a little, and to live in a more sober and orderly manner. And now, as I retained the form of sound words, and held the doctrines of free grace, justification by faith, and other orthodox tenets, I was tolerably confident of the goodness of my state; especially as I could now also add that other requisite, a moral behaviour. Surely, thought I, though I have been so profligate and profane, yet, as I am now reclaimed, and am not only sound in principles, but sober and honest in practice, I cannot but be in the right way to the favour of God.

For several years I went on in this easy, cool, smooth, and indolent manner, with a lukewarm, insipid kind of religion, yet not without some secret whispers of God’s love, and visitations of His grace, and now and then warm addresses to Him in private prayer. But, alas, all this while my heart was whole; the fountains of the great deeps of my sinful nature were not broken up! I was therefore conscious that the written word of God was against me, especially those parts of it that represent the children of God as a poor, afflicted, mourning, broken-hearted people; of which characteristics I was destitute; nor was the blood of

Christ effectually applied to my soul. I looked on His death indeed as the grand sacrifice for sin; and always thought on Him with respect and reverence; but did not see the inestimable value of His blood and righteousness clearly enough to make me abhor myself, and count all things else but dung and dross. On the contrary when I used to read the Scriptures (which I now did constantly, both in English and the original languages), though my mind was often affected, and my understanding illuminated, by many passages that treated of the Saviour; yet I was so far from seeing or owning that there was such a necessity for His death, and that it could be of such infinite value as is represented, that I have often resolved, (oh, the horrible depth of man's fall, and the desperate wickedness of the human heart!) that I never would believe it; and have been tempted to tell God Himself that He could not make me, without injuring my reason, and imposing on my understanding by downright violence and perverse power.

About three or four years ago I fell into a deep despondency of mind, because I had never experienced grand revelations and miraculous discoveries. I was very melancholy, and shunned all company, walking pensively alone, or sitting in private, and bewailing my sad and dark condition, not having a friend in the world to whom I could communicate the burden of my soul; which was so heavy, that I sometimes hesitated even to take my necessary food. But after many a gloomy doleful hour spent in solitude and sorrow, not without strong and frequent cries and tears to God, and beseeching Him to reveal Himself to me in a clearer manner, I thought He asked me, in the midst of one of my prayers, Whether I rather chose the visionary revelations of which I had formed some idea, or to be content with trusting to the low, despised mystery of a crucified man? I was enabled to prefer the latter; and felt comfort in expecting the future effects of my choice.

But gloom of mind and dejection of spirit still frequently overwhelmed me; from which I used to be relieved by pouring out my soul to Christ, and beseeching Him, with cries and groans and tears, to reveal Himself to me; praying at the same time it might be done without pain; for I was so much a coward, that I preferred ease to every other consideration. I was often answered by such portions of Scripture as these: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me." – "That which ye have *already* hold fast till I come." To the latter of these I closed my hands fast, and cried, I would sooner part with every drop of blood than let go the hopes I already had in a crucified Saviour: and to

the former I used to reply, (after considering the words, “My reward is with me,”) “Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.” For, though I expected some sore visitation, yet believing that Christ would bring strength and power with Him, I waited, and longed for His coming.

The week before Easter, 1757, I had such an amazing view of the agony of Christ in the garden as I know not well how to describe. I was lost in wonder and adoration; and the impression it made was too deep, I believe, ever to be obliterated. I shall say no more of this; but only remark that, notwithstanding all that is talked about the sufferings of Jesus, none can know anything of them but by the Holy Ghost; and I believe he that knows most knows but very little. It was upon this I made the first part of Hymn I. *On the Passion*; which, however, I afterwards mutilated and altered.

I used to be often terribly cut down with those words, “And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;” Matt. 25. 30; which sometimes sunk me almost to utter despair; and then again I used to receive some comfort. At length despair began to make dreadful head against me; hopes grew fainter, and terrors stronger; which latter were increased by a faithful letter I received from a friend, who had also run great lengths of impiety with me formerly, but was now reclaimed. The convictions I now laboured under were not like those legal convictions I had formerly felt, but far worse, horrible beyond expression. I looked on myself as a gospel sinner; one that had trampled underfoot the blood of Jesus, and for whom there remained no more sacrifice for sin. I shall not enlarge here, choosing rather to suppress than exaggerate; as I do not lay stress on my own sufferings, or those of any other man, except the man Christ Jesus; but surely what I felt was very grievous; for so deep was my despair, that I found in me a kind of wish that I might only be damned with the common damnation of transgressors of God’s law. But, oh! I thought the hottest place in hell must be my portion. All the evangelical promises were so far from comforting me, that they were my greatest tormentors, because they would only increase my condemnation.

This distress and anguish of soul was likewise attended with great infirmity of body. One morning I was waked with intolerable pain, as if balls of fire were burning my reins. Amidst this excruciating torture, which lasted near an hour, one of the first things I thought on was the pierced side of Jesus, and what pain of body, as well as soul, He underwent. Soon after this fiery stroke I was seized in the evening with

a cold shivering, which I concluded to be the icy damp of death, and that after that must come everlasting damnation. In this condition I went to my bed, but dared not close my eyes, even when nature was overcharged, lest I should awake in hell.

While these horrors remained, I used to run backwards and forwards to places of religious worship, especially to the Tabernacle in Moorfields, and the Chapel in Tottenham Court Road; where indeed I received some comfort, which, though little, was then highly prized, because greatly needed: but in the general almost every thing served only to condemn me, to make me rue my own backslidings, and envy those children of God who had continued to walk honestly ever since their first conversion. Notions of religion I wanted no man to teach me: I had doctrine enough, but found, by woeful experience, that dry doctrine, though sound, will not sustain a soul in the day of trial.

In this sad state I went moping about (and that I could, was next to a miracle), having some little hope at the bottom under all, which now and then would glimmer, but was soon overwhelmed again with clouds of horror, till Whitsunday, 1757, when I happened to go in the afternoon to the Moravian Chapel in Fetter Lane, where I had been several times before. The minister preached on these words, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3. 10). Though the text, and most of what was said on it, seemed to make greatly against me, yet I listened with much attention, and felt myself deeply impressed by it. When it was over I thought of hastening to Tottenham Court Chapel; but presently altering my mind, returned to my own house.

I was hardly got home when I felt myself melting away into a strange softness of affection which made me fling myself on my knees before God. My horrors were immediately dispelled, and such light and comfort flowed into my heart as no words can paint. The Lord by His Spirit of love came, not in a visionary manner into my brain, but with such divine power and energy into my soul, that I was lost in blissful amazement. I cried out, "What me, Lord?" His Spirit answered in me, "Yes, thee." I objected; "But I have been so unspeakably vile and wicked." The answer was; "I pardon thee fully and freely. Thy own goodness (for I had now set about a thorough amendment, if peradventure I might be spared) cannot save thee, nor shall thy wickedness damn thee. I undertake to work all thy works in thee and

for thee; and to bring thee safe through all.” The alteration I then felt in my soul was as sudden and palpable as that which is experienced by a person staggering, and almost sinking, under a burden, when it is immediately taken from his shoulders. Tears ran in streams from my eyes for a considerable while; and I was so swallowed up in joy and thankfulness, that I hardly knew where I was. I threw my soul willingly into my Saviour’s hands; lay weeping at His feet, wholly resigned to His will, and only begging that I might, if He was graciously pleased to permit it, be of some service to His church and people.

Thenceforth I enjoyed sweet peace in my soul; and had such clear and frequent manifestations of His love to me, that I longed for no other heaven. My horrors were banished, and have not, I think, returned since with equal violence. And, though I can see little signs as yet of His granting my request concerning usefulness; though I am very barren of good, and full of evil; though I have many sore trials and temptations in my soul; yet it pleases the Lord to reveal Himself often in me, to open the mysteries of His cross, and give me to trust in His precious blood.

¹Not long after this my – shall I call it *reconversion*? – I was terribly infested with thoughts so monstrously obscene and blasphemous, that they cannot be spoken, nor so much as hinted; and I believe such as hardly ever entered into the heart of any other man; though I am sensible that most of God’s children are sometimes attacked in like manner; but mine were foul and black beyond example, and seemed to be the master-pieces of hell. They haunted me some months, and used to make me weep bitterly, and cry earnestly to my God to remove them; which at last He was pleased to do in a great measure; though they would often be returning still, like intruding visitants, but are not permitted to come with much power. In short, I felt myself now as poor, as weak, as helpless and dependant, as ever; but now my weakness is my greatest strength; I now rejoice, though I rejoice with trembling.

I soon began to be visited by God’s Spirit in a different manner from what I had ever felt before. I had constant communion with Him in prayer. His sufferings, His wounds, His agonies of soul, were impressed upon me in an amazing manner. I now believed *my* name was sculptured deep in the Lord Jesus’s breast, with characters never to

¹ This was written before the Author’s call to the ministry.

be erased. I saw Him with the eye of faith, stooping under the load of *my* sins; groaning and grovelling in Gethsemane for *me*. The incarnate God was more and more revealed to me; and I had far other notions of His sufferings than I had entertained before. Now I saw that the grief of Christ was the grief of my Maker; that His wounds were the wounds of the Almighty God; and the least drop of His blood now appeared to me more valuable than ten thousands of worlds. As I had before thought His sufferings *too little*, they now appeared to me to be *too great*; and I often cried out in transports of blissful astonishment, 'Lord, 'tis too much, 'tis too much; surely my soul was not worth so great a price! I had also such a spirit of sympathetic love to the Lord Jesus given me, that after I had left off to sorrow for myself, for some months I grieved and mourned bitterly for Him. I looked on Him whom I had pierced, and felt such sharp compunction, mixed at the same time with so much compassion, that the pain and the pleasure I experienced are much better felt than expressed.

Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, is now the only thing I desire to know. In that incarnate mystery are contained all the rich treasures of divine wisdom. This is the mark towards which I am still pressing forward. This is the cup of salvation, of which I wish to drink deeper and deeper. This is the knowledge in which I long to grow; and desire at the same time a daily increase in all true grace and godliness. All duties, means, ordinances, &c. are to me then, only rich when they are enriched with the blood of the Lamb, in comparison of which all things else are but chaff and husks.

PHARISAIC ZEAL, and ANTINOMIAN SECURITY, are the two engines of Satan, with which he grinds the church in all ages, as betwixt the upper and the nether millstone. The space between them is much narrower and harder to find than most men imagine. It is a path which the vulture's eye hath not seen; and none can show it us but the Holy Ghost. Here let no one trust the directions of his own heart, or of any other man; lest by being warned to shun the one he be dashed against the other. The distinction is too fine for man to discern, therefore let the Christian ask direction of his God. These two hideous monsters continually worry and perplex my soul; nor is the former, though appearing in a holier shape, one whit less, but (if possible) more odious to me than the latter. Therefore, from the wonderful dealings of God towards me, I endeavour to draw the following observations:

On the one hand I would observe, that it is “not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” That none can make a Christian but He that made the world. That it is the glory of God to bring good out of evil. That whom He loveth He loveth unto the end. That, though all men seek, more or less, to recommend themselves to God’s favour by their works, yet “to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” That the blood of the Redeemer, applied to the soul by His Spirit, is the one thing needful. That prayer is the task and labour of a Pharisee, but the privilege and delight of a Christian. That God grants not the requests of His people because they pray; but they pray because He designs to answer their petitions. That self-righteousness and legal holiness rather keep the soul from, than draw it to Christ. That they, who seek salvation by them, pursue shadows, mistake the great end of the law, and err from the way, the truth, and the life. That God’s design is to glorify His Son alone, and to debase the excellence of every creature. That no righteousness besides the righteousness of Jesus (that is, the righteousness of God) is of any avail towards acceptance. That to be a moral man, a zealous man, a devout man, is very short of being a Christian. That the eye of faith looks more to the blood of Jesus than to the soul’s victory over corruptions. That the dealings of God with His people, though similar in the general, are nevertheless so various, that there is no chalking out the paths of one child of God by those of another; no laying down regular rules of Christian conversion, Christian experience, Christian usefulness, or Christian conversation. That the will of God is the only standard of right and good. That the sprinkling of the blood of a crucified Saviour on the conscience by the Holy Ghost, sanctifies a man, without which the most abstemious life and rigorous discipline is unholy. Lastly, faith and holiness, with every other blessing, are the purchase of the Redeemer’s blood; and He has a right to bestow them on whom He will, in such a manner and in such a measure as He thinks best; though the spirit in all men lusteth to envy.

On the other hand I would observe, that it is not so easy to be a Christian as some men seem to think. That for a living soul really to trust in Christ alone, when he sees nothing in himself but evil and sin, is an act as supernatural as for Peter to walk on the sea. That mere doctrine, though ever so sound, will not alter the heart; consequently that to turn from one set of tenets to another is not Christian conversion. That, as much as Lazarus coming out of his grave, and feeling himself

restored to life, differed from those who only saw the miracle, or believed the fact when told them, so great is the difference between a soul's real coming out of himself, and having the righteousness of Christ imputed to him by the precious faith of God's elect, and a man's bare believing the doctrine of imputed righteousness because he sees it contained in scripture, or assenting to the truth of it when proposed to his understanding by others. That a wholehearted disciple can have but little communion with a broken-hearted Lord. That "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." That a prayerless spirit is not the spirit of Christ, but that prayer to a Christian is as necessary and as natural as food to a natural man. That the usual way of going to heaven is through much tribulation. That the sinner who is drawn to Christ is not he that has learnt that he is a sinner by head knowledge, but that feels himself such by heart contrition. That he that believeth, hath an unction from the Holy One. That a true Christian is as vitally united to Christ as my hand or foot to my body; consequently suffers and rejoices with Him. That a believer talks and converses with God. That a dead faith can no more cherish the soul than a dead corpse can perform the functions of life. That where there is true faith there will be obedience and the fear of God. That he that lives by the faith of the Son of God, eateth His flesh and drinketh His blood. That "he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." That many imagine themselves great believers who have little or no true faith at all; and many, who deem themselves void of faith, cleave to Christ by the faith of the operation of God. That faith, like gold, must be tried in the fire before it can be safely depended on.. Lastly, that Christians are sealed by the Holy Ghost to the day of redemption; and to this seal they trust their eternal welfare; not to naked knowledge, or speculative notions, though ever so deep. They dread to dream they are rich when they are blind and poor; to have a name to live and yet be dead; or to be forced to fly for precarious refuge to the conjectural scheme of universal salvation, with those who hope to be saved because they think there will be none lost.

For my own part, I confess myself a sinner still; and though I am not much tempted to outward gross acts of iniquity, yet inward corruptions and spiritual wickedness continually harass and perplex my soul, and often make me cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" From me they are not yet removed; though I once hoped, with many others, that I should soon get rid of

them. All I can do is to look to Jesus through them all; cling fast to His wounded side; long to be clothed with His righteousness; pray Him to plead my cause against these spiritual enemies that rise up against me; and, though I feel myself leprous from head to foot, believe that I am clean through the word which he hath spoken unto me. In short, I rejoice, not because the spirits are always subject to me (for, alas! I find they are often too strong for me to control), but because my name is written in heaven.

I am daily more and more convinced that the promises of God to His people are absolute; and desire to build my hopes on the free electing love of God in Christ Jesus to my soul before the world began, which I can experimentally and feelingly say, He hath delivered from the lowest hell. He hath plucked me as a brand out of the fire! Though my ways were dreadfully dangerous to the last degree, His eye was all along upon me for good. He hath excited me to love much, by forgiving me much. He hath showed me, and still daily shows me, the abominable deceit, lust, enmity and pride of my heart, and the inconceivable depths of His mercy; how far I was fallen, and how much it cost Him of sweat and blood to bring me up. He hath proved himself stronger than I, and His goodness superior to all my unworthiness. He gives me to know, and to feel too, that without Him I can do nothing. He tells me (and He enables me to believe it) that I am all fair, and there is no spot in me. Though an enemy He calls me His friend; though a traitor, His child; though a beggared prodigal, He clothes me with the best robe, and has put a ring of endless love and mercy on my hand. And, though I am often sorely distressed by spiritual and internal foes, afflicted, tormented, and bowed down almost to death, with the sense of my own present barrenness, ingratitude, and proneness to evil, He secretly shows me His bleeding wounds; and softly, but powerfully, whispers to my soul, "I am thy great salvation."

His free, distinguishing grace is the bottom on which is fixed the rest of my poor, weary, tempted soul. On this I ground my hope, oftentimes when unsupported by any other evidence, save only the Spirit of adoption received from Him. He hath chosen me out from everlasting, in whom to make known the inexhaustible riches of His free grace and long-suffering. Though I am a stranger to others, and a wonder to myself, yet I know Him, or rather am known of Him. Though poor in myself, I am rich enough in Him. When my dry, empty, barren soul is parched with thirst, He kindly bids me come to Him, and drink my fill

at the fountain head. In a word, He empowers me to say, with experimental evidence, “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Amen and amen.
April, 1759.

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DOCTRINE AND TRUTH

An Extract From:

The Mute Christian Under the Smarting Rod

By T. Brooks

First, and that more generally, afflictions shall work for the good of the righteous; ver. 27, “*It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.*” A gracious soul secretly concludes, as stars shine brightest in the night, so God will make my soul shine and glister like gold, whilst I am in this furnace, and when I come out of the furnace of affliction: Job 23. 10, “He knoweth the way that I take; *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”

Surely, as the tasting of honey did open Jonathan’s eyes, so this cross, this affliction, shall open mine eyes; by this stroke I shall come to have a clearer sight of my sins and of myself, and a fuller sight of my God, Job 23. 27, 28; 40. 4, 5; 13. 1-7.

Surely this affliction shall issue in the purging away of my dross, Isa. 1. 25.

Surely as ploughing of the ground killeth the weeds, and harrowing breaketh hard clods, so these afflictions shall kill my sins, and soften my heart, Hosea 5. 15, 6. 1-3.

Surely as the plaster draws out the core, so the afflictions that are upon me shall draw out the core of pride, the core of self-love, the core of envy, the core of earthliness, the core of formality, the core of hypocrisy, Psa. 119. 67, 71.

Surely by these the Lord will crucify my heart more and more to the world, and the world to my heart, Gal. 6. 14; Psa. 131. 1-3.

Surely by these afflictions the Lord will hide pride from any soul, Job 33. 14-21.

Surely these afflictions are but the Lord’s pruning-knives, by which He will bleed my sins, and prune my heart, and make it more fertile and fruitful; they are but the Lord’s portion, by which He will clear me, and

rid me of those spiritual diseases and maladies, which are most deadly and dangerous to my soul.

Affliction is such a potion, as will carry away all ill humours, better than all the *benedicta medicamenta*, as physicians call them, Zech. 13. 8, 9.

Surely these shall increase my spiritual experiences, Rom. 5. 3, 4.

Surely by these I shall be made more partaker of God's holiness, Heb. 12. 10. As black soap makes white clothes, so doth sharp afflictions make holy hearts.

Surely by these God will communicate more of Himself unto me, Hosea 2. 14.

Surely by these afflictions the Lord will draw out my heart more and more to seek Him, Isa. 26. 16. Tatianus told the heathen Greeks, that when they were sick, then they would send for their gods to be with them, as Agamemnon did at the siege of Troy send for his ten councillors. Hosea 5. 15, "In their affliction they will seek me early," or as the Hebrew hath it, "they will morning me"; in times of affliction, Christians will industriously, speedily, early seek unto the Lord.

Surely by these trials and troubles the Lord will fix my soul more than ever upon the great concerns of another world, John 14. 1-3; Rom. 8. 17, 18; 2 Cor. 4. 16-18.

Surely by these afflictions the Lord will work in me more tenderness and compassion towards those that are afflicted, Heb. 10. 34, 13. 3. As that Tyrian queen said,

Evils have taught me to bemoan,
All that afflictions make to groan.

The Romans punished one that was seen looking out at his window with a crown of roses on his head, in a time of public calamity. Bishop Bonner was full of guts; but empty of bowels; I am afraid this age is full of such Bonners.

Surely these are but God's love-tokens: Rev. 3. 19, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." Seneca persuaded his friend Polybius to bear his affliction quietly, because he was the emperor's favourite, telling him, that it was not lawful for him to complain whilst Caesar was his friend. So saith the holy Christian, O my soul! be quiet, be still; all is in love, all is a fruit of divine favour. I see honey upon the top of every twig, I see the rod is but a rosemary branch, I have sugar with my gall, and wine with my wormwood; therefore be silent, O my soul! And

this general conclusion, that all should be for good, had this blessed effect upon the church: Lam. 3. 28, “He sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him.”

Afflictions abase the loveliness of the world without that might entice us; it abates the lustiness of the flesh within, which might else ensnare us! And it abates the spirit in its quarrel against the flesh and the world; by all which it proves a mighty advantage unto us.

Secondly, They shall keep them humble and low: Lam. 3. 29, “He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.” Some say, that these words are an allusion to the manner of those that, having been conquered and subdued, lay their necks down at the conqueror’s feet to be trampled upon, and so lick up the dust that is under the conqueror’s feet. Others of the learned looked upon the words as an allusion to poor petitioners, who cast themselves down at princes’ feet, that they may draw forth their pity and compassion towards them. As I have read of Aristippus, who fell on the ground before Dionysius, and kissed his feet, when he presented a petition to him; and being asked the reason, answered, *Aures habet in pedibus*, (“he hath his ears in his feet”). Take it which way you will, it holds forth this to us, That holy hearts will be humble under the afflicting hand of God. When God’s rod is upon their backs, their mouths shall be in the dust. A good heart will lie lowest, when the hand of God is lifted highest, Job 13. 1-7; Acts 9. 1-8.

Thirdly, The third soul-quieting conclusion you have in Lam. 3. 31, “For the Lord will not cast off for ever”; the rod shall not always lie upon the back of the righteous. “At even-tide, lo there is trouble, but afore morning it is gone”, Isa. 17. 14. As Athanasius said to his friends, when they came to bewail his misery and banishment, *Nubecula est, cito transibit*; it is but a little cloud, said he, and it will quickly be gone. There are none of God’s afflicted ones, that have not their *lucida intervalle*, their intermissions, respites, breathing-whiles; yea, so small a while doth the hand of the Lord rest upon His people, that Luther cannot get diminutives enough to extenuate it; for he calls it a very little little cross that we bear: Isa. 26. 20, “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment (or for a little space, a little while), until the indignation be overpast”. The sharpness, shortness, and suddenness of the saints’ afflictions, is set forth by the travail of a woman, John 16. 21, which is sharp, short, and sudden.

Fourthly, the fourth soul-silencing conclusion you have in Lamentations 3. 32 “But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.” In wrath God remembers mercy, Hab. 3. 2. “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy *cometh* in the morning”, Ps. 30. 5. Their mourning shall last but till morning. God will turn their winter’s night into a summer’s day, their sighing into singing, their grief into gladness, their mourning into music, their bitter into sweet, their wilderness into a paradise. The life of a Christian is filled up with interchanges of sickness and health, weakness and strength, want and wealth, disgrace and honour, crosses and comforts, miseries and mercies, joys and sorrows, mirth and mourning; all honey would harm us, all wormwood would undo us; a composition of both is the best way in the world to keep our souls in a healthy constitution. It is best and most for the health of the soul that the south wind of mercy, and the north wind of adversity, do both blow upon it; and though every wind that blows shall blow good to the saints, yet certainly their sins die most, and their graces thrive best, when they are under the drying, nipping north wind of calamity, as well as under the warm, cherishing south wind of mercy and prosperity.

Fifthly, The fifth soul-quieting conclusion you have in Lam. 3. 33, “For he doth not afflict willingly (or as the Hebrew hath it, “from his heart”), “nor grieve the children of men”. The church concludes that God’s heart was not in their afflictions, though His hand was. He takes no delight to afflict his children; it goes against the hair and the heart; it is a grief to Him to be grievous to them, a pain to Him to be punishing of them, a death to Him to be striking of them; he hath no will, no motion, no inclination, no disposition, to that work of afflicting of His people; and therefore he calls it His “work, his strange work”, Isa. 28. 21. Mercy and punishment, they flow from God, as the honey and the sting from the bee. The bee yieldeth honey of her own nature, but she doth not sting but when she is provoked. He takes delight in shewing of mercy, Micah 7. 18; He takes no pleasure in giving his people up to adversity, Hosea 11. 8. Mercy and kindness floweth from Him freely, naturally; He is never severe, never harsh; He never stings, He never terrifies us, but when he is sadly provoked by us. God’s hand sometimes may lie very hard upon His people, when His heart, His bowels, at those very times may be yearning towards his people, Jer. 31. 18-20. No man can tell how the heart of God stands by His hand; His hand of mercy may be open to those against whom His heart is set,

as you see in the rich poor fool, and Dives, in the Gospel; and His hand of severity may lie hard upon those on whom He hath set his heart, as you may see in Job and Lazarus. And thus you see those gracious, blessed, soul-quieting conclusions about the issue and event of afflictions, that a holy, a prudent silence doth include.

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Extracts from J. C. Philpot's *Ears from Harvested Sheaves*

"Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation" (Psa. 35. 3).

To keep water sweet, it must be perpetually running; and to keep the life of God up in the soul, there must be continual exercises. This is the reason why the Lord's people have so many conflicts, trials, painful exercises, sharp sorrows, and deep temptations – to keep them alive unto God; to bring them out of, and to keep them out of that slothful, sluggish, wretched state of carnal security and dead assurance in which so many seem to have fallen asleep – fallen asleep like the sailor upon the top of the mast, not knowing what a fearful gulf is boiling up below. The Lord, therefore, "trieth the righteous." He will not suffer his people to be at ease in Zion; to be settled on their lees, and get into a wretched Moabitish state. He therefore sends afflictions upon them, tribulations, and trials, and allows Satan to tempt and harass them. And under these feelings the blessed Spirit, from time to time, raises up in them this sigh and cry, "Say unto my soul, I *am* thy salvation." None but Thyself, Lord, can save me; nothing short of Thy voice can whisper peace to my conscience; nothing short of Thy blood can speak away guilt from lying as a heavy burden upon my heart; nothing short of Thy love shed abroad by the Holy Ghost can make my soul happy in Thyself." – May 13th.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Life and Ministry of David Mulvey

By J. R. Broome

Edited by Dr M.J. Hyde, paperback 112pp, price £4.50 + £1.50 postage. Obtainable from Dr M. J. Hyde, 5 Hawthorn, Appledore, Ashford, Kent. TH26 2AH.

David Mulvey was a member at the Dicker Church to his death in 1968. He was baptised by Mr Tyler on 30th March 1952. He was sent to preach by the church in 1959 after twenty-one years' exercise but only preached for just under nine years, being called home on 10th April 1968. Yet the memory of the savour of his ministry still abides in the churches today.

At the age of fifteen, he turned his back on the truth and left chapel until the Lord called him by His grace in 1939 at the age of twenty-three. Then he attended the ministry of Mr J.H. Gosden at Maidstone until he moved to Blackboys to sit under the ministry of Jabez Field, where he stayed until Mr Field's death when he moved to the Dicker.

This book contains a brief biography and five of his sermons plus two letters. It has been published at the behest of his daughter Salome and has been put together by Dr M.J. Hyde. It is well-produced and has a coloured cover.

David Mulvey's ministry was searching. Time, death and eternity were ever present in his preaching, even the vital necessity of being prepared. He had a great love for souls. He had some quaint ways of expressing himself in his preaching, but was himself: utterly honest and sincere. It is obvious that he preached with great feeling. His sermons were better listened to than to be read today.

We can thoroughly recommend this little book of a truly godly servant of the Lord, of whom it is true, "He being dead yet speaketh."

PS. At the recent funeral of Mr. Richard Abbott of Lamberhurst, it was recorded that the Lord began with him under the ministry of David Mulvey.



Mr David Mulvey

CURRENT EVENTS

The 350th Anniversary of the Great Ejection by Dr. M. J. Hyde

This year will mark the 350th anniversary of the Great Ejection. On 24th August 1662, the Act of Uniformity came into force in England, timed to coincide, on St. Bartholomew's Day, with the anniversary of the massacre of the French Huguenots ninety years previously. By this Act, ministers in the Church of England were required to use the new prayer book in all services, and to give their "unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things in the said Book contained and prescribed." To many ministers within the Church of England this was not acceptable and, rather than compromise, they seceded from the church, giving up their homes, stipends and in many cases their congregations. Amongst those who left the church at the time were such famous names as Thomas Watson, Thomas Manton, William Jenkyn, Richard Baxter, Edmund Calamy and Joseph Caryl. In all, over 2000 ministers dissented and became non-conformists – that is, not conforming to the prescribed form of doctrine and worship of the Church of England.

The Act of Uniformity was not the first piece of legislation against nonconformists. In 1661, the Corporation Act demanded that all public office bearers must be in communion with the Church of England, effectively barring nonconformists from public office. In the years that followed 1662, two more successively heavier Acts of Parliament were passed, in an attempt to finally crush non-conformity. In 1664, the Conventicle Act forbade more than five people, who were not members of the same household, meeting for worship; while the Five Mile Act of 1665 banned Nonconformist ministers preaching within five miles of incorporated towns, or the place of their former parish churches, and also banned them from teaching in schools. As Baptists, we have always been nonconformist, and these Acts also had consequences for Baptists too; John Bunyan was imprisoned for .

Real and lasting relief only came with the Act of Toleration, passed in 1689. This Act provided freedom of worship to nonconformists who pledged oaths of allegiance to the monarch, but did not extend to nonconformists who held to transubstantiation (Roman Catholics) or were non-Trinitarian (the Unitarians). While this provided toleration of worship, nonconformists of all denominations continued to be barred from English universities and public office until well into the 1800's. J. C. Philpot had to resign his Fellowship at Worcester College on secession from the Church of England, because nonconformists were barred from that privilege.

Many of those who could not conform later became ministers amongst the Baptist, Independent, Congregational and English Presbyterian churches. For us today, the events of 1662 should act as a reminder that our freedoms in religious worship were not won for us easily. They are precious freedoms and we should treasure them, and thank God that they are still spared to us. When we consider the sacrifice that those 2000+ ministers made in 1662, may we be given grace to hold the truths we believe as dear to us, as they were to them.

A number of events planned to mark the anniversary; in March both a Protestant Alliance City Lecture and a study day at the Evangelical Library are planned (Dv). Outside of Reformed circles, the United Reformed Church and the Church of England are holding an ecumenical service in Westminster Abbey on 7th February, to "heal" the memories of the Ejection. If you have never read them, the Farewell Sermons preached by the ejected ministers have been printed by both the Banner of Truth and Soli Deo Gloria and are worth obtaining and reading.

When this passing world is done,
When has sunk yon glaring sun,
When we stand with Christ in glory,
Looking o'er life's finished story,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

When I hear the wicked call,
On the rocks and hills to fall,
When I see them start and shrink
On the fiery deluge brink,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

When I stand before the throne,
Dressed in beauty not my own,
When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinning heart,
Then Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

When the praise of Heav'n I hear,
Loud as thunders to the ear,
Loud as many waters' noise,
Sweet as harp's melodious voice,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

Even on earth, as through a glass
Darkly, let Thy glory pass,
Make forgiveness feel so sweet,

Make Thy Spirit's help so meet,
Even on earth, Lord, make me know
Something of how much I owe.

Chosen not for good in me,
Wakened up from wrath to flee,
Hidden in the Saviour's side,
By the Spirit sanctified,
Teach me, Lord, on earth to show,
By my love, how much I owe.

Oft I walk beneath the cloud,
Dark, as midnight's gloomy shroud;
But, when fear is at the height,
Jesus comes, and all is light;
Blessed Jesus! bid me show
Doubting saints how much I owe.

When in flowery paths I tread,
Oft by sin I'm captive led;
Oft I fall—but still arise—
The Spirit comes—the tempter flies;
Blessed Spirit! bid me show
Weary sinners all I owe.

Oft the nights of sorrow reign—
Weeping, sickness, sighing, pain;
But a night Thine anger burns—
Morning comes and joy returns;
God of comforts! bid me show
To Thy poor, how much I owe.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne. (May 1837)

PERCEPTION



*It is good for me that I have been
afflicted; that I might learn thy
statutes. Psalm 119.71*

SUMMER 2012

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PERCEPTION

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EDITORIAL

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matt. 26. 41).

Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire, that trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh, the falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye, when none but God is near.

The Lord Jesus in Gethsemane prayed, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*” (Matt. 26. 39). He Himself has set us an example. Scripture records that on occasions the Lord prayed all night. Paul says “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5. 17). The Lord counselled His disciples in Gethsemane, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation” (Matt. 26. 41). Yet we have to admit how far short we come in the pathway of prayer. The human heart is averse to prayer, yet it is the most blessed path when in trial and trouble; the soul looks upward to God and can say like Jonah, “Out of the belly of hell cried I, *and* thou heardest my voice” (Jon. 2. 2). It seems that a sinner needs tribulation brought into his pathway to make him pray in sincerity and truth from the depth of his soul. Left to ourselves, we are like Peter and the disciples in Gethsemane – we sleep; we do not watch and pray. Peter was to prove the danger of following His Lord at a distance to the Judgment Hall.

Scripture records many prayers; Hannah’s in 1 Samuel 2; Daniel’s in Daniel 9 – Daniel we are told prayed three times a day; David’s prayer after the Lord showed him that Solomon his son would build a house for the Lord after his death (2 Sam. 7. 18-29); Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 8); Nehemiah’s prayer regarding the desolations of Jerusalem (Neh. 1. 4-11); Hezekiah’s prayer concerning his sickness (Isa. 38); Jonah’s prayer in the belly of the whale (Jon. 2. 1-9); the Lord’s prayer in John 17 and the prayer of Paul and Silas in prison at midnight (Acts 16. 25).

The disciples asked Jesus, “Teach us to pray” (Luke 11. 1) and Jesus cautioned them not to use vain repetitions and then gave them the

Lord's Prayer as an example of how they should pray saying "After this manner therefore pray ye" (Matt. 6. 9). He spoke a parable on another occasion that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18. 1). Prayer is the communion of a sinner with his God. A sinner comes pleading the blood of Jesus shed on Calvary and through that sacrifice seeks access to God for confession of sin and corruption, and seeks pardon and peace. A sinner brings his sorrows and his trials to his God and seeks help. Prayer to God is the avenue to strengthening of faith and hope. It is the breathing of a living soul God-ward and when the Lord hears and answers prayer, there is comfort in the soul, a realisation of His approbation and peace and assurance.

The Scriptures give us much instruction regarding prayer. They tell us to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thes. 5. 17). Paul in his letter to the Romans says, "continuing instant in prayer" (Rom. 12. 12), and in his letter to the Philippians he writes: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4. 6). Writing to Timothy he says, "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Tim. 2. 8). James in his Epistle tells us to "pray one for another" (Jam. 5. 16) and adds, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray" (Jam. 5. 13). Paul says, "we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8. 26).

In the exercise of prayer, when the Lord often delays answering and God's people feel the heavens are "iron and brass", then we hear the Psalmist uttering such prayers as "Give ear to my prayer, O God" (Ps. 55. 1), and "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer" (Ps. 61. 1) and again, "Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry" (Ps. 88. 2). Jeremiah in his Lamentations felt, "When I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer" (Lam. 3. 8). But Jonah in the belly of the whale could say, "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple" (Jon. 2. 7). The Psalmist tells us that the LORD "will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer" (Ps. 102. 17), and adds, "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come" (Ps. 65. 2).

In conclusion, James tells us that, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jam. 5. 16), and gives the example of Elijah; "he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed

again, and the heaven gave rain” (Jam. 5. 17-18). Prayer indited from above the Lord will surely hear.

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CURRENT ISSUES

The Doctrine and Covenant of Marriage According to the Holy Scriptures of Truth

By J. R. Rutt

Marriage is a creation institution; the divine original reads: “And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” (Gen. 2. 18-25).

The Lord’s judgments came upon fallen men because they chose as many women as they wanted; this was symptomatic of the fallen condition of man with violence filling the earth. We see this in our day which is a sign that we are in the last days. Many broken marriages, often caused by adultery; many couples cohabiting or living together without being married; same sex relationships and violence increasing in our society. “And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years” (Gen. 6. 1-3).

There are two aspects to this judgment of Almighty God. First, it refers to the length of time that Noah was building the ark - 120 years. But many of our learned and godly forefathers believe that the average of the life of man was reduced to 120 years at this time. Later Moses records in Psalm 90 that the days of our years are now 70; this is the average age of man upon the earth. The next great judgment will be the second coming of Jesus Christ: "But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24. 37-39).

The holy law of God, the Ten Commandments, confirm the sanctity of the institution of marriage. This clearly means that it is sinful to break the marriage covenant. We are given a definition of sin in the first epistle of John: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3. 4). It is very instructive to read Leviticus Chapter 18. This lays out clearly who we cannot have a physical relation with; it also lays out clearly the abomination to Almighty God of same sex relationships, and the abomination of lying with an animal. The word abomination in Holy Scripture means hateful. Some argue that we are no longer under the law, and therefore Leviticus is no longer relevant to Christians. Christians are not under the law as a covenant of works, but the moral judgments laid out in the Levitical law are still the same today and will always be so; God has not changed His moral government of the world, and sin is still sin under the New Testament as it was under the Old Testament.

Let us look at some of the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, regarding the sanctity of marriage. In these Scriptures the Lord Jesus Christ takes us back to the original institution of marriage. One man, one wife; in these clear teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ divorce and remarriage are not permitted. A monogamous relationship alone is allowed under the teachings of Christ and the apostles. And the Lord Jesus finds fault with the way Moses administered the children of Israel; it was not because God commanded it, but because of the hardness of their hearts. The patriarchs and Kings of Israel greatly corrupted the sacred institution of marriage by having many wives; the Lord Jesus takes us back to the beginning:

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt. 5. 27-28). The Lord Jesus highlights the spirituality of the law and of the gospel: “I say unto you.” It is not just the physical act of adultery, but looking upon a woman in lustful desire. The using of pornographic books and films leads to wicked sinful thoughts and stirs up the heart to lust. “Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (Jam. 1. 15).

“It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery” (Matt. 5. 31-32). There is no room whatsoever here for remarriage after divorce. When we take a vow before Almighty God, “till death us do part” that is exactly what it means, for better, for worse etc.

“And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away. And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery” (Mark. 10. 2-12). This last clause here and the previous scripture quoted from Matthew clearly and emphatically condemns remarriage after divorce. To live with a divorced person as man and wife is to live in sin. Those persons that do so will prove that, “the way of the transgressor is hard.”

The apostle Paul in Romans takes us to the law. “Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but

if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man” (Rom. 7. 1-3).

In 1 Corinthians the apostle emphasises that if a couple do separate they cannot remarry. “And unto the married I command, *yet* not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from *her* husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband: and let not the husband put away *his* wife” (1 Cor. 7. 10-11).

In Ephesians the marriage union is compared to the union between Christ and the church; the same also in the Song of Solomon where the Bridegroom, the beloved, is Jesus Christ. His spouse is the church, his Bride. The same in Psalm 45; the King’s daughter and the queen are the church, the bride of Christ. Notice in this following portion from Ephesians how the apostle moves from speaking of that sacred mystical union between Christ and the church to enforce the practical precepts of the gospel concerning how the husband must cherish and love his wife and she, in love, submit herself to her husband. We have a divine pattern and order for marriage. We need to note carefully in this next passage that we are instructed that marriage was instituted by God to show forth that sacred, mystical union between Christ and the church, not the other way round. If we hold loose, light views of the sanctity of marriage it must lead to loose, light views of the sacred, eternal union between Christ and His church, and with it the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints. If we are free to break the marriage bond then Christ is free to break his covenant of grace with his church. This is not just a difference of opinion; it is a fundamental doctrine.

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and

cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband” (Eph. 5. 22-33).

The conclusion we must come to is one husband; one wife. A monogamous relationship only is permitted under the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. Notice how the apostle by the leading of the Holy Spirit enforces this doctrine in the New Testament churches...

“A bishop then must be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach” (1 Tim. 3. 2). A bishop merely means a minister of the gospel.

“Let the deacons be **the husbands of one wife**, ruling their children and their own houses well” (1 Tim. 3. 12).

“If any be blameless, **the husband of one wife**, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers” (Tit. 1. 6-9). We must be sound in doctrine and in practice; it is a complete contradiction to have one without the other.

“Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Heb. 13. 4). What is clear in this scripture is that a physical relationship outside of the marriage bond is wrong in the eyes of Almighty God. To have a relationship with many different partners is to be a whoremonger; a whore in Holy Scripture is a harlot or a prostitute. Broadly speaking the accepted meaning of adultery is to be unfaithful to your husband or wife. Fornication is when unmarried persons have a physical relationship outside of the marriage bond. Sometimes in Scripture the word fornication refers to moral uncleanness in all its forms.

We feel deeply sorry for anyone whose husband or wife has been unfaithful and left them for another person; sometimes it is argued that an exception should be made for the innocent party leaving them free to remarry. I do not read of any such exception in the Holy Scriptures in

fact just the opposite. The argument is often put that Jesus said, "...saving for the cause of fornication..." We should point out that he immediately goes on to say, "...whosoever shall marry her that is divorced (or put away) committeth adultery..."

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India – Preaching the Gospel to the Poor

By Dr. I. A. Sadler

This article gives a short account of my visit to India in December 2011 as Chairman of the Free Grace Evangelistic Association (FGEA). It was with much fear and trembling that I set out on this return visit to India, but I proved the Lord's goodness throughout the programme of preaching, Bible and book distribution in villages. I was often led to think of the Lord Jesus preaching amongst the villages of Galilee, for it is in the villages that one meets with the worst poverty, where there is the greatest need. Although Jesus is the King of Kings, yet he came to such poor and wretched places to save sinners (Philippians 2. 5-8). Thus it is to such people that the church of Christ and His servants are called to set forth the Gospel.

After the overnight flight to Hyderabad, I was met by Pastor Sudhakar (FGEA local co-ordinator) and other brethren. We then left for the eight hour journey to Ponnur near the Bay of Bengal, where Pastor Sudhakar and an orphanage supported by FGEA are located. We had a hired vehicle with driver for the visit. This was essential as all FGEA (India) members are poor and have no vehicle. In total we were distributing approximately 1500 books and 650 Bibles (almost all in Telugu language), and many of the villages that we were visiting were only accessible by rough roads.

An immediate challenge is language. A "good" interpreter into English is only available for large sums of money, so we had to cast ourselves upon the Lord. Pastor Sudhakar struggles in hearing the accent of a native Englishman speaking (English people rarely visit this part of India). In answer to prayer the Lord abundantly helped Pastor Sudhakar in interpreting and I was enabled to speak simply and clearly.

On our first day we visited the orphanage at Ponnur, where I spoke at an open-air service, in which I preached on the subject of the authority of God as Creator, Law Giver, Saviour and Judge. New blankets were then given to each orphan and to widows. There are at present 46

orphans, but there are only two rooms for the orphans (the size of a typical living room in the UK), plus an outside toilet block. There is no space for furniture, and so they sleep on the floor. However, these conditions are very good compared to the pitiful lot of some that I observed on the streets living amongst the filth. The orphans on the other hand are evidently in good health, clean, neatly clothed, and well-fed; they go to school and are lovingly cared for. A service is held each Lord's Day at the orphanage and they are instructed in the way of salvation in Christ Jesus. Pastor Sudhakar and his family only have one small room at the orphanage. They have no other house, because they sold everything to build the orphanage. The care of the orphans is shared with other church members, who show a gracious and loving spirit.

Later that evening, Pastor Sudhakar had a phone call from a lady in his congregation to say that she had been blessed under the ministry during the preaching at the orphanage, and she requested baptism. The following day her son also came forward for baptism, and then afterwards another lady. This was truly a miracle of grace and the work of the Holy Spirit. A few days later the three were baptised by Pastor Sudhakar in the sea. I was privileged to witness the baptising and was asked to speak a few words from scripture on the beach.

During the following days we travelled to different villages to preach and to distribute Bibles and Telugu books (*Mystery, Babylon the Great, Jesus the Way* and *Love of God* translated freely by Pastor Sudhakar and printed in Ponnur through FGEA funds). Many of the evening meetings were held in the open air outside the hosting church, so that others in the village often came and listened to the message. At one village church there were a number of younger people gathered, who were learning English: each was given a KJV English Bible donated by the Chippenham Bible Aid Fund.

Many of those who received expressed evident joy and thankfulness. Usually the pastor of the church we were visiting nominated those individuals who he considered to be most in need to receive a Bible. However, it was particularly sad, on those occasions when we did not have enough Bibles for all those who were present, to see the faces of those who wanted the scriptures but did not receive; although we always ensured that everyone received at least some literature. Further Bibles have been ordered for India to try to meet these needs.

One of the villages was where Pastor Sudhakar's uncle ministers (he is a loyal member of FGEA (India)). The church building was of very poor construction. Nevertheless, we knew the Lord's presence in a service in which local pastors sent out two young FGEA (India) members into the ministry. I was asked to preach at the service, and I spoke from 1 Samuel 2. 30: "them that honour me I will honour".

On the final day a Pastor's Meeting was held in the open air with about 90 present. I spoke on *Preaching the Word* based on Paul's Epistles to Timothy, emphasising the need for faithfulness to God's word and faithfulness in a minister's conduct before God. Afterwards books were distributed to all, and English KJV Bibles to those who could read English.

The visit confirmed the pressing need for a faithful, spiritual and searching testimony of the truth of God in India. May the Lord mightily appear by the Holy Spirit to bless and water the seed sown to His honour and glory.

(Further details are on the FGEA Website: www.freegrace-ea.org)

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CHURCH HISTORY

John Cennick (1718 – 1755)

By J. R. Broome

John Cennick was born at Reading on 12th December 1718 and was baptised at St. Lawrence's Church three days later. His mother brought him up strictly, and he was made to attend regularly at St. Lawrence's Church. He hated Sunday – the day of rest was for him a day of torment. He was not allowed to play, but was made to read or repeat hymns to his sisters. He was a serious boy, and was afraid to swear and blaspheme. He was obstinate and given to lying, but afraid to go to bed if he had done anything wrong, as he had a dread of waking in hell. He always said his prayers and made vows before God to lead a better life. Often, after lies and Sabbath-breaking he would look at Proverbs 30. 17; "The eye *that* mocketh at *his* father, and despiseth to obey *his* mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." A visit to an aunt on her death bed left a deep impression on his mind. He heard her say to a relative, "Mary, you may think it a lie, but indeed it is the truth. This night the Lord stood by me

and invited me to drink of the fountain of life freely; and I shall stand before the Lord bold as a lion.” This made Cennick pray that he too, like his aunt, might be prepared for heaven. When his mother entered the room and looked at his aunt, she said, “Poor soul!” – but the dying one replied, “Who dares call me poor? I am rich in Christ! I have got Christ! I am rich.” Until his own death, Cennick often thought with tears of his aunt’s dying words – they left such a deep impression on him.

But at the age of fifteen, he broke away from parental control and for three or four years sowed his wild oats – cards, singing, horse-racing, dancing, the theatre. But his worldly life was not to last. Walking in Cheapside (as he records in the autobiographical Preface to his hymns) in London one day, the Holy Spirit convicted him of his sinful state before a Holy God, and these convictions lasted more or less for two or three years, though at the time he was not fully aware that it was the Lord who was working in his heart. This lack of understanding led him to pursue (as Luther) a “holy” life of temperance and abstinence, and regular attendance at Communion at St. Lawrence’s Church, hoping to appease the Lord’s anger against his sins. He prayed; he fasted; he watched; yet the more he strove, the more he fell into sin and temptation. Finally in September 1737, as he records in the Preface to his Hymns, he was blessed with deliverance in St. Lawrence’s Church. In the following year, he was asked one evening to take part in a game of cards. This he refused to do, only to be told by a member of the company that there was “a similar stupid religious fellow” in Oxford, called Kinchin. This led Cennick to go to Oxford, praying that the Lord would bring him into contact with Kinchin. He met him and found him to be a man after his own heart. Cennick had read Whitefield’s *Journal* lent to him in 1738 and he had longed to meet the author. Through Kinchin and the group at Oxford, Cennick was directed to Whitefield, whom he eventually met at James Hutton’s house in London.

Whitefield asked him to become a schoolmaster at the school he and John Wesley were hoping to open at Kingswood near Bristol, the place where the Lord had abundantly blessed His word in the opening days of the great Evangelical Awakening in the 18th Century. So Cennick came among the men who were to take a leading part in the work of the Revival. It was at Kingswood (as he records in the Preface) that his mouth was first opened to preach the gospel on Thursday 14th June 1740. He was young, only twenty-one, yet having passed through deep

soul trouble, and having obtained a manifest deliverance, he was able like the Lord's servant Paul to "straightway" preach Jesus.

His Hymns and the valuable autobiographical Preface were published in 1741, just a year after he commenced preaching, and relate mainly to the years of his conviction and deliverance. The reader will see how they relate to his experience, and centre around the period before and after he was brought into gospel liberty on 7th September 1737, through the application by the Holy Spirit of the words, "Great are the troubles of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all," and, "They that put their trust in Him shall not be destitute." (Coverdale's translation of Psalm 34. 19 & 22). He says of this experience, "I had just reason to think, 'Who can be more destitute than I?' when I was overwhelmed with joy. I believed there was mercy. My heart danced for joy and my dying soul revived. I heard the voice of Jesus saying, 'I am thy salvation.'" How sweet, how real, how blessed a deliverance could Cennick speak of, write about, and preach – those things which he had tasted, handled and felt of the good word of life. These hymns were the vital outpouring of his soul under a period of conviction and gracious deliverance, as Christ was revealed to him as his Saviour – all before he was nineteen.

Cennick accepted the invitation of George Whitefield to become headmaster of the school which was to be built for the children of the colliers at Kingswood. He was authorised to teach, visit the sick and expound the Scriptures. But within a short time he felt led to preach the gospel and his labours gradually extended to the surrounding villages. The Holy Spirit attended his ministry with power and many were deeply convicted of the evil of their lives. Then as the Lord's blessing was felt, so a division developed between Cennick and John Wesley, with Whitefield supporting Cennick and Charles Wesley siding with his brother John – the matter in dispute being the preaching of free-will, universal redemption and perfectionism by John Wesley, which neither Whitefield nor Cennick could accept. As Cennick preached against freewill and perfectionism, John Wesley preached against predestination, a truth which Cennick believed. Eventually John Wesley came to Bristol and expelled Cennick from his position as teacher there and his membership of the Society. It was a deeply painful experience for Cennick, just brought into contact with the Evangelical Revival, to find such bitterness and dissent in its midst. Yet he had only stood for the truth as he had been taught it. He was not alone in his

stand. George Whitefield wrote to him, "It is a trying time now in the church. The Lord give us a due mixture of the lamb and the lion."

Cennick united those who supported him at Kingswood into an Independent Society and then went to London and preached at Whitefield's Tabernacle, before returning to Gloucestershire, where he met Howell Harris, the Welsh itinerant minister from Talgarth, who had been convinced of his sins and blessed with their pardon on Whitsunday 1735, and had at once started to preach the gospel. The two had much in common. Cennick set out with Harris to preach in North Wiltshire. He began his ministry at the invitation of William Orchard, who had heard him preach at Sudbury in Gloucestershire, and now invited him to Castle Coombe, where he preached to a congregation of several thousand, in July 1740. In the next year, he preached to congregations in various towns and villages in Wiltshire, while keeping in contact with his congregation at Kingswood. With Howell Harris, he commenced a preaching tour, beginning at Swindon. They met with fierce resistance, muskets being fired over their heads till their faces were black, and water and filth being thrown over them. From Swindon they went to Stratton St. Margaret, where a butcher had prepared a quantity of blood to throw over them. He was restrained from accomplishing his purpose, but a few days later when Cennick tried to preach again, the crowd became wild and he and his friends were forced to take refuge in a Baptist chapel, many being injured and Cennick having his shoulders blackened with bruises.

It soon became known, as Cennick records in his Diary, that many of those who opposed his ministry and organised the mobs had come to sudden and awful ends, often dying cursing. One of his principal enemies fell from his horse and died. Cennick records these events in his Diary, not as judgments, but as the means by which his tormentors were silenced. As he preached, he spoke of the love and mercy of God, who had saved him in Christ. All the time he was in constant contact with George Whitefield, and regarded himself, though not an ordained minister in the Church of England, as an assistant to Whitefield, of whose Tabernacle at Moorfields, London, he was a trustee. With Whitefield's approval he published his sermons and occasionally Whitefield would write a preface, as he did for one Cennick preached at the Tabernacle in London on Thursday evening, 10th October 1743, his text being Mark 5. 34; "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague;" Whitefield's preface was signed

from “Brinkworth, Wilts., 19th December 1743.” For Whitefield, Cennick composed a number of hymns which were sung at Whitefield’s meetings. Whitefield also came down to Wiltshire to baptise children and administer the Communion. In this way Cennick regarded himself as a loyal member of the Church of England. As he preached, so he established groups of believers, known as Societies, composed of people who remained within the Church of England. Such Societies were set up at Bath, Brinkworth, Foxham, East Tytherton and other places.

In 1741 he published the first volume of his Hymns together with the autobiographical preface. He also printed a second volume of Hymns in 1742, together with some of the sermons he preached in the West Country at such places as Little Somerford in 1740 from Acts 2. 38-39, Malmesbury 1741, John 3. 3, and Bristol 1742, 2 Corinthians 13. 5, together with a further five preached in 1744 in Devon and Cornwall at Exeter, Bideford, Plymouth and St. Ginnis. Some of these sermons which were published individually have hymns attached to them and occasionally a prayer is recorded with them. With Cennick as their leader the Societies in Wiltshire formed the Wiltshire Association, which was joined to the English Association with Whitefield as its leader. On 25th October 1742, as the Revival spread in Wiltshire, and the parish churches in which Cennick or his supporters were allowed to preach became scarce, Cennick bought a house and some ground at East Tytherton near Chippenham. Here he established his headquarters for the next three years. Here he preached under a pear tree, and here he laid the corner-stone of a chapel, and to this place Whitefield, Howell Harris and his supporters gathered from time to time – a hallowed spot in those early days of the 18th Century Evangelical Revival. (The chapel is still there today, a Moravian Church, and a chair and two offertory plates are made from the wood of the pear tree under which Cennick preached.)

In the years 1743-1745, Cennick was coming under a new influence – that of the Moravians and their leaders, Zinzendorf, Spangenberg, Peter Bohler and James Hutton. He also had received a call to preach in Ireland where he was to spend much of the latter part of his life. In the West Country the Societies were in disorder, lacking any proper Church government, and largely unattached, though claiming allegiance to the Church of England. Cennick decided that he would join the Moravian Church and unite his West Country Societies to it, thus

leaving himself free to leave Wiltshire and go to Ireland. Howell Harris tried to dissuade him, but having made known his intention to Whitefield, he called the leaders of the Wiltshire Societies to East Tytherton on 18th December 1745, and after a conference they unanimously signed an invitation to the Moravians to take control of the Wiltshire Societies. So Cennick's Wiltshire Societies became a part of the Moravian Church in England and at Malmesbury and East Tytherton these churches survive.

Then, leaving Wiltshire, he went to London and set off on a visit to Germany with a Moravian, John Paul Weiss, leaving England on 4th January 1746 and returning just over four months later on 21st May. After a long journey, he eventually reached Count Zinzendorf's castle at Marieborn, visited the Moravian Theological College at Lindheim and then went to Herrnhag, the Moravian Community Settlement, where Protestants of many nationalities lived together in a community settlement. While there Cennick preached to the congregation, and after a delay of eighteen months was finally accepted as a member of the Moravian Church. This delay, from the time of his first applying until his acceptance, shows that the Moravian Church did not treat membership lightly.

On his return to England, Cennick went first to London, and then set out for Ireland, riding on horseback to Holyhead, from where he crossed to Dublin. He preached in a hall in Skinners Alley, Dublin, and later formed a Moravian Church there. In the same year, he received an invitation to the North, to Ballymena, where he preached with great power – but did not stay for long, soon returning to Dublin, and staying there for the next two years. At the end of this period, he crossed over to England, and came back to Wiltshire for a short while. In writing to Mr Hutton from Wiltshire, in the period 1742-5, he had often mentioned some friends he had, called Mr and Mrs Bryant, who lived in Clack (Wiltshire), but had never mentioned that they had a daughter, Jane. Now, however, while in Wiltshire, he was married to Jane Bryant, and returned to Dublin with her. She accompanied him in many of his preaching journeys, and frequently travelled with him to Ulster. Here he preached with great power, and under his ministry, the counties of the North witnessed a great awakening. In all this, he was not without strong opposition, especially from the magistrates, who tried to have him arrested, because, as a Moravian, he refused to take the oath of

allegiance to the Crown, on the grounds that he felt oaths were unscriptural.

For the next five years, he was engaged in preaching, and forming religious Societies in the Counties of Antrim, Down, Derry, Armagh, Tyrone, Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal. At Bailee, not far from Ballymena, to the north of Belfast, he preached on one occasion to a crowd of ten thousand, and at Ballynahone to another similar congregation. All over the Northern Counties, he preached to large crowds in barns and the open air. Sometimes he rode on horseback, sometimes he walked many miles. With him he had a group of Moravian preachers, and his work in Northern Ireland was regarded by him as a missionary task for the Moravian Church. By 1752 he had built ten Moravian Chapels, and had organised forty Societies. It was estimated before his death in 1755, that he had founded no fewer than two hundred and twenty religious Societies and preaching places in Northern Ireland.

By 1755, Cennick's strength was beginning to fail. His labours in the ministry had been great, and he began to suffer from physical weakness and depression. Among his papers, after his death, were found the following lines:-

But take it not amiss! O! be not grieved!
 I want from pilgrimage to be relieved.
 I want to be dissolved and no more here
 A wanderer be, a banished foreigner.
 I would not Thee offend: Thou know'st my heart,
 Nor one short day before Thy time depart;
 But I am weary and dejected, too:
 O let me to eternal mansions go.

Here was one who had been so blessed, now brought so low—and yet the Lord knew His servant's labours. He had had a home with Jane, first at Craighilly, and afterwards at Gloonen near Ballymena. Also, he had two little daughters. Yet he seemed to feel his work was done. In his latter years, his work had not been confined to Ireland. He had preached and established a Moravian Society at Leominster in Herefordshire. He had kept on friendly terms with Howell Harris, and often at his request visited and preached in Wales, and had established a Society at Haverfordwest. He had preached frequently at the Moravian Chapel in Fetter Lane, London. He had also preached in Essex, in

Bedford and at Ockbrook in Derbyshire; and in numbers of places in Yorkshire to large congregations.

Now his health was declining. He had with his own hands helped lay the foundations of some of his chapels in Ireland. But during his last years the Moravians were coming under attack, and one of those who was most to the fore in this was George Whitefield. Cennick had not become a member of the Moravian Church until 25th March 1746. He had been made a deacon in 1749. For the last nine years of his life he had separated himself from the Church of England, though he still had many friends in her midst. He wrote to a friend, Johannes de Watteville, in 1755, "I think I have finished with the North of Ireland. I am leaving just at the right time. I am ready to go wherever the Saviour wants me, but best of all would be to go to the Lord Himself. If I stay here much longer, I fear I shall damage His work." In his notebook he wrote:-

Now Lord, at peace with Thee and all below,
 Let me depart and to Thy kingdom go:
 I long to kiss that hand which once me blessed.
 Those feet that travelled to procure my rest;
 Those lips that me confessed, and that dear head
 That bowed when on it all my sins were laid.

He went for the last time to Dublin, opened a new chapel in Booter Lane, and preached to a large congregation. He planned to cross to England, go to South Wales, Bristol and on to London. He crossed over to Holyhead, but by then was very ill with a fever; so he changed his plans and rode straight to London to his Moravian brethren at Fetter Lane, where he arrived after a journey of five days, on Saturday afternoon 28th June 1755, a dying man. He lay for a week in the vestry of the Chapel in Fetter Lane. While delirious, he was heard to say several times, "Dear Saviour, give me patience." Bishop Gambold visited him and told him his illness might be his last. Cennick replied. "I should like that best of all. I want to be taken to His arms." He tried to repeat one of his favourite verses:-

Yes! their last look, serene and clear,
 Shall witness they believers were.

but he faltered in the middle of the first line and became unconscious, passing away at 7pm on 4th July 1755. He was thirty-six. He was laid to rest in the Moravian Burial Ground, called Sharon's Garden, in

Chelsea, (this graveyard is still there today), eight hundred people attending his funeral.

The 1741 volume of his hymns did not contain well known hymns of his, such as, *Children of the Heavenly King*, or *Jesus my all to heaven is gone*. However, *Ere I sleep for every favour, Be present at our table Lord*, and, *We bless Thee, Lord, for this our food* are found there. His published works, beside his hymns, include, *An Exhortation to steadfastness*, addressed to his Wiltshire congregations; *A Treatise of the Holy Ghost*; *A short Catechism for the Instruction of Youth in the Doctrines of Jesus Christ*; and his sermons, published singly, in two Volumes 1753-4, entitled *Village Discourses*. John Julian D.D. in his *Dictionary of Hymnology* gives the following details regarding Cennick's Hymns:- (1) *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God in the Days of their Pilgrimage*, London, J. Lewis, not dated; 2nd Edition, London B. Milles 1741, Parts ii, iii, 1742; (2) *Sacred Hymns for the Use of Religious Societies, etc.*, Bristol, F. Farley, 1743; (3) *A Collection of Sacred Hymns, etc.*, Dublin, S. Powell, 3rd Edition, 1749; (4) *Hymns to the honour of Jesus Christ, composed for such little children as desire to be saved*, Dublin, S. Powell, 1754; additional hymns in the Moravian Hymnbook 1789, of which Cennick's son-in-law, Rev. J. Swertner was editor; also sixteen of his hymns in his *Sermons*, 2 Vols, 1753-4, some being old hymns rewritten, and others new.

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J. C. Philpot

By J. R. Broome

A lecture given at the Reformed Congregation in Barneveld, The Netherlands, in 2003.

The year 2002 marked the 200th anniversary of the birth of J. C. Philpot. Great would have been his surprise to think that 133 years after his death, his birth (13th September 1802) would be commemorated. The fact that it was not only commemorated in England but in the Netherlands, is not suprising, as Philpot had friends (G. Tips of Rotterdam and H. Bokma of Heeg in Friesland) there in his lifetime with whom he communicated and to whom he felt a spiritual union. J. A. Saarberg, in his biography *Der Pelgrims Metgezel* (1967) devotes a whole chapter (20) to *Kontakten met Holland*. Philpot knew

Dutch, German and French. The reason for the continued interest in his life and ministry is well known. His preaching has touched a chord in The Netherlands among the godly. Here was a man after the spirit and calibre of Theodorus van der Groe – a man deeply grounded by the Holy Spirit in a knowledge of his fallen, ruined, sinful human nature – equally a man to whom Christ had been blessedly revealed as his Redeemer. His preaching carried the hallmark of one who had walked out the truths for which he contended. He was no stranger to that path hidden from eyes of the wise and prudent and revealed to babes.

His father was a minister in the State Church, Vicar of the parish of Ripple in Kent. He had been a student at Emmanuel College, Cambridge and was a graduate of that University. He was a learned scholar, and realising that his son Joseph was a child of considerable ability, at a very early age he started to train him in the fundamentals of Greek and Latin. His mother (Maria Lafargue) came from pure Huguenot stock. Peter Lafargue, her father, was the only child of a French mother whose ancestors had come from St Lo in Normandy, and a French father, Elias Lafargue, who had been brought to England by his widowed mother at the age of two in 1692 from the Dordogne valley of southern France. The forebears of these great-grandparents of J. C. Philpot had all suffered bitter persecution for their faith after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685. Elias eventually went to Clare College, Cambridge and graduated in the University. Dr J. H. Philpot, the youngest son of J. C. Philpot, says in *The Seceders* (1931) (his book on the life of his father), “My great-grandfather, Peter Lafargue, had not a single drop of English blood in his veins, and his daughter Maria may fairly be described as half a Huguenot. It was from her, beyond a doubt, and not from the placid Rector of Ripple, that my father derived his most salient characteristics, his warm and sensitive temperament, his firm and passionate devotion to truth, his gift of speech, restrained as it always was by a peculiarly-French lucidity of thought and orderliness of presentment, and lastly his fresh complexion, his coal-black hair and his wonderful eyes. No pure-bred Englishman ever looked out upon the world with eyes like his, large, dark, luminous eyes, which could flash and lower and blaze and melt and in fact do anything but twinkle.” Added to which there is every indication that Philpot was probably about 1.90 metres tall.

At the age of nine his father sent him away to boarding school, to the Merchant Taylor’s School in London. There he developed tuberculosis

and was brought home to recover or die. In fact he made a partial recovery and then suffered the effects of a weak chest all his life. He was the fifth child of a family of eight (four boys and four girls) and between the age of eight and eighteen he saw four of his brothers and sisters who had died from the disease buried in Ripple Parish Churchyard. Who can judge what the effects of such events had on him? While recovering at home he read prolifically from his father's library. Then he was sent to St Paul's School in London in the shadow of the great Cathedral, where he remained from his twelfth to his nineteenth year. He studied Hebrew, Greek and Latin and was able to translate fluently from the two dead languages and compose verse and prose in both. Eventually having gained an open scholarship at Worcester College he went up to Oxford University in the autumn of 1821. Sadly his father died suddenly with a stroke in February 1823 while he was at University. He took a First in Classics in 1824 and stayed at the University for the following eighteen months teaching pupils privately.

In the year 1826 he was invited by a rich gentleman from Ireland to go there to be tutor to his two sons. Tempted by the large salary, he left Oxford and went out to Ireland. He says that at this time the grace of God had not touched his soul. There he developed a great affection for the sister of his pupils, a beautiful, intelligent, serious-minded girl. Their affection was real and deep, but her parents judged, that although Philpot was a Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, he was not rich enough for their daughter, nor was his health good enough, and so she was sent away to friends. This brought Philpot into a distraction of grief and in the Lord's mysterious purposes it was the means of the beginning of the work of grace in his soul. Years later in writing a review in the *Gospel Standard* for 1855 he said, "I have every reason to love Ireland, for there, in the early Spring of 1827, the first beams of light and life visited my previously dead soul, and Irish valleys and mountains witnessed the first tears and prayers that went up out of my heart to the throne of grace." In his sermon, *Winter afore Harvest*, preached at Oakham in August 1837, he says, "Well do I remember the place – a little garden hidden by buildings and overgrown by shrubs – where this flower opened in my soul. But the buildings could not hide it, nor the evergreens shade it, nor the damp close it. The bud opened, the flower burst forth, and at the same moment the eye

looked up and the mouth uttered, 'Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.*'"

When he returned to Oxford from Ireland in 1827, his whole life was changed. His friends could detect a difference in him. No longer could he enjoy the godless company of the College and eventually in 1828 he decided to leave his College and the University and become the minister of the Anglican Church at Stadhampton, a village south of Oxford. He took rooms in a farmhouse and ministered among the villagers until 1835. Here the Lord deepened his work in his soul, and as a result he began to feel that he could not stay in a Church which allowed ungodly persons to come to the Communion Table. Anyone baptised as an infant and confirmed as an adolescent was allowed to take Communion. Also Philpot was required, according to the Prayer Book of the Church of England, to bury all his parishioners in sure and certain hope of eternal life. Many had led an utterly godless life. Here his ministry was greatly blessed and many flocked from the surrounding district to hear his preaching. Here he met William Tiptaft who was a minister at a nearby Church of England at Sutton Courtney. Tiptaft had similar exercises to him and in 1831 left the Church of England and founded a Strict Baptist Chapel in Abingdon. But before Tiptaft seceded, in the winter of 1830-31, Philpot stayed at the Rectory at Sutton Courtney with him, and Tiptaft nursed him through a serious chest infection for several months. In this illness Philpot was greatly blessed in his soul.

About this time, Joseph Parry, a farmer and deacon of a newly built (1827) chapel at Allington in Wiltshire had heard of J. C. Philpot from William Tiptaft. He went to meet Philpot at Stadhampton hoping that he would leave the Church of England and come as minister to the Strict Baptist Chapel at Allington. The outcome was that Philpot left the Church of England in March 1835 and went to Allington in June. (Over the pulpit in Allington Chapel is a monument recording that Philpot preached his first sermon among the Strict Baptists in that Chapel in June 1835 and his last sermon among them in September 1869.) He now felt constrained to be baptised by immersion and was baptised by John Warburton of Trowbridge on his birthday, 13th September 1835, at the age of thirty-three. He stayed at Allington until June 1836 and preached to large congregations who travelled to hear him from all the surrounding villages. His preaching was in these days very searching. Carby Tuckwell, the elder, and a great friend of Philpot,

described how he felt the preaching to be so close that he wondered if Philpot knew about his soul exercises and was preaching purposely at him. But later he felt the real value of the preaching.

Leaving Allington in 1836, Philpot went to Abingdon to preach for Tiptaft and then to Oakham in Rutlandshire to preach for some of Tiptaft's relations, and later to Stamford. Preaching at Cambridge, Welwyn and London he eventually returned to Allington in September. But his ministry had been so blessed at Oakham and Stamford that he had a desire to return there, which he did in October, and remained there during the winter. Here in October 1836 he preached and published the sermon, *The Heir of Heaven walking in Darkness and the Heir of Hell walking in Light* (on Isa. 50. 10, 11).

Now his travels began to widen. In September 1837 he was at Manchester preaching for William Gadsby. There he printed his second sermon, *Winter afore Harvest*, and shortly afterwards was busy preparing for publication John Warburton's book, *The Mercies of a Covenant God*. In 1838 he returned to Allington for two months. In July of that year he was married at Oakham to Sarah Keal, a daughter of William Tiptaft's sister, and honeymooned with her at Plymouth, the home of his mother, after a sea trip by paddle steamer from London to Plymouth. By this time he had received a call to be pastor of the Strict Baptist Churches at Stamford and Oakham, which he now accepted. So in the autumn of 1838 he went to his new home at Rutland Terrace, Stamford and his pastorate at Stamford and Oakham. Here he was to remain for the next twenty-six year until his health failed in 1864 and he moved to Croydon, to a drier and warmer climate, and sat under the ministry of Francis Covell at West Street Chapel. Farmer Parry was disappointed at Allington in his hope that Philpot would be his pastor, but every year Philpot came to Allington to preach for two or three months, enjoy the Wiltshire summer, ride the hills on one of farmer Parry's horses and preach to large congregations in the little chapel.

In April 1838, Philpot wrote his first review in *The Gospel Standard* on Warburton's *The Mercies of a Covenant God*. It was the first of a long series of reviews. After the death of William Gadsby in 1844, Philpot worked as assistant Editor of the *Gospel Standard* with John M'Kenzie and when the latter died in August 1848 Philpot became sole Editor of the *Gospel Standard* and continued so until his death in 1869. His sermons were printed in large quantities and sold all over the world. Many were eventually translated into Dutch. He

became the leader of a distinguished group of Gospel Standard ministers which included John Warburton, John Kershaw, William Tiptaft, Thomas Godwin, Francis Covell, and Joseph Tanner. John Warburton lived until 1857 and the humble Lancashire weaver and the Oxford scholar (who read his Bible each day in the original languages) found a great union of heart together. At their first meeting at Abingdon they had both feared each other, one feeling his lack of education, the other his lack of grace.

It was also in 1844 after the death of William Gadsby that Philpot had one of the most precious spiritual experiences of his life. In a Preface to his book *The Eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ*, published in December 1860, he says, "It pleased the Lord in November 1844 to lay me for three weeks on a bed of sickness when I was much favoured in my soul. My heart was made soft and my conscience tender. I read the word with great sweetness and much of a spirit of prayer and was enabled to confess my sins with a measure of real contrition of spirit. One morning about 10 o'clock after reading some of Doctor Owen's *Meditation of the Glory of Christ*, I had a gracious manifestation of the Lord Jesus to my soul. I saw nothing by the bodily eye; but it was as if I could see the Lord Jesus by the eye of faith just over the foot of my bed; and I saw three things in him which filled me with admiration and adoration: 1) his eternal Godhead 2) his pure and holy Manhood 3) his glorious Person as God-man. What I felt at the sight, I leave those to judge who have ever had a view by faith of the Lord...and they will know best what holy desires and tender love flowed forth and how I begged of him to come and take full possession of my heart." While he was in the sweetness of this blessing the words in Matthew 17 were sealed in his heart,: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." This account of his experience was written in December 1860 at the time when he was defending the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ, which had at that time been denied by some Strict Baptist Churches and ministers. In his lifetime Philpot stood fearlessly for the truth and in his position as Editor of the *Gospel Standard* he was involved in various controversies and ably defended the truth. He was excellent in his reviews of books of theology and very skilled in exposing error.

So J. C. Philpot continued his ministry at Stamford and Oakham, visiting Allington regularly each year in the summer months to the August of 1869 when he preached his last sermon on earth in the little

chapel there. He returned to Croydon and sat under the ministry of Francis Covell with whom he had a deep spiritual union. He continued to edit the *Gospel Standard*, but was unable to preach again. The effects of the affliction of his youth were now taking their toll on his strength and gradually he declined, dying on 9th December 1869 at the comparatively early age of sixty-seven. His funeral was taken on a bitter winter's day at Queens Road Cemetery, Croydon, by his friends Francis Covell and Thomas Godwin. His sermons are still in print in English and Dutch, and are widely used still in reading services. His voice is not silent. "He being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11. 4). They said on the day of his funeral that a Prince in Israel had fallen. He combined great learning with great grace. He was a scholar in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, yet the Lord had humbled him as a little child. Still today his sermons are read in our churches as in yours. Still we seek for the same power to rest upon the preaching as it did in his day.

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LETTERS, ADDRESSES AND SERMONS

A sermon preached by John Raven, at Ebenezer Chapel, Clapham, on Wednesday Evening 16th March, 1938

"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost"
(Matt. 18. 11)

One thing does sparkle throughout the whole of the record that we have of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is this, that He is kind to sinners. A sweet thought that has been to some of us, that the Lord Jesus is kind to sinners. His heart is filled with the tenderest compassion to poor sinners; with the deepest sympathy toward poor sinners; with the kindest goodwill toward poor sinners; filled with grace for poor sinners; thoughts of peace toward poor sinners. In His teaching again and again He emphasises this blessed truth, that He was sent by the Father to undertake the cause of poor, lost sinners. "He shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save *him* from those that condemn his soul" (Ps 109. 31). When a man feels, in some measure, by the Spirit's teaching, what a sinner he is, how guilty he is; when he is filled with shame and realises the woefulness of a lost condition, and he gets an inkling of this truth, O how attractive it is to him that Christ is the Friend of sinners. As Mr. Hart says,

Christ is the Friend of sinners, be that forgotten never.

And as He went about in His ministry, O the words of grace that came from His lips and dropped into the weary hearts of poor sinners who were round about Him, so that they were attracted with the powerful influence of His grace. O, they felt in hearing Him preach the gospel to the poor that this was what their poor souls needed, that this alone could satisfy their hunger, could quench their thirst, could meet their deep need. That was their conviction, and so, as we read just now, publicans and sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. He laid no harsh impositions upon them, He laded them with no burdens. He said to them, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.” They had never heard such words as these from the lips of their religious teachers. They had heard nothing but the crack of the legal whip in listening to their religious teachers; grievous burdens were laid upon them, impossible tasks, and do what people could, they could make no progress in that way; they were in bondage. But the ministry of Christ spoke of liberty, it was the trumpet of Jubilee; He proclaimed “liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound.” There was nothing in His Person or teaching to forbid and discourage the approach of poor sinners, however guilty and vile, however sick and polluted. Elihu said, “Behold, I *am* according to thy wish in God’s stead: I also am formed out of the clay. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.” In that word, Elihu was a blessed type of the Lord Jesus Christ. His hand was not heavy upon poor sinners; there are no terrors in Him to frighten poor sinners from His feet, but everything to allure them.

What an attractive Object was Christ as He went about in His ministry, preaching as He was anointed to preach of the Holy Ghost, and He said, “The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor” and so on. So we find this again and again, He speaks to the fears and discouragements that beset poor people who would come to Him, He answers the accusations of their adversary who would keep them back from Him, by saying this, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out”. He was full of grace and truth. So here in our text He says, “For the Son of Man is come to

save that which was lost.” Wonderful truth! Wonderful it is for a poor sinner to be enabled to believe it, to feel the truth and reality of it in his own heart, “The Son of man is come to save that which was lost”. The Lord Jesus Christ had just been giving the disciples some instruction in the matter of humility, and He called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them and said, “Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven”. And so He goes on to speak of these little ones; and who are these little ones, who receive the kingdom of heaven as little children? Who are they? Why, they are just poor, sensible sinners; they are people who are given, by the Spirit of God, such a real and solemn sense of their sinnership, that with all humility and sincerity of heart and mind they go before God and set themselves down in the lowest place at His feet. As the hymnwriter expresses it, “To Thee I come a sinner weak, To Thee I come a sinner poor, To Thee I come a sinner great, To Thee I come a sinner vile.” They come, and it matters not how low He sets them down in His Word, they fall under it. They say like the Syrophenician woman when the Lord seemed to call her a dog, “Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.” It is these people, who, being given such a sense of their sinnership, guilt, ruin and helplessness before God, answer to the description the Lord gives here when He says, “The Son of man is come to save that which was **lost**.”

First of all let us notice briefly this expression, “The Son of man.” There is for a poor sinner something so attractive when the Spirit speaks it in the heart, when the Spirit interprets somewhat of its meaning. “The Son of man”! The Lord Jesus Christ Himself manifested great delight in this title of His; He delighted in it before the worlds were made. He looked forward before there were either angels or men formed; He looked forward to that point in time when He should come forth from the Father, sent by the Father, and should be born of a woman. God sent “his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” “When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law”. And the great Son of God said, “Then I was by him, *as one brought up with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.” That was before the world was made. He looked forward to that which lay in the purposes of the Three-One God concerning this world, and man upon it, and

concerning the election of grace; and He looked forward to that body which He was to take into union with Himself. He looked forward with delight to it, looked forward with delight to the time when He should come forth from the Father and be clothed with human nature, and should do His Father's will upon this earth. "I delight to do thy will, O my God." "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me".

So this Son of Man is the eternal, the only-begotten Son of the Father in truth and love, and you know, when a soul is in some measure enlightened by the Holy Ghost and enabled to receive the truth, it is made a very precious, a very glorious truth to that soul. O how he loves it. How he exults in it, that Christ is God, that this Son of man is truly the Son of God, that in this Person of Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. "The Son of man"! But then we have here the Person who is not only truly, properly the eternal Son of the eternal Father, but we have particularly before us that human nature which He took into union with Himself, which He condescended to assume. The hymnwriter speaks of "the loves of our descending God," and I like that expression. O what condescending love is here; that the great Son of God of whom it is said "from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God"; of whom it is true, the "heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded", should condescend to be born of a woman, laid in a manger, be "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" upon this earth, a Man of poverty; experiencing weariness and pain and temptation, entering into the trials and afflictions of His people in their daily lives, entering into them in a personal experience of daily life here upon earth, and that the humblest and most laborious kind of life.

Nothing brought Him from above, nothing but redeeming love.

One says: "On wings of love the Saviour flies...to take a human birth." Then there is this to consider, that He came as the Father's Servant. He came to do His Father's will, to labour and to suffer for His Church, as Jacob willingly laboured and suffered hardship that he might have Rachel for his wife. So the Son of God became incarnate in order that He might labour and suffer for His Church, that He might purchase her for Himself at the great price of His own most precious blood. "The Son of man"! The Son of Man was under the law; He was responsible as the Surety of the Church to fulfil every jot and tittle of the law; His every thought, word and act was foursquare with that law. The eyes of

infinite purity never saw in His Person or in His life on earth the least thing that was contrary to that law, contrary to His Father's will; He answered to it perfectly. "And this *is* his name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." O, the perfect obedience of Christ as the Surety of the Church is very sweet to His believing people when they are led into it; it is food for faith. The believing people of God do love to be enabled to feed upon Christ's eternal righteousness as imputed to them. When a man is favoured to realise this, his filthy rags are gone, and he is dressed in garments white as snow, even the garment woven in everlasting love; such a garment as that the all-seeing eye of Jehovah can detect no flaw in it; and the one arrayed in it is without spot or blemish or any such thing. The Son of Man came to do this, and obey the law for righteousness for His people.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Jonathan Edwards and *Religious Affections*

By Dr. P. Wilkins

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) was an outstanding American preacher. He lived during times of great revival, but the reality of this revival was questioned by many. In connection with this Edwards was forced to think about what he called the most important question of all – how can we judge whether our religion is true or false? His most important contribution to answering this question came in his 1754 work on *Religious Affections*. This review is intended to give an overview of Edwards' teaching in this work.

Edwards starts by saying that, "True religion, in great part, consists in holy affections". But by "affections" Edwards does not just mean feelings – he is saying that true religion is really demonstrated by the attitude of the heart. As Edwards says: "The holy Scriptures do everywhere place religion very much in the affection; such as fear, hope, love, hatred, desire, joy, sorrow, gratitude, compassion, and zeal." Edwards is saying that true religion will always influence or "affect" every part of a man – and that a religion that does not affect us is not worth having.

But Edwards recognises that a man may have what could be called "religious" affections, and yet actually be unconverted. And so he

attempts to give some hints as to how we should view certain “affections”. He gives first 12 “symptoms” that do *not* prove affections to be gracious (although it is very important to remember that these signs also do not prove the opposite), and then 12 “distinguishing signs of truly gracious affections”.

12 signs that do not prove (or disprove) that affections are gracious:

1. **That the affections are very powerful is no proof that they are gracious.** There are religious affections which are very powerful, that are not spiritual and saving. When Christ rode into Jerusalem, the people, affected by the miracle of Lazarus’ resurrection, praised and worshipped – yet before long they were crying out for Him to be crucified.

2. **That the affections have great effects on the body is no proof that they are gracious.** Such effects often arise from great affections about non-spiritual things. On the other hand, we ought not to dismiss religious affections because they do have great physical effects.

3. **That the affections cause a man to be fluent and fervent in talking of the things of religion, is no proof that they are gracious.** Once again, we must be careful not to mistrust a person just because they are fluent and fervent in talking about religion. It is no proof one way or the other.

4. **It is no proof that the affections are gracious that a man did not make them himself, or excite them by his own efforts.** There are other spirits who have influence on the minds of men, besides the Holy Ghost. Satan can influence a man into feelings of false security or false love.

5. **That the affections come with texts of scripture, remarkably brought to the mind, is no proof that they are gracious.** Some people say things like, “There were such and such sweet promises brought to my mind: they came suddenly, as if they were spoken to me”, or “the word came with power”, and they suppose that this means their experience must have been from God. But there is no evidence that the devil cannot bring texts of Scripture to the mind, and misapply them to deceive persons, even “with power”.

6. **That there is an appearance of love in the affections is no proof that they are gracious.** Persons may *seem* to have love to God and Christ and yet have no grace.

7. **A person may have religious affections of many kinds, accompanying one another, but this is no proof that these affections are gracious.** Men, while in a state of nature, are capable of a resemblance of all kinds of religious affections; and so they may have many of them together.

8. **That comforts and joys seem to follow awakenings and convictions of conscience, in a certain order, is no proof that the affections are gracious.** It is no evidence that comforts and joys are gracious, just because they succeed great terrors, and intense fears of hell.

9. **That they dispose persons to spend much time in “religion”, is no proof that the affections are gracious.** See, for example, Martin Luther before his conversion.

10. **That a person is frequently inclined to praise and glorify God with his mouth, is no proof that the affections are gracious.** It is foretold that false professors should show a forwardness to glorify God: Isa. 66. 5.

11. **That the affections make a man very confident that he is saved, is no proof that the affections are gracious.** There is such a thing as true assurance, and we should pray for it – but a man may be sure that he is saved, and yet not be.

12. **That a man can talk about and display his affections in a way that makes other Christians think he is converted, is no proof that his affections are gracious.** The true saints are not able to know for sure who is godly, and who is not. Bright professors, who had been received as eminent saints, have often been known to fall away and come to nothing.

Edwards now moves on to give 12 signs of truly gracious affections. Edwards did not aim to allow us to discern for certain whether another person is truly saved. Nor did he intend to give signs that would enable a true Christian to know that he is saved if he is very low in grace, or has much departed from God, or is fallen into a “dead, carnal, and unchristian frame.”

12 signs of truly gracious and holy affections:

1. **Gracious affections always arise from divine influences and operations on the heart.** These divine influences are entirely above nature, or supernatural. Edwards’ explanation of this point is lengthy and not really possible to summarise here – read the book!

2. **Gracious affections are always primarily founded on the excellent nature of divine things, not self-interest.** A man who truly loves God does so primarily because God himself is lovely and worthy to be loved; not because of God's mercy to him. The true saint delights in God primarily because of God's own perfection; and he delights in Christ because of Christ's own beauty; the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

3. **Gracious affections are always founded on the loveliness of the moral excellency of divine things.** A true love to God begins with a delight in his holiness; for no other attribute is truly lovely without this. His holiness must be loved before any other of his attributes can be loved. True saints love the grace of God not just because this grace serves their interest (and so suits their self-love), but because this grace is beautiful in itself.

4. **Gracious affections always arise from the mind being enlightened to understand or apprehend divine things.** There are affections which do not arise from any spiritual understanding; and these affections are not spiritual. For example, affections arising from texts of scripture coming to the mind are vain, if the affection flows from the manner in which the text came, rather than on the teaching contained in it.

5. **Gracious affections are always attended with a conviction of the reality and certainty of divine things.** All those who are truly gracious persons have a solid, full, thorough and effectual conviction of the truth of the great things of the gospel. They no longer halt between two opinions; the great doctrines of the gospel cease to be any longer doubtful things, or matters of opinion.

6. **Gracious affections are always attended with evangelical humiliation.** The Christian has a sense of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousness. The Christians that are really the most eminent saints are ashamed of the low degrees of their love and thankfulness, and their little knowledge of God.

7. **Gracious affections are always accompanied by a change of nature.** If there has been no great and remarkable abiding change in a man, all his imaginations are vain, however he has been affected.

8. **Gracious affections are always attended with the lamblike, dovelike spirit and temper of Jesus Christ.** This is not to say that true Christians have no remains of a contrary spirit, and can never be guilty of behaviour disagreeable to such a spirit.

9. Gracious affections always soften the heart, and are attended and followed with a Christian tenderness of spirit. False affections have a tendency in the end to harden the heart.

10. Gracious affections always display beautiful symmetry and proportion. For example, the saints' joy and comfort is balanced with godly sorrow and mourning for sin.

11. The higher gracious affections are raised, the greater the spiritual appetite and longing of soul after spiritual attainments. Those with false affections rest satisfied in them. But for a Christian, the more he loves God with a gracious love, the more he desires to love him, and the more uneasy he is that he doesn't love him more; the more he hates sin, the more he desires to hate it, and is upset that he loves it so much; the more his heart is broken, the more he desires it should be broken; the more he longs after God and holiness, the more he longs to long.

12. Gracious and holy affections always have their exercise and fruit in Christian practice. This implies three things in the case of a true Christian:

a. That his behaviour or practice in the world will be conformed to, and directed by, Christian rules.

b. That he will make a business of such a holy practice above all things; that it be a business which he is chiefly engaged in, and devoted to, and pursues with highest earnestness and diligence: so that he may be said to make this practice of religion eminently his work and business.

c. That he will persist in it to the end of life: so that it may be said, not only to be his business at certain seasons, but the business of his life; it is the business which he perseveres in through all changes, and under all trials, as long as he lives. True saints may be guilty of some kinds and degrees of backsliding, and may be foiled by particular temptations, and may fall into sin, yea great sins; but they never can fall away so as to grow weary of religion, and the service of God, and habitually dislike and neglect it.

Some of Edwards' words may seem blunt and appear not to take into account that even the best Christians are very far from perfect. However this is because I have reduced the c.170,000 words of the original book into only c.1,700 words, so 99% of what Edwards said is missing. Really the only way to fully appreciate his teaching is to read the book. It is worth the effort that it requires!

CURRENT EVENTS

The Issue for 2012—Should Marriage be Legally Redefined

As the country has become more and more secularised and as professing Christianity and church attendance have markedly decreased, so there has risen in the nation a strong anti-Christian element. While the Bible is no longer the basis for our social structure and moral laws, it has been superseded by a secular rationalism, and laws have been passed in our National Parliament wholly at variance with the Bible. This has led to conflict and discussion of freedom of conscience in the face of a vociferous anti-Christian spirit. Adjudicating on anti-discrimination legislation passed in Parliament, the Judiciary has sided with the rationalistic, anti-Christian element and condemnation for the sake of conscience has been meted out in the Courts.

Now in 2012, the Government is set on redefining the institution of marriage, which is one of the key structures of our society. Debate as to the moral issue involved is not being allowed, but there is taking part during the first half of this year a period of consultation regarding the issues involved in such a redefinition. The matter was debated in the Scottish Parliament last December and it appears that the Scottish Government is leaning in this direction. If such a statute were passed in the Scottish Parliament, it would be bound to have repercussions south of the border. There is also pressure within the European Union for a similar redefinition of marriage. A meeting took place in January of this year between members of the European Union and members of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA). According to the Lisbon Treaty if a motion is signed by a million members of the European Union, then the EU must act to consider legislation in the matter. The aim of the ILGA is to move along this line of action in Europe.

So the whole concept of the redefinition of marriage will be a major issue throughout Europe during this year, with David Cameron making it a major issue of his party's political platform. But the issue is raising very considerable opposition from very many quarters in the nation. The issue does not concern legal rights, since these were granted to the Gay and Lesbian Community by the present Civil Partnership arrangements. The issue concerns the definition of marriage as a legal bond in which the government wishes to include all sexual combinations, though presumably family siblings will be excluded. It all centres around existing anti-discrimination legislation.

The issue has mobilised the professing Christian community throughout the country and there was formed in February "The Coalition for Marriage," which has already (April) attracted a third of a million signatures to maintain the status quo. Anglicans, Nonconformists and Roman Catholics are united in opposition to the matter seeing it as an attack on the Christian foundation of this nation. The issue is by far the most serious that the professing Christian Churches in our society have had to face. The structure of our society rests on the Scripturally ordained ordinance of marriage. When the Bible is removed as the basis of the laws of this land, then the nation is in a perilous state.

O Zion, afflicted with wave upon wave,
Whom no man can comfort, whom no man can save;
With darkness surrounded, by terrors dismayed,
In toiling and rowing thy strength is decayed.

Loud roaring, the billows now nigh overwhelm;
But skilful's the Pilot who sits at the helm;
His wisdom conducts thee, his power thee defends,
In safety and quiet thy warfare he ends.

"O fearful, O faithless!" in mercy he cries;
"My promise, my truth, are they light in thy eyes?
Still, still I am with thee; my promise shall stand;
Through tempest and tossing, I'll bring thee to land.

"Forget thee I will not, I cannot; thy name
Engraved on my heart does for ever remain;
The palms of my hands while I look on I see
The wounds I receivèd when suffering for thee.

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain;
Yet all are most needful; not one is in vain.

"Then trust me, and fear not; thy life is secure;
My wisdom is perfect, supreme is my power;
In love I correct thee, thy soul to refine,
To make thee at length in my likeness to shine."

J. Grant

PERCEPTION



Glorious things are spoken of thee,
O city of God. Psalm 87.3

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PERCEPTION

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EDITORIAL

“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil. 1. 21).

The apostle Paul, writing from his prison in Rome to the members of the church at Philippi, tells them that the Lord is with him and that he is walking out the precepts of the gospel. Like his master he has been falsely accused and is suffering for the sake of the gospel. In all his trials he is at peace with God, being made as clay in the hands of the heavenly potter. He sees all his circumstances as in the hands of his God. He can therefore write, “To me to live *is* Christ.”

There were those about him, who insincerely preached Christ of contention, supposing to add affliction to his bonds. There were others who preached Christ of love, knowing that Paul was set for the defence of the gospel. The apostle did not rebuke any of them, but rejoiced that whether in pretence or in truth Christ was preached and added, “I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice” (Phil. 1. 18). In the midst of all his sufferings, his imprisonment and bonds, he walked in humility, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering and forbearance in love, keeping “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4. 3). We see in the apostle the spirit of Christ. He was made like his Master and walked out the precepts which he urged upon the Philippians. He had humbled himself; lowliness, meekness, longsuffering and forbearance shone in him in the midst of his sufferings. He had put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind. He did not render evil for evil. He blessed those who persecuted him. He followed the precepts and thereby heaped coals of fire on the head of those that opposed him

He did not let any root of bitterness arise, but followed peace with all men. The fruit of the Spirit was manifest in him in love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. What an example he was of the spirit of Christ. As we look back we realise how far short we have come in our own lives of this example. We would do well to let this mind be in us, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in

the likeness of men, and humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. One thing is certain, if we are to walk out the precepts of the gospel, we shall need great grace, much prayer and watchfulness. The life and walk of the Lord's people is the fruit of the work of grace in their hearts. The Lord Jesus spoke in His day of the tree that bore fruit and the tree that bore no fruit. He spoke of the seed that was sown. Some was choked with the cares and riches of this world; some fell on stony ground; other bore fruit.

The precepts are the rule of life for God's people. They obey them in love to Christ and desire to walk in His ways, but often fall and come short of them. Yet there is a right desire to follow them and a seeking of grace so as not to neglect them. When the apostle wrote, "For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain," he was speaking of two things. One was the realisation of the presence of Christ with him and the other was walking out the precepts in all circumstances in his life. As James wrote in his epistle, "faith without works is dead". We may lay emphasis on a good hope through grace, but is there equal emphasis on our walk, conduct and conversation? What about, "Bless them that curse you"? Are we "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"? The precepts go on, "speak evil of no man"; "confess *your* faults one to another"; "let patience have *her* perfect work"; "Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ"; "godliness with contentment is great gain"; "be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience," "*be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing".

The preaching of the precepts and obedience to them is not legality. There is no merit regarding our salvation in keeping them, "for, the just shall live by faith." But the precept is, "add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (2 Pet. 1. 5–10). "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jam. 2. 17).

CURRENT ISSUES

Congo – Bringing God’s Word to a Troubled Land

By Dr. I. A. Sadler

I must record the Lord’s faithfulness and gracious hand in the midst of many difficulties during my visit to Eastern Congo in May 2012 as Chairman of Free Grace Evangelistic Association (FGEA). This visit proved to be the most challenging I have ever made, given the recent civil war in Congo and the extreme poverty. After flying via Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) and Entebbe (Uganda), I was met at Kigali airport in Rwanda by Pastor Wakula (co-ordinator of the FGEA branch in Eastern Congo). During the long journey the Lord blessed me with the words: “And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went” (2 Sam. 8. 6). I had need to pray that this might be true of me.

We immediately met difficulties with the journey to Cyangugu (a town on the Congo border). Instead of being able to take a bus, we had to obtain a taxi for the 7-hour mountainous journey across Rwanda. By God’s grace we arrived safely, and at first light we were able to cross the Congo border into the city of Bukavu, arriving just in time for me to speak at a 3-day pastors’ conference on the subject “Building on the Sure Foundation of God’s Word”. I was shocked by the poverty of Congo. Most homes were of very poor construction, with roads and pathways full of mud. Given the daily rains, I had to walk through slippery mud to get to the church. The church building itself was built of very basic materials (corrugated steel sheet roof, propped up by tree trunks, with plastic sheeting for the walls and mud floors). However, it was where the Lord gathered with us. I felt much liberty in preaching on Christ the living and incarnate Word; the written Word and Bible versions; and then practical godliness and the preaching of the Word. Pastor Wakula reported that I had said many challenging but necessary things for the churches in Congo.

What I said on Bible versions, and the corruption in many modern versions, was completely new to the Pastors present. As well as speaking about the English Bible, I also spoke about Bible versions in French. This led to animated discussions when I asked those with a French Bible (all were Second versions – the most common French version) to look at 1 John 5. 7. One Pastor had a Second French Bible with the full verse (which reads in English); “For there are three that

bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” Someone else had the word “Father” missing, and others had no such verse at all! There were also vital differences in 1 Timothy 3. 16. I observed that Louis Segond was a liberal theologian who opposed the doctrine of the inspiration of the scriptures, and that different organisations had used his corrupt translation and altered it as they saw fit. I then spoke about the most faithful version currently available in French, which is the David Martin version (but is difficult to obtain). I then turned to Isaiah 7. 14, where Christ, according to Segond, was born of a “jeune fille” (young woman), but in Martin was born of a “vierge” (virgin). In Revelation 19. 8 Segond states that the saints in heaven “se revêtir” (clothe themselves) with the fine linen which is “les oeuvres justes des saints” (the righteous works of the saints), whereas in Martin the saints in heaven “être vêtue” (are clothed) with the fine linen which is “la justice des Saints” (the righteousness of Saints – i.e. Christ’s righteousness). At this point one of the senior Pastors exclaimed, “C’est différent” (It is different!). Their consternation increased further when I pointed them to Daniel 3. 25, where in the Martin version (as in the KJV) it says that the one with the three Hebrews in the fire was “un fils de Dieu” (a son of God – Christ), whereas in Segond it is “un fils des dieux” (a son of the gods – a Babylonish false god). The Bible College Principal who assisted me in interpreting into Swahili for this session had an English New International Version with him. I asked him to find Matthew 18. 11 and Acts 8. 37. After searching in vain, he just covered his face with his NIV in embarrassment, as the NIV omits such vital verses. However, the local language Swahili Union version consistently agreed with the King James Version on all the key verses we examined; the apparent reason being that it is a translation of the English KJV.

We then distributed a number of English KJV Bibles and literature to those who could read English, which I had brought from the UK. I also gave some French Martin Bibles to senior Pastors. On the final day of the conference we distributed a large number of Swahili Union Bibles and locally-printed copies of a Swahili translation of my book *Jesus, the Way*.

The following day we left Bukavu to head south along the Great Rift Valley to Fizi, a remote town in the mountains above Lake Tanganika. We again had a challenge – the road south of Bukavu had been cut by a flash flood. Having arranged 4x4 transport through the mountains,

driving for 5 hours often at speeds of less than 10 miles per hour (such was the condition of the road), we reached the point where the road was broken to meet a confused scene of vehicles and crowds of people. After our baggage, Bibles and books were carried across the river, it remained for me to cross by clambering across a tree trunk (a sort of temporary bridge). We were then met by another vehicle and travelled towards Fizi along Lake Tanganika. This road was very poor with many un-bridged rivers, and led into a region where many terrible atrocities had been committed, with children in rags, some with signs of malnutrition. Many of the villages had notices commemorating massacres. In Fizi itself an atrocity took place as recently as January 2011. Thankfully, the region was calm with order maintained by UN peacekeepers, Congolese soldiers and police, who showed me courtesy throughout.

As we could not reach Fizi before dark, we stopped at a small town for the Saturday night, and then set off at first light on the Lord's Day morning reaching Fizi in time for the morning service. I preached on the opening verses of Genesis in a packed church building, which was built of mud bricks with a reed/plastic sheet roof. In the afternoon I was introduced to orphans that FGEEA is assisting. I was also introduced to the brethren who care for them amidst appalling poverty. I was told that many of the orphans had suffered terrible experiences. On the Monday, I spoke at a one-day Pastors' Conference entitled "Faithfulness to God's Word and Calling"; attendees included representatives of the local administration, police and army, who also received Swahili Bibles and books.

On the Tuesday we started the long journey back to Kigali, stopping on the way at three rural churches, where I briefly preached and Swahili Bibles and books were given to the churches. After travelling through Congo and Rwanda, we safely arrived at Kigali airport on Thursday morning for my return flight home. "God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah" (Psa. 46. 1, 11).

(Further details are on the FGEEA Website: www.freegrace-ea.org)

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Bees and Honey in the Bible

By J. Baker

What wonderful thoughts the Ancient Israelites must have had of the Promised Land they were journeying to. *“A land flowing with milk and honey”*. The Israelites were daily reminded of this land because of the taste of the manna.

Exodus 16. 31 *“And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.”*

In Bible times very few foods were sweet. Honey was the only available sweetener. The honey was also used in ancient times for its nutritional, medicinal and cosmetic properties and so was of great value, and much sought after. This can be seen in the way it was traded as a commodity.

Ezekiel 27. 17 *“...they were thy merchants: they traded in thy market wheat of Minnith, and Pannag, and honey, and oil, and balm.”*

Honey was often given as a gift!

1 Kings 14. 3 *“And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him.”*

And again in **Genesis 43. 11** *“And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds.”*

The description of Israel as a land flowing with “milk and honey” is found twenty times in the Bible. Honey is mentioned in total 56 times and the bee four times. Despite these many references many secular historians have come to the conclusion that the word “honey” in the Bible does not mean honey. Instead they say it was something sweet such as jam or sweet fig paste. Their reasoning for this is because bees and honey are only mentioned together in the Bible once (Judges 14. 8). Therefore, they say, any other reference must mean something else. Put simply they do not believe that the large amounts of honey spoken about in the Bible are true. This is difficult to understand. They seem to have overlooked that honeycomb is often mentioned. There is of course no honeycomb without bees to build it! Bees build honeycomb to store honey. It would seem that this is an excuse for not believing the Bible is true.

In the Jordan valley lie the ruins of the ancient settlement of Tel Rehov. The ruins date back 3000 years to the time of Solomon and David. In 2008 part of the ruins were excavated by the Hebrew university of Jerusalem. There was great excitement when the remains of ancient beehives were found. The ancient hives were clay cylinders, nearly a yard long and half a yard in diameter, with a small hole at one end for bees to enter and exit and a lid at the other end. These were similar in design to the wicker basket skeps¹ formerly used for keeping bees in this country. Around 30 hives were found but the size of the apiary suggests there would have been at least 100 hives and possibly nearer 200. Researchers were at first baffled by the fact that so many bees were kept in a town, especially as the bee that is native to Israel – the Syrian bee (*apis mellifera syriaca*) – is known for its aggressive behaviour.

In some of the pots were found charred, melted remains of wax and propolis². This indicated that the town was probably destroyed by fire. Historical records show that the town was captured by an Egyptian pharaoh about 920 BC and its heavy industry destroyed. The pharaoh was probably Shishak.

2 Chronicles 12. 9 “So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king’s house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made.”

When the wax was melted down, well-preserved bee parts were found. These were analyzed and, what a surprise, the bees were not the native bees found in Israel but were *Apis mellifera anatoliaca* (a subspecies of bees found in Turkey.) The beekeepers at Tel Rehov were very skilled and imported bees from Turkey. This strain of bee is similar to the Italian bee, and is very docile. This is why they could be easily kept in the town. Also these bees are very prolific. Importing these bees would have been a shrewd business decision: Turkish bees produce up to eight times as much honey as Syrian bees. This apiary alone would have produced large amounts of honey.

¹ A skep is a wicker basket turned upside down and used as a beehive.

² Propolis is a resinous mixture that honey bees collect from tree buds, sap flows, or other botanical sources. It is used as a sealant for unwanted open spaces in the hive.

In addition to the honey, the by-product 'bees wax' would also have been extremely valuable to Solomon's craftsmen who would have used it for making casting moulds in order to make the various treasures from metals including brass and gold.

When the Israelites reached the borders of the Promised Land, Moses sent out a team of spies to see what lay ahead. What was their report?

Numbers 13. 27 *"And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it."*

Rather than just reporting, the spies took back fruits of the land to show how good it was. We read in **Numbers 13. 23**: *"And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs."*

We read further of this wonderful land the Israelites had been given, a land which far exceeded the promise God had given them. The verses following speak for themselves:

Deuteronomy 8. 9 *"A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass."*

It becomes clear from the above that many parts of the Promised Land were very fruitful and because of this would also have produced abundant flowers for the bees to forage for nectar from.

Today an observant visitor to Israel, when driving through the country or walking through the orchards and groves will notice the white hives. In total there are 90,000 kept by the Israeli beekeepers, producing large amounts of honey and revenue. By contrast the country of Wales which is the same size as Israel has just 20,000 hives.

So we see the secular historians have been proved wrong: this land of Israel was and certainly still is a "land flowing with milk and honey"; real honey.

There are many interesting facts:-

In Biblical times, the bee was the emblem of Ephesus and the city's coins were minted with bees on their faces.

In **Judges 14** there is the well known intriguing story of Samson and the lion and bees. And in **Matthew 3. 4** we read of John the Baptist eating a diet of locusts and wild honey.

The meaning of the name Deborah means bee. Perhaps the parents of the two Deborahs in the Bible were bee keepers! One of the two

Deborahs was of course the prophetess (**Judges. 4. 4**). The other was a nursemaid who probably nursed Rebekah when she was an infant. (**Gen. 24. 59; 35. 8**).

In **Proverbs 24. 13** we are given advice on eating honey: *“My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste.”* It is intriguing that the writer of Proverbs (Solomon) then appears to have thought about this and is concerned that too much will be eaten. In the very next chapter **Proverbs 25. 16** we read. *“Hast thou found honey? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.”* He then gives this further thought repeating the advice on not eating too much honey, but also adding the thought that we should not chase after our own glory. Perhaps some people spent too much time hunting for wild honey, or tending their bee hives? **Proverbs 25. 27** *“It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory.”*

Some of the references to honey in the Bible are of course using honey as an illustration to explain how sweet something is. Likewise three of the four references to the bee or bees in the Bible are using the bee to describe the fierceness of enemies for example **Deuteronomy 1. 44**: *“And the Amorites, which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, even unto Hormah.”*

I would encourage the reader to spend time looking up and reading and thinking about the various references to honey in the Bible, some of which can only be referring to the sweetness of Christ, for example **Psalms 119. 103** *“How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”* Many sermons could be preached and books could be written on this subject. I end with a final thought on the same text that I started with but this time thinking of a different land, Heaven:

There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign,
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

“A land flowing with milk and honey.”

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DOCTRINE AND TRUTH

The Believer's Rule of Life

By J. H. Gosden

“We believe that the believer’s rule of conduct is the gospel, and not the law commonly called the Moral Law, issued on Mount Sinai, which hath no glory in it by reason of the glory that excelleth; that is to say, the gospel: (Gal. 6. 15, 16; 2 Cor. 3. 10; Rom. 7. 2-4) the gospel containing the sum and substance and glory of all the laws which God ever promulgated from His throne, and the Jews because of the hardness of their hearts being permitted some things which the gospel forbids (Deut. 24. 1; Matt. 19. 8, 9).”

At the outset we feel disposed to remark that had the protagonists on the orthodox side (according to our Article) always been careful to define one point, probably much misunderstanding might have been avoided. It should be very clearly understood that in declaring the gospel, and not the law, to be the believer’s rule of conduct, we do not intend that the gospel allows any relaxation from the strictest moral rectitude. God forbid! It is only too plainly evident that not a few professors of the gospel disgrace the Christian name by claiming a “liberty” which is entirely unwarranted. That is a strange “gospel” which yields a freedom to sin. Such manifest their rule of conduct to be neither law (by which is the knowledge of sin) nor gospel (by which is the knowledge of the love and grace of God), but their own personal will and convenience. The only appellation proper to them is *antinomian* – an epithet scornfully attributed to those who truly seek power humbly to regulate their walk according to the gospel. “Do and live” is not synonymous with “Live and do.” The two are antitheses. And to “say, and do not” is the sign of a hypocrite (Matt. 23. 3).

Because freed from the law as a covenant of works, believers are not free to disregard the will of God as manifested in the Decalogue or anywhere else. By the power of the Spirit in the heart, the gospel motive of love, which is the “fulfilling of the law” (Rom. 13. 10), operates affectionately towards every known commandment. It is without partiality (Jam. 3.17; Mal. 2. 9; 1 Cor. 13. 4-7). It does not say: How little obedience may I render without risking the wrath of God? but: How can I attempt to pay the vast debt of gratitude and love I owe

to Him who by His perfect obedience and precious sufferings and death secured my eternal salvation at such an awful cost? Dread of the gallows may keep men from actual murder, but love prohibits hatred to a brother without a cause. Fear of public disgrace may prevent the violation of the 7th Commandment, but love to God and holiness will prohibit the gratification of lust in an unlawful glance. Love is definitely a stricter rule and a mightier motive than fear. Though by the law is the *knowledge* of sin, by the gospel comes *sorrow* for it and *hatred* of it. Not contrary to the law, but wider in scope, jealous and exclusive, is the gospel as known in power.

No one would of course profess godliness with any pretence of sobriety, and yet condone a violation of the 6th, 7th or 8th Commandments. Yet many boast of their “freedom” from the 4th, and with a most supercilious air characterize it as “legal” or “Jewish”! As for themselves, they mean to consult their own liberty, and spend that day as they find occasion. Restrictions they know nothing of for themselves, but they reserve the right to employ others, directly or indirectly, on that day. To think otherwise is to be under legal bondage! In not a few instances their “gospel liberty” discharges them from the rules of common humanity, for no scruples are entertained about debarring others from attending to their souls’ interests, for the purpose of unnecessary work on the Lord’s Day. Yet because justification before God is not of the law, and the law contains a prohibition of such merciless conduct, the contenders for their own ideas of gospel liberty feel it to be dangerously close to legality to regard such scruples!

We emphasize this particular point, which to some may seem paltry, because we solemnly feel that God has a controversy with this nation on account of the increasing violation of the Sabbath day. We recognize that gospel motives cannot be enforced upon unbelievers, and that the nation as such cannot today be regarded as Christian except in name; yet no doubt the licence given, by precept in some cases and by example in others, lays a grave responsibility upon those who thus confirm the world in the ungodly practice of violating the sanctity of the Lord’s day. It would be very difficult to disprove the contention that our country’s worst enemies are those who by defying God provoke Him to send still further judgments on the nation. Our Article is a solemn declaration of the gospel principles of obedience, which we believe to be true to Scripture and to all genuinely godly experience.

Regeneration constitutes a person a child of God, but by faith in Christ alone comes the liberty of a child. Conviction of sin, sense of guilt and legal bondage usually precede this, and evangelical repentance accompanies it. This faith works by love, and purifies the heart (Gal. 5. 6; Acts 15. 9). The convinced sinner, killed by the law's powerful demands, proves that the law cannot give him life or hope. He learns that it does not allow repentance or provide pardon. He becomes thereby dead to the law: "I through the law am dead to the law" (Gal. 2. 19; Rom. 7. 4). The law, though itself holy, just and good, quick and powerful, cannot convey goodness to a sinner, cannot relieve the condemned life of the guilty. All therefore who are under it are under the curse; and dying thus, are consigned to hell for their sins. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18. 4, 20).

But the point may arise: Though the law cannot give life, can it not regulate it? May it not be a rule of guidance, if not a covenant of life? It is true that the Sinaitic law comprised in the Decalogue is substantially identical with the law of nature as laid in Eden, but the spirituality of it is disregarded by carnal, that is, unregenerate men. So far, however, as by the light of nature and rational belief in God men regulate their conduct by the rule of the law, this is good amongst men. Society would be far healthier were it indeed so. But as to justification and eternal life, the law is impotent; it is "weak through the flesh" and it "worketh wrath" (Rom. 8. 3; 4. 15).

The believer is not under the law, but under grace (Rom. 6. 14) as a covenant, and as a rule also. On behalf of His dear people (who by nature are equally obnoxious as others owing to the curse due to sin) God by His sovereign grace accomplished what the law could not do. "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh". The Lord Jesus Christ, who was thus made a curse for His people as their smarting Surety, "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (Rom. 8. 3; 2 Tim. 1. 10). God's gracious gift to them through Jesus Christ is eternal life. There is now no condemnation to them that believe, who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. What is involved in this walking after the Spirit? *The conquest of grace in them*, the consequence of the conquest of Christ for them when their sin was condemned in His flesh: "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8. 4). This walk is therefore *not contrary to the law*, although it is not

under the law as a covenant or as a rule. Our Article embraces this principle when it says: "The gospel contains the sum and substance and glory of all the laws which God ever promulgated from His throne."

The gospel discovers the perfections of Jehovah in their glory as they are nowhere else so gloriously seen. His justice, His holiness, His faithfulness, His truth, His power, His wisdom, His mercy, His love, His grace, His immutability – all are brightly displayed in the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

In 2 Corinthians 3, Paul compares and contrasts the law and the gospel, showing that whereas "the letter" of the Decalogue was inscribed on tables of stone by the finger of God, the gospel of Christ is written with the Spirit of God in fleshy tables of the heart. He admits that even the "ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious", inasmuch as the glory of God was reflected in Moses' face when he came forth to the people with the two tables. But that glory, though dazzling, was to sinners rather a forbidding than an attractive glory: dark, foreboding, unhelpful to the guilty. The beholders could see no intermission of its strictest demands, no end of its terrible but just penalty. Even Moses exceedingly feared and quaked at the fearful display of divine judicial authority (Heb. 12. 21). To transgressors the law had nothing to give, except just condemnation. It was to sinners a ministration of death, not an attainable rule of life. All who consider themselves justifiable before God by their own imagined conformity to it remain under God's curse. To such, Christ and His precious sacrifice are become of no effect (Gal. 3. 10; 5. 4; Rom. 3. 20). The glory of the law, therefore, lies in the perfect holiness and inflexible justice both of its righteous claims and its awful sanctions.

But, says the Holy Ghost, the law had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. In the promulgation of the glorious gospel of salvation through the cross of Christ, all other glory is, as it were, eclipsed. For this is "the ministration of righteousness" (2 Cor. 3. 9), Christ being, to every one that believeth, "the end of the law for righteousness" (Rom. 10. 4). By Him sin is put away, death is abolished, the free gift of "righteousness" which "delivereth from death" is bestowed, the law is established – not abrogated – honoured, yea, even magnified (Prov. 10. 2; Isa. 42. 21; Rom. 3. 31). The veil being done away, in the gospel we all behold with open face the glory of the Lord (2 Cor. 3. 18). "With open face," yet "as in a glass"; for our present poor, frail, mortal tabernacle could not sustain the immediate

weight of glory. It being reflected in the mirror of the Scriptures by the light and life of the Holy Ghost, every glimpse the believer catches by the eye of his soul in measure transforms him, changing him into “the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

There lies in the gospel “a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory” than we can here comprehend, to support which we shall need – and hereafter possess – immortal powers (2 Cor. 4. 17; 5. 5; Phil. 3. 21; Col. 3. 4; 1 John 3. 1, 2). The anticipation of this supports the tried believer under his “light affliction, which is but for a moment” in comparison. (*Without the comparison*, the same affliction appears intolerably heavy and interminable.) And it is this also which fires the soul with humble zealous obedience and submission to God’s declared will in Christ Jesus, wherein the believer rests. “And his rest shall be glorious” (Isa. 11. 10), for it is God’s rest too.

The gospel further contains all the glory of Israel’s ceremonial law, which is now abrogated; the substance and efficacy of its priesthood and sacrifices being spiritually realized in Christ crucified and rising again. Thereby God did what the law could not do – reconciled the Church to Himself. “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:” – that is, ceremonially – “how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb. 9. 13, 14).

This serving God in a liberated conscience is the believer’s rule of conduct, being a service of gratitude and love. Says Owen: “That is no obedience which proceedeth not from love; that is not love which issueth not in obedience.” This is the rule of life: “To me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.” The yoke of Christ is easy and His burden light; His commandments are not grievous to the humbled and enlightened sinner (Matt. 11. 30; 1 John 5. 3). This easiness and lightness derive not from a “gospel” of leniency with sin, but from the divine, holy, sin-atoning blood, the redeeming, dying, pardoning, unquenchable love of Christ, the unction of which destroys the galling yoke of legality (Isa. 10. 27). Grace empowers the soul to “put off...the old man”, and to “put on the new man which...is created in righteousness and true holiness” and which is “renewed in knowledge after the image of him which created him” (Eph. 4. 22, 24; Col. 3. 10).

All gospel obedience, then, is the effect of the love of God, and a fruit of the Spirit, by whom the believer, being dead to the law by the body of Christ, is united in a fruitful union of faith and love to Him who is raised from the dead (Rom. 7. 1-4). "The law of Christ" is fulfilled – so says the Holy Ghost by Paul – in bearing one another's burdens. This is not contributory to salvation, but an accompaniment of it. It is a measure of conformity to Christ's example: "For even Christ pleased not himself"...He "made himself of no reputation...and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Rom. 15. 3; Phil. 2. 7, 8). But in the matter of salvation, "every man shall bear his own burden." The distinction is definite. Concerning personal standing before God: "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another"... "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Gal. 6. 4; Rom. 14. 12). But, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ"; for, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law" (Gal. 6. 2; Rom. 13. 10).

The rule of the believer's WAY to God and heaven is "a new creature". It is by a "new and living way...consecrated...through the veil", by the Lord Jesus, that access is obtained into the holiest and acceptance with God enjoyed. "I am the way...no man cometh unto the Father, but by me", said Christ. In the ark beneath the mercy-seat rests the law satisfied, while sinners have intercourse with God through Christ, finding sweet pardon for all their sins which they are there enabled to confess. "Against such there is no law," says Paul, speaking of the fruits of the Spirit which flow forth from the living and purged branches in the true Vine. See Gal. 6. 16; Phil. 3. 16; 2 Cor. 5. 17; Heb. 10. 19; John 14. 6; 15. 1-3. Thus the rule of the believer's conduct, his WALK through the wilderness, though distinct from his WAY, is motivated by gospel principles of love and gratitude, and regulated by the precept. This would appear to be the dual meaning of Isa. 35. 8; "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it *shall be* for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*." Fools they often feel they are. The conflict between flesh and spirit, between the old man and the new, prevents them doing the things they would do; yet the *aim* of the new man is *universal* obedience. Many defeats are suffered, much is still unattained; but the gospel is full of hope, and whilst providing an everlasting salvation, it promises final victory over

sin (Rom. 6. 14). Every believer striving, though feebly, to “work out” his “own salvation with fear and trembling” is assured that “it is God which worketh in [him] both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure” (Phil. 2. 12, 13). To all such the apostle says: “whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing” (3. 16).

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The Precepts

The precepts form a large part of the New Testament and are the believer’s rule of life. Below is a selection of them.

Ephesians

Have lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, and forbearance in love. Keep unity of Spirit in bond of peace. Put off old man – put on new man. No lying, anger but sin not, let not sun go down on wrath. Give no place to devil. No stealing, corrupt communication. Grieve not Spirit. No bitterness, wrath, anger, evil speaking. Be tender-hearted, forgiving, walk in love. Have no uncleanness, covetousness, foolish talking, jesting, but giving of thanks. No fellowship with works of darkness. Walk circumspectly; be not drunk but filled with the Spirit, speaking in Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, giving thanks. Submission one to another – wives to husbands; husband head of wife; husbands love wives. Children obey parents; honour thy father and mother; fathers provoke not children to anger. Bring up children in nurture and admonition of the Lord. Servants obey masters with fear and trembling, not eye-service; masters forbear threatening. Be strong in the Lord; put on whole armour of God; loins girt with truth, feet shod with preparation of gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, praying always.

Colossians

Seek and set affections on things above. Mortify members; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, covetousness and idolatry. Put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication. Lie not; put off the old man and put on the new man. Put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another if any have a quarrel. Put on charity; let the peace of God reign in your hearts; be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you in

all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms etc. Do all in the name of the Lord, giving thanks. Wives submit to your husbands; husbands love your wives; children obey; fathers provoke not your children; servants obey your masters in singleness of heart. Do all as to the Lord not to men. Masters give what is just and equal. Continue in prayer, watch in same with thanksgiving. Pray for us. Walk in wisdom to them that are without, redeeming the time. Let speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt.

1 Thessalonians

Possess vessel in sanctification and honour. Do not defraud a brother. Love one another (brotherly love). Study to be quiet. Do your own business. Work with own hands. Walk honestly to them that are without. Let us not sleep but watch and be sober. Put on breastplate of faith and love; for helmet, hope of salvation. Comfort and edify one another. Them which labour among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you esteem very highly for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves; warn unruly. Comfort feeble-minded, support weak, be patient to all men. Render not evil for evil; follow good always. Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing, in everything giving thanks. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesying. Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.

Romans

Be not conformed to this world. Present your bodies a living sacrifice. Do not think too highly of self. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love, preferring one another; not slothful in business. Rejoice in hope; be patient in tribulation; continue instant in prayer. Distribute to necessity of saints, given to hospitality. Bless them that persecute you, curse not. Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with those that weep. Be of the same mind one to another. Mind not high things; condescend to men of low degree. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to none evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of God. If possible live peaceably with all men. Avenge not yourself; give place to wrath. If thy enemy hunger feed him; if he thirst give him drink; this will heaps coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good. Be subject to higher powers ordained of God. Pay tribute. Render to all their dues; owe no man anything. Love one another; love thy neighbour as thyself. Walk honestly, not in rioting or drunkenness; not in strife and envying.

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ; make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts. Those weak in the flesh receive but not to doubtful disputations. Eating or regarding a day; respect fellow brethren's views; judge not a brother. Do not judge one another anymore. Follow things that make for peace.

Hebrews

Lest any root of bitterness arise, follow peace with all men. Lift up hands which hang down, make straight paths for your feet. Let brotherly love continue; be not forgetful to entertain strangers unawares. Remember those in bonds. Let conversation be without covetousness. Be content with such things as ye have. Remember them that have the rule over you. Be not carried about with strange doctrines. Go forth unto him without the camp. Offer the sacrifice of praise. To do good and communicate forget not. Obey them that have the rule over you. Suffer the word of exhortation.

Galatians

The works of the flesh are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness and revellings; they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance; against such there is no law. If one is overtaken in a fault, restore such a one in spirit of meekness. Ye that are spiritual bear one another's burdens. If we think we are something when we are nothing we deceive ourselves. Let every man prove his own work; then he can rejoice in himself and not another. Let us bear our own burden. What we sow we reap. If we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption. Be not weary in well doing; in due season we shall reap. Do good to all men, especially the household of faith.

Philippians

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus – equal with God – He took upon Himself the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men, humbled Himself and became obedient to death even the death of the Cross. God highly exalted Him. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Do all things without murmurings and disputings. Our conversation is in heaven from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Count all things but loss for the

excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; that we may be found in Him. Press toward the mark for the prize of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus. For to me to live is Christ, to die is gain.

1 Timothy

Prayers; giving of thanks for all men. Women adorn themselves in modest apparel; they learn in silence; do not teach or usurp authority over a man. An elder must be blameless, have one wife, sober, given to hospitality, apt to teach, ruling well his own house, with his children in subjection; not a novice, of good report of them that are without. Deacons must be as elders, refuse old wives' tales and exercise themselves unto godliness; give attendance to reading, to exhortation, godliness and doctrine. Rebuke not an elder, honour widows; look after them in the family. Lay hands suddenly on no man. Use a little wine. Honour masters. Godliness with contentment is great gain. Fight the good fight of faith. Charge the rich that they be not high minded, but rich in good works.

2 Timothy

Hold fast the form of sound words. Endure hardness. Study to show thyself approved unto God. Shun profane and vain babblings. Flee youthful lusts. In meekness instruct those that oppose themselves. Continue in the things that thou hast learned. To ministers – preach the word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Endure afflictions.

Titus

Aged men – be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, charity, patience. Aged women – in behaviour holiness, not false accusers; teach the young. Women be sober. Young women – discreet, keepers at home, obedient to husbands. Young men – be sober-minded. Servants obey masters. All to live soberly, righteously, godly, subject to powers, ready to every good work. Speak evil of no man. Be gentle, meek. Avoid foolish questions – genealogies, contentions, strivings about the law. An heretic reject after the first and second admonition.

1 Peter

Be holy in all manner of conversation. Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. Love one another with a pure heart fervently. Lay aside all malice, hypocrisies, envies, evil speaking. Abstain from fleshly lusts. Have your conversation honest among the Gentiles. Do good works. Submit to rulers. Honour all men, love the brotherhood,

fear God, honour the King. Servants obey your masters, to the good and gentle and also to the froward. Wives be subject to husbands, having not the outward adorning, but the hidden man of the heart, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Husbands give honour to the wife. Be of one mind, have compassion. Love as brethren, be pitiful, courteous, render not evil for evil but blessing. Avoid evil, seek peace and pursue it. Eschew evil, be ready always to give an answer to all who ask the reason of the hope that is in you with fear and trembling. Better to suffer for well doing. Watch and pray. Use hospitality. Watch unto prayer. Suffer for Christ's sake but not as an evil doer. Elders feed the flock of God, not for filthy lucre. Not as lords over God's heritage. The younger submit to the elder, be subject one to another. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Cast all your care on Him.

2 Peter

Add to faith, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly love, kindness, charity. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. Be diligent to be found in Him in peace without spot and blameless. Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

James

Let patience have her perfect work. If any lack wisdom, let him ask of God. Let a brother of low degree be exalted; let the rich be made low. Endure temptation. Be swift to hear and slow to speak, slow to wrath. Receive with meekness the engrafted word. Be doers of the word and not hearers only. Bridle the tongue. Visit the fatherless and the widow. Keep oneself unspotted from the world. Have not faith with respect of persons. Do not despise poor and respect the rich. Faith without works is dead. The tongue a little member – a fire – no man can tame it; with it we bless and curse. If bitter envying and strife in heart, glory not. Have wisdom from above. Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands and purify your hearts. Be afflicted and mourn. Let laughter be turned to mourning. Humble yourself in the sight of God. Speak no evil of a brother. Say, "If the Lord will, we shall do this and that." Be patient to the coming of the Lord. Grudge not one against another. Swear not, neither by heaven nor by earth or any other oath. Let your yea be yea and your nay, nay. If afflicted, pray. If merry,

sing Psalms. If sick call for the elders. Let them pray anointing with oil. Confess your faults one to another. Pray for one another.

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LETTERS, ADDRESSES AND SERMONS

Revival

By J. R. Broome

The purpose of this lecture is to outline the way the Lord has worked throughout the history of the Church since the time of Pentecost when there was a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Man being fallen, the Churches have continually been beset with periods of declension throughout the centuries. The outpouring of the Spirit on the preaching of the gospel brings revival. But revival is followed by declension and then comes coldness, tradition, false confidence, death and lifelessness, a form without the power. This gives those who sorrow for what they see a yearning for the former glory, a desire for the power of the Spirit to return. Today is such a day in which we are now living. There is a desire in the Churches for revival and we read this word in Scripture, “When the enemy shall come in like a flood” and that is true today, “the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.” We want to see revival again and so we yearn for the return of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the ministry.

What then is revival? I will try and answer it because we are surrounded by so much that seems to be revival. In my own lifetime I have seen Billy Graham crusading in this country, but the crusades did not produce revival. The nation has since sunk deeper into godlessness. Today we are living with the Charismatic movement, and there is no reason to believe that the Lord cannot call people out by His grace through it. But it has not led to revival. Revival is not planned, it is not organised. Revival is the work of the Holy Spirit and is sovereignly given by God. We cannot bring it down from heaven, we cannot organise campaigns to do it. We can use the means that are before us and the means are very simple; prayer, wrestling prayer with God. I wonder how many of you have ever had a time of real wrestling prayer when you would not let the Lord go and eventually He blessed you. This is what we need today. Wrestling prayer that the Lord would appear in our nation.

So what is the instrument the Lord uses for revival? It is simple and the Scriptures describe it – “The foolishness of preaching.” God’s servants are human instruments in His purposes. It is the instrumentality of the foolishness of preaching that the Lord uses in revival. And what are the evidences of the work? The evidences are very simple. The first evidence is deep conviction of sin. A light shining in darkness; men and women cut down in their sin, not only out in the world but in the Churches. In our heart is hypocrisy, sin, deceit, guile, evil, malice. When the Lord comes with revival, He opens up the iniquity of the heart. When He shines as a light in a dark place, the fruit of that is an earnest desire for forgiveness. This is the working of the Spirit and it is strikingly clear, the Scriptures say; “They were pricked in their heart, and said...what shall we do?” So when we look at the work of the Spirit in revival, we see it is exactly the same as it was at Pentecost – conviction, repentance, faith, pardon. The Spirit was given at Pentecost to found the early church. In generations when the churches have been brought low, the Lord has given an outpouring of His Spirit to revive them. The Lord is sovereign in this. Look at the great outpourings of the Spirit in this nation in the past. In the Puritan revival in the seventeenth century the Lord used John Owen, Chancellor of Oxford University and John Bunyan, a tinker. In the eighteenth century He used men like George Whitefield, an Oxford University student and Howell Harris, an uneducated Welshman. At the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century He used the coal heaver, William Huntington. In the nineteenth century in the formation of the Gospel Standard churches He used William Gadsby and John Warburton, both uneducated men.

The Scriptures reveal the details of the outpouring of the Spirit after Christ’s ascension. The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch and that was because they had been scattered abroad through persecution. The Scriptures tell us they were unlearned and ignorant men and yet they had a tremendous boldness and, we are told, the Jews took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. We read that the sermon of Peter at Pentecost had an effect. They were pricked in their hearts. Peter preached the necessity of repentance and those who gladly received the word were baptised and the same day were added to the church about three thousand souls. These events followed the mighty outpouring of the Spirit when the disciples spoke in tongues and every man heard them speak in his own language; something which has never

been repeated. When Peter and John healed the lame man at the Gate Beautiful and Peter preached in Solomon's porch and they were both arrested for doing it, we read "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." Here we have the first examples of the great outpouring of the Spirit. And then "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." When the Gospel was preached to the Greeks in Antioch in Syria, we read "the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord". Finally, in the midst of all this blessing came the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, the greatest enemy of the Christians, on his way to persecute the Church at Damascus. The Lord took their greatest enemy, their most bitter persecutor and made him a brother. The apostle was brought among the early Christians, a forgiven man. So in this first outpouring of the Spirit there was a number called by grace, something in excess of ten thousand. The Holy Spirit worked with remarkable power in a relatively brief space of time and called a great multitude out of nature's darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel. In this way the Church was established after the Lord had ascended and the principles of revival were laid down for the future. Later, Paul and others preached the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire and many Churches were founded. Peter went to the Jews and Paul went to the Gentiles. There followed, even before the death of the apostles, error which crept into the Churches. Declension followed, the Lord kept alive His truth in a few hearts, but there came the Dark Ages which led right up to the days of the Reformation. In the Roman Empire many were martyred for their faith by the Emperors, but the Roman Empire collapsed at the end of the 5th century. Some names stand out like Augustine of Hippo, in the 5th century, who wrote his Confessions. But we can trace a period largely up to the Reformation of nearly a thousand years when the Church was sunk in error. It carried the name of Christian but there was a form without the power, though throughout these centuries, without doubt, the Lord had a people.

Throughout that period, there had been no revival until the time of John Wycliffe and John Huss. Wycliffe was a priest of the Catholic Church. He lived from 1328 to 1384 and translated the Bible into English. He denied that the wafer in the Roman Catholic Mass was the body of Christ. He was a forerunner of the Reformation. He sent out into this country a body of men called Lollards, preaching the Gospel.

This was a revival in a period of intense darkness when the Gospel, the light of the truth, was beginning to come back again. But the Bible was in manuscript form; printing had not yet been invented. The writings of Wycliffe went right across Europe and we find that they influenced John Huss who was then Rector of Prague University. He was led to place the authority of the Bible above the Church and to start to examine the Scriptures again. He was tried by the Catholic Church in 1415 at the Council of Constance and burnt at the stake. But both men broke the great darkness through the use of the Scriptures and the grip of the Catholic Church was weakened.

Then came the Reformation, the greatest outpouring of the Spirit since the time of the apostles. Europe was gripped in the dawn of the Reformation by the darkness of Rome. Under that system the salvation of the faithful rested on their works. Grace came through christening. The wafer brought them forgiveness. The Lord raised up Martin Luther, an educated man, a monk, and also a Professor of a University. He was used to translate the Bible into German. The Lord used him to stand before the German Emperor in his day. Erasmus had printed the New Testament in Greek in 1516. Luther translated it into German in 1523. William Tyndale was raised up in England to translate the New Testament into English in 1525. He died at the stake at Vilvorde in Belgium in 1536. These men were the light of the Reformation. Then the Lord raised up another generation of Reformers in Calvin and Beza at Geneva in the latter half of the sixteenth century. In England He raised up men in the Roman Catholic Church – Archbishop Cranmer, and Bishops Latimer, Hooper and Ridley. They died at the stake after the Lord showed them that the Mass was a blasphemy. Hooper was burnt at Gloucester and the three others at Oxford. Besides these, three hundred Protestants were burnt at the stake in the reign of bloody Mary. John Knox appeared on the scene in Scotland and stirred the nation by his fiery zeal and his mighty stand for truth and his fervent preaching. The Reformation had great leaders, made great by the grace of God. It spread into France and became established in northern Europe. Since then the truths of the Reformation have spread, not only in Europe, but throughout the world. After the Reformation there was still persecution of dissenters in England in the reign of Elizabeth and the result was that a group of Puritans, called the Pilgrim Fathers, left this country, went first to Holland in 1593, then to America in 1620 to found the New

England Colonies. The Reformation aroused bitter persecution. Something like one hundred thousand Protestants died in Holland.

The Puritan period in England in the seventeenth century was another great outpouring of the Spirit. It was the means of bringing many godly young men to a deep knowledge of the Truth. They produced many gracious writings. They preached sermons on one book of the Bible. For example Jeremiah Burroughs, who preached for fifteen years on the book of Hosea, published his sermons as an exposition of Scripture. Puritanism was a consolidation of the Reformation and the influence of the Puritans spread into Scotland and Holland.

Puritanism crossed the Atlantic with the Pilgrim Fathers and produced generations of godly divines in America in Princeton University. Puritanism survived the Civil War and the persecution of the Stuarts. In the days of John Bunyan and William Kiffin in the 17th century, there was a movement of the Spirit which has left a permanent mark on the English character. Despised and mocked, Puritans were men of God. The works of divines such as John Owen, Chancellor of Oxford University, and his contemporaries are not forgotten today.

The Puritan revival was followed by the Evangelical Awakening in the eighteenth century. Here we see that after the death of Bunyan in 1688, and John Owen at the end of the 17th century, England obtained its religious freedom in the Glorious Revolution. But with the release from religious persecution there came a sad decline. For nearly fifty years after 1688 there was not the blessing on the truth which there had been in the 16th and 17th centuries. There was a period of decline, but after 1735 there took place a revival in New England in America under the ministry of Jonathan Edwards, who wrote a book called *A Narrative of Surprising Conversions* and this created a desire on this side of the Atlantic for similar blessings here. We find men like George Whitfield and Howell Harris going out into the open air to preach the Gospel in this land and that for a period of nearly forty years of the Evangelical Awakening. Up and down the land, all over the country these men of God went preaching the Gospel and the simple truth they preached was this – “Ye must be born again.” The Evangelical Awakening of the 18th century laid great emphasis on the New Birth. As the century progressed the Spirit was poured out on the labours of such men as William Grimshaw at Howarth, Henry Venn at Huddersfield, John Berridge at Everton, John Newton at Olney and Daniel Rowland at

Llangeitho. They wrote beautiful hymns. Hymnwriters included Toplady, Newton, Berridge, Anne Steele, and Cowper. Thousands upon thousands were drawn to hear the Gospel. Crowds of ten and twenty thousand were nothing unusual. They found natural arenas in the hills where they could easily attract a vast crowd without any amplification and multitudes were struck down by the Holy Spirit and cried out "What must we do to be saved?" This Evangelical Awakening went on in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland as well as in America for something like forty to fifty years.

In the beginning of the 19th century, we come to the beginnings of our own denomination. The Evangelical Awakening was consolidated and winnowed by men like William Huntington. He winnowed the Awakening with his deep, experimental preaching and it caused as much offence. He was called an Antinomian, but there was no more godly man than William Huntington, no more separating man in his ministry. He preached to large congregations in his Chapel in London and at Bristol and Bath and throughout the country. Then there followed William Gadsby, John Warburton, John Kershaw. They started in the North preaching in Manchester, Rochdale, Yorkshire and Lancashire and they witnessed scenes of revival. They came into an area where there had been great blessing already in the 18th century and witnessed thousands attend their ministry. Warburton later was called to go away from the North and come down to Trowbridge and Kershaw was raised up in his place. When Warburton came to Trowbridge he had that word "I have much people in this city". His Church membership was three hundred and his congregation was one thousand. Many might think it is not quite true to say that the Gospel Standard Churches were founded on revival, but they were. They were founded on an outpouring of the Spirit. Gadsby was the means of opening fifty churches in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and John Warburton the same number in Wiltshire and Berkshire. Church after church owed its origin to the ministry of these men. From 1835 to 1870, the Gospel Standard magazine circulation rose to fourteen thousand. Warburton regularly baptised every year. He started in 1815 and never had a year (except in 1839) without about ten or twenty baptisms. When we look at our denomination, we see such able theologians raised up as J C Philpot and J K Popham. The 19th century is also remembered as the century when the Gospel went out to the world. William Carey formed the Baptist Missionary Society and went to India; Hudson Taylor formed

the China Inland Mission and went to China; and Livingstone and others went to Africa.

The end of the 19th century is the scene of declension and we see it in the launching of evangelical campaigns. The first American evangelical campaign that came to this country was through Sankey and Moody; a free-will type of organised campaign brought in from the USA, supported by such ministers as C H Spurgeon, but bearing no resemblance to the work of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of such men as Huntington and Whitfield. Moody said on one occasion "It is as easy to come to Christ as it is to take your pocket watch out of your pocket and look at it." This was the type of "theology" that was being preached by these men. That period was also the period of the entrance of liberalism and Higher Criticism into the Churches of this land. The Sankey and Moody revival did not stop the liberalism. It entered the Churches and all the ministerial colleges in our country. A similar type of campaign was carried on in the 20th century by Billy Graham. Again you see no effects from it. Similarly today we are living with the Charismatic Movement. Again it is not what we are looking for. The Lord can use it, but we are looking for something completely different. So we come to our conclusion, and ask what are we looking for? What is the revival we are looking for today? The revival that we need today will come through a ministry that contains under the power of the Holy Spirit a deep experience of sin and salvation. God's servants can only preach what the Lord has taught them in their hearts, and then the people will know. The Holy Spirit's work will contain a deep knowledge of sin, conviction and a lost condition. That is one of the fruits of revival. When the Spirit draws near with mighty power, then we shall see conviction. Equally, it will be blessed with a great knowledge of deliverance, pardon and peace through the blood of Christ.

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**A sermon preached by John Raven, at Ebenezer Chapel,
Clapham, on Wednesday 16th March, 1938 (Part 2)**

"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost"
(Matt. 18. 11)

Then again, as a Surety He bore the curse; the sins of His elect people by imputation were His. "The LORD hath laid on him the

iniquity of us all.” “It pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief.” The Surety answered for His people; He paid the awful debt; He made an end of His people’s transgression, and that for ever. All our sins He bore, says Peter, “in his own body on the tree”. Here again that broken body, that shed blood of His, is meat and drink to His believing people. They eat the flesh and they drink the blood of the Son of Man, and they cannot be satisfied unless they do. Some poor soul may say, “Well I wish, O, I wish I could say I knew what it is, but it seems to be something altogether too high for me, an experience beyond anything I have ever known, to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ as crucified for me.” My old Pastor used to speak in a very tender way about these matters, and he used to speak to us about feeding on Christ in just a line of a hymn. It may be that sometimes you have had just a glimpse of Jesus Christ, of His atoning sacrifice, in a line of a hymn that has distilled a little sweetness into your heart, and drawn your soul in desire towards Him; you have felt the attraction of His Person and His grace. “A bleeding Saviour seen by faith.” It may have only lasted a very short while, but there was an eating of His flesh, and a drinking of His blood. Perhaps it has been in that hymn:

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins.

Your heart has been drawn to Christ in it; Christ has been set before you, and you have felt a springing up of hope in your soul.

The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day,
and you have said,

O there may I, as vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

As the Son of Man, how very near He did approach to His people. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us”. I do like this expression, “among us”; it does express the very intimate relationship of the Lord Jesus with His people as bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, and also the very intimate way in which He entered into the very path His people have to tread. “In all their affliction he was afflicted”, and that is certainly true of the Lord Jesus. And, you know, when He was upon earth, how people with their sorrows, temptations, burdens, wants, sicknesses and sores found in Him a most ready, willing, sympathising help; they found no lack of compassion in the

Christ of God. "The Son of man." There is such a wealth of tenderness in this word. The Lord Jesus Christ appeared in such a sweet view of Him, as drawing very near to poor sinners in order to be their redemption. "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost."

He "is come". The Lord Jesus states the blessed fact, He "is come". The Church in the Old Testament, right from the beginning when the promise was first made, had been looking forward with longing expectation, with earnest desire to the promise of that coming One. The Psalmist and the Prophets sung of Him. The tabernacle which Moses was commanded to rear was significant of Him and His union with His Church and people, what He was to do for them, and what He was to be to them. Then you find again and again expressed the longing of individual believers in the Old Testament for His coming. For instance, Job: how he looked forward to the day of Christ. He longed for a Daysman, and he had such a view at one time that he said, "I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth". Isaiah spoke of Him, and so we might go on and name others, but time will not permit. The Church was looking for Him, and in the Song of Solomon you find her desiring His coming; there was the cry, "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." In the next chapter you have the response, "I am come into my garden, my sister, *my* spouse." "For the Son of man is come." Then you remember what joy there was expressed by that company of believers when the Infant was brought into the temple; Simeon and Anna and others to whom the Spirit had revealed these things. How they rejoiced. Mary sang too, in the prospect of His birth. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." "The Son of man is come." O, if the Spirit of God repeats this in our hearts, it will be a fragrant word: "The Son of man is come." This is the burden of the gospel ministry, that the Son of Man is come. He is come, and the things written concerning Him were fulfilled in Him; the work His Father sent Him to do was accomplished perfectly.

'Tis finished! said his dying breath,
And shook the gates of hell.

"The Son of man is come." What to do? "To save that which was lost." Here again this word "to save"; what a great word it is. "*To save.*" But who is able at all to appreciate the greatness of it? To the majority of people, these words, "to save," mean nothing at all; they are but

empty words to the majority of people. And to some people who profess something of Christianity these words mean very little. O, salvation is a very trivial thing, for the simple reason that sin is a trivial thing to them. More than that, their thoughts of God are trivial and unworthy thoughts; and if our thoughts of God are trivial and unworthy, our thoughts of sin will be superficial; we shall think lightly of sin; and if we think lightly of sin certainly we shall think very little of salvation, we shall set little store by a Saviour. These words are great words, first of all because God is great. God is great! And then to be the sinner, to have sinned against that great God, is a tremendously solemn and awful thing. The sinfulness of sin lies in the fact that it is against Him who is infinitely holy. O, then, what a hideous monster, what a vile, black thing sin is made to appear, when a sinner is given some discovery of what God is. Then, when these points are well fixed in the conscience, what a great matter salvation becomes! There are some poor people to whom salvation has been made a tremendously great matter; to be saved from sin, from its guilt, its pollution, its consequences, to be saved from the ruin that is by sin, saved from the wrath to come, from the just condemnation and curse of a holy God in a righteous law – this is a great matter to a sensible sinner; and therefore, that word “Saviour” is a great word. The Person who bears, and who loves His name, (for the Lord Jesus does love His name of Saviour,) becomes a very great Person in the estimation of a sensible sinner.

“To save”! O, what a salvation! How deep it reaches, to what sinners it comes, and how high it raises them! He that is their Saviour “raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory”. “The Son of man is come to save that which was lost”. Not the good sort of people, not the people who can do so much for themselves, but “that which was lost”, “that which was *lost*”. And that means guilty, filthy, ruined, helpless, incapable of one single act, of the least contribution toward their own salvation. “O,” says such a sinner, “if my soul is to be saved, God must do it without my help; I can make no contribution whatever towards it. What a wonderful mercy it is, what a precious truth it is, that this divine, almighty Saviour is able. He is *able*, and why? Because of His eternal Deity, because of the humanity He assumed, because of what He did in our nature, and because He is exalted high and ever lives to make intercession at the right hand of the Father. “Because he continueth ever”, He “hath an

unchangeable Priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.” “ The Son of man is come to save that which was lost.” O, His grace, His love, His salvation is as

Deep as our helpless miseries are,
And boundless as our crimes.

“The Son of man is come to save that which was lost.” And, you know, all that He does for poor sinners, He does so graciously; His work bears looking at. It will be matter for eternal praise in those who are raised to sit with Him upon His throne. Eternity will be required to be admiring His grace, and all that He has done in saving poor sinners from their sins, redeeming His people, and possessing them for Himself. Eternity will be required to admire it, to sing the praises of it. “For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.”

The Lord command His blessing.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Gospel Precepts by J. C. Philpot

By J. R. Broome

*Published by the Gospel Standard Trust 2012, paperback, 161pp.
Price £5.75 (plus £1.72 P&P).*

This is a series of articles on the precepts of the Gospel which J.C. Philpot wrote in the *Gospel Standard* each month from Feb – Oct 1865, now reprinted as a paperback with coloured cover. Philpot confesses it was only late in his life that he came to understand the true value of the precepts. He had observed that they were hardly ever preached about, yet they formed in the New Testament a large part of the written word and should form an equally large part of the preached word.

Regarding the written word, he notes that of six chapters of Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, three are preceptive; Colossians has four chapters of which two are preceptive; Galatians has six chapters of which two are preceptive. The last two chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews are preceptive as also chapters 12-14 of Romans. Precepts are found in the epistles to the Philippians, Timothy, Titus, Peter and James. If this is the high proportion of space allocated to the precepts in

the New Testament, why, J.C. Philpot asks, are they so little preached from? He gives two reasons; one, a fear of legality; and, two, that the minister himself feels unfit to preach from them.

The precepts set a very high standard of godliness. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians writes, “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour” (Eph. 4. 31-32; 5. 1-2). This is only one of many precepts and how far have we come in obeying it? Philpot says that if only the precepts were walked out fully there would be less trouble in the churches and more peace. How many feel unable to forgive and carry secret grudges in their hearts for years.

He highlights the great need of grace to walk out the precepts. Especially is this true of ministers if they are to preach the precepts and admonish and exhort their hearers. They must walk in the experience of the precepts before God and before men; then they will bear the fruit of which Christ spoke so solemnly. The precepts are given in the form of command, injunction, entreaty and admonition. Philpot points out that unlike the believer’s rule of life being the law, which is “Do and live,” when the believer’s rule of life is the gospel, then it is “Live and do.” When walked out in experience, the precepts produce in the heart light, life, liberty and love. When we ignore the precepts it leads to bondage and darkness. Given in the form of an exhortation to a godly life, the precepts explore our weaknesses and show us how far short we come. This has happened to me in my present affliction; a time to look back over my life and realise how the precepts have not been walked or preached as they should have been.

We can thoroughly recommend this book, which is subtitled, “The Believer’s Rule of Conduct.” We shall need great grace to walk out the precepts and not find excuses, which so many do, as to why they cannot forgive, often bearing grudges all their lives right down to the grave. So many have taken the law as the “Believer’s Rule of Life” in the past and this has resulted in the fact that there are no sound studies of the precepts. Philpot in this small work has filled this gap and we hope our readers will enjoy it and profit from it as much as we have done.

CURRENT EVENTS
The Vedder Crossing; Sardis, British Columbia
By T. Collins (Chilliwack Canada)

The Vedder River is a tributary of Canada's Fraser River, and the particular place of the photo on the cover of this issue is the Vedder Crossing. It gets good salmon runs, and in the month of June the river at this point is much higher and faster, as the snow-melt mountain water from the winter passes through the Chilliwack River Valley in its run to the sea.

Vedder Crossing is interesting from another standpoint. A locally famous Indian chief known as Captain John is connected with this particular place. He received that name during the gold rush of 1858, when he guided the first flat-bottomed Mississippi-style riverboat up the Fraser River from the Hudson Bay Company trading post at Fort Langley to the goldfields at Hope. Captain John also became a notorious drunkard during those days. But after his conversion to Jesus Christ about 1868, in his later years he became an occasional lay preacher at one of the early Protestant (Wesleyan Methodist) churches in the Chilliwack-Sardis area.

But in 1825, when Captain John was only 12 years old, Vedder Crossing was the farthest point that the Pacific coast Indians could travel up the Vedder River in their big war canoes, when they came into the interior of the Fraser River valley on their frequent raids to capture women and children for slaves. From here, because of the rapids, they had to continue on to the local villages on foot. One of 12-year-old Captain John's regular duties was to be a lookout when the local Sto-Lo tribesmen of his village were away hunting. He would climb a tall tree at Vedder Crossing and watch the river for war canoes. Whenever he sighted a party of coast Indians in their war canoes, he scurried down the tree and ran to his village to sound the warning. Then, all the women and children would run through the forests to Cultus Lake and hide themselves in large Pit-houses that had been dug deep into the ground until the raiding war parties had left the area.

There is a personal epilogue to the Captain John story. One day several years ago, while I was researching his story, I was walking past a bus stop about a block from the TBS Canada office in Chilliwack. Three teenagers were standing there, smoking marijuana. As I came abreast of them, I said, "That stuff certainly won't do you any good." Now, one might expect that they would have said, "Get off of it, you old fool," or something to that effect, but they didn't. So I stopped, and perhaps because Captain John was foremost on my mind, and also, because one of them was a native Indian, I began to tell them his story. The Indian boy suddenly said, "I know all about Captain John; he's my ancestor; my name is A--- John!" Then I said, "Well, A-----, I'm telling you the exact same thing that your ancestor Captain John would have told you if he were here." And so, they listened, and also to what I had to say about drugs, though I do not know whatever happened to them after that day.

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He whose word can not be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode;
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

See! the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
And all fear of want remove.
Who can faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace, which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age.

Round each habitation hovering,
See the cloud and fire appear,
For a glory and a covering,
Showing that the Lord is near.

Thus deriving from their banner,
Light by night and shade by day,
Safe they feed upon the manna
Which he gives them when they pray.

Blest inhabitants of Zion,
Washed in the Redeemer's blood!
Jesus, whom their souls rely on,
Makes them kings and priests to God
'Tis his love his people raises
Over self to reign as kings;
And as priests, his solemn praises
Each for a thank-offering brings.

Saviour, if of Zion's city
I thro' grace a member am;
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in thy name;
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,
All his boasted pomp and show;
Solid joys and lasting treasure,
None but Zion's children know.

John Newton

PERCEPTION



For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Hebrews 12.3

WINTER 2012

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Cover Picture: The Sea of Galilee taken from the Mount of the Beatitudes by Gwen David.

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PERCEPTION

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EDITORIAL

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2. 5).

What was the “mind” that was in Christ Jesus? The Apostle Paul, writing to the Colossian Church, exhorts them to put on “bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another” (Col. 3. 12-13). He had Christ in mind as he pointed the Colossians to the path that the Lord’s people should walk. He pointed the Philippian Church to the blessings they had known through Christ; consolation, love, fellowship of the Spirit, compassion, kindness and mercy. He exhorted them to be likeminded, love one another, and not only to think of themselves but also of others.

Then Paul comes to our text; that they should have the same “mind” as Christ. He points to the path that Christ walked, and how though the eternal Son of God, He “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2. 7-8).

What a sight we have of the condescension of Christ; of His meekness and humility. How it makes us realise how far short we come in our own walk and conduct. Man would be of some reputation; be something; would not want to humble himself and take the lowest place. Yet this should be the fruit of the Spirit in the lives of the Lord’s people. The precepts in the New Testament are the believer’s rule of life. Christ was spat upon in the Judgment Hall; crowned with thorns; mocked with a purple robe, and when reviled, reviled not again, but was silent under humiliation. If we profess His name, have we always walked as he did? or has our spirit risen in anger and revenge, or born a grudge for years and felt deeply wounded?

Human nature, the old man, has none of the “mind” of Christ. That “mind” the apostle, from his prison in Rome, exhorted the Philippians to have; such who knew Christ by precious experience, had known His consolation, love, fellowship, kindness and mercy. A sight by faith of

Him in all His tenderness, humility, love and compassion, will show us how far short we come and give us a desire to be more like Him

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CURRENT ISSUES

Pakistan – 2012

By S. A. Hyde

Pakistan is an Islamic country with 97% of the population considered to be Muslims. Christians are a very small minority and Protestants a small proportion of this. To be a Protestant Christian in Pakistan is costly. Employment becomes difficult and reproach and persecution are the expected result of those who profess faith in the Lord Jesus. So why should I write about Pakistan? “God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.” I go back to late 2009 when as a church at Hope Chapel Redhill we decided to enclose a small booklet with our annual Christmas Calendar distribution called *Ultimate Questions* (not perfect, but a good booklet to cause people to consider their ways). This distribution had an almost immediate effect as we were contacted by a Pakistani national who was so impressed that he asked if we could translate this booklet into Urdu (the national language of Pakistan) and also some other languages. We arranged to meet this man whose name is Sohail. At the meeting we suggested he might like to read Mr Ramsbottom’s book, *Bible Doctrines*. He willingly agreed and in a couple of days phoned me, said how much he had enjoyed it and asked if we could translate it into Urdu. He said it was like a small body of divinity! This seemed a very worthwhile project so the translation was arranged to be carried out in Pakistan with a back translation carried out in the UK to establish its accuracy. When this was complete, and all amendments made, the GS Trust agreed to fund the printing of 1000 copies. This was so well received that another 5000 copies were requested so that distribution could be made throughout Pakistan.

During this time the Pakistani Pastor who had been fronting this work had his Church bulldozed to the ground by the Muslims. We subsequently found out the history of this church which is as follows. Pastor Sawar (our contact Pastor) had known the Lord’s direction to go to the poorest part of Lahore in Pakistan to establish a church. From meeting in a house this had progressed so that there was a need to have

a building to meet in as the numbers had increased. Pastor Sawar had a little money (although he lived in rented accommodation) and together with money received from the sale of his wife's jewellery they were able to purchase a small piece of land and gradually erect a building. What a blow to have the building demolished! What should they do? By faith they commenced building again, and when they reached the roof level we were alerted to the position and realised they had no more money to pay for the roof. It was at this stage that our church had a collection to pay for the roof. They were overjoyed.

Subsequently they emailed me asking to go and preach at their Pastors' conference. I thought it was their way of thanking us for the financial help we had given and did not expect to hear any more. It was a surprise when I received an email informing me of the dates of the conference with a note that they were expecting me! I responded saying I could not come on these dates but I did give a possible alternative date. I was amazed when this change of date was readily accepted and I was also told I could select my own choice of subjects. So what should I do? The Lord had opened a door.

So I agreed to go; I was to preach eight times in five days.

It was with some trepidation that I landed at Lahore airport in the morning of 9th March 2012, to be greeted very warmly by Pastor Sawar and his colleagues. I was taken to my hotel in a curtained minibus, and allowed a few hours rest until I was whisked off to the church previously mentioned to preach my first two sermons with a ten minute break between them.

Pakistan is a male-dominated work force; indeed the only work (other than household work and looking after their families) that women are allowed to do is teaching, hospital work and the Police force. Therefore all hotel workers were male. In the services there was generally segregation with the men on the left and the women on the right; this also included the children. All the women were covered in their brightly-coloured saris and head scarves; it was a joy not to have to look at large areas of bare flesh. I was not allowed to leave my hotel unaccompanied. There was also security outside of the church buildings in the form of a police officer and a security guard.

I now discovered that I was the only speaker. Each service was attended by between 200 and 400 people, apart from the Lord's Day when there were only about 100 people from the local church.

I spoke through an interpreter (Pastor Sawar) who I believe did an excellent job, judging by the comments made to me after each sermon by some of the people.

So what did I preach from? I desired to preach Christ. Indeed as the Apostle Paul, I determined to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. So, by the grace of God, I preached on the following subjects and in the following order.

9th March Pastors' conference: 1. The person of Christ; 2. The redemption of Christ.

10th March Pastors' conference: 3. The High Priesthood of Christ; 4. I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14. 6).

11th March Sunday service: 5. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else (Isaiah 45. 22).

12th March Convention: 6. I am the bread of life (John 6. 35).

13th March Convention: 7. I am the good shepherd (John 10. 11).

14th March Convention: 8. I am the vine (John 15. 5).

Halfway through my time in Pakistan I suddenly realised three things: firstly, I had felt the help of the Lord in preaching and it had been warmly received; secondly, I had felt very peaceful with no fear; and thirdly, I had not felt tired, although on two occasions I had not gone to bed until 2.30 am! I believe that prayer had been answered, not only of the many who had been praying in England but also the many prayers in Pakistan. Apparently before I arrived, some of the people had prayed all night for God's blessing to be made known!

On one afternoon I was asked to meet a number of pastors who wanted to ask me questions. This was a very interesting and challenging time but I was able to answer all their requests satisfactorily. They told me – to God's glory – they had never heard Christ so preached before.

On several occasions as I entered the church the ladies had formed a passage and as Pastor Sawar and I passed along they threw handfuls of rose petals over us which obviously gave them great joy. Also on two occasions a line of ladies presented me with gifts to take home, including a beautiful Sari outfit for my wife.

These people who had come to hear the preached word had nearly all walked, some many miles. None of them had cars! They did not hide their light, indeed many posters had been displayed around the town informing the people I was to preach which included a large picture of me. It was wonderful to see so many people hungry for the word. When

it was time to leave two car-loads of people came to see me off at the airport with many requests that I return. I gave no promises.

So what did my visit achieve? We shall never know. I did however have a number of emails from Pastor Sawar saying how the Christ-exalting ministry had been blessed. One of these emails was as follows: "I am happy to write to you that as a result of your teaching and preaching 25 people have come forward to be baptised with water baptism. All these people are very much happy to have Christ in their lives". I did not preach on baptism and do not think I even mentioned it.

This was a great encouragement to me as there are no baptisteries in the churches so the baptising is in the open – a public demonstration of their belief in the Lord Jesus. "Ye are my witnesses" in a country which is 97% Muslim. To God be the glory.

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BIOGRAPHY

Thomas Hardcastle: A Forgotten Dissenter Of 1662

By Dr M. J. Hyde

This year, 2012, marks the 350th anniversary of the Great Ejection. The passing of the Act of Uniformity demanded that ministers of the Church of England must conform to the prescribed worship set out in the new 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*. Any man who could not conscientiously consent to the use of the new Prayer Book was forced out of the bounds of the Church, and thus on 24th August 1662, nearly 2000 men preached farewell sermons to their congregations and left their churches for good.

Individual reasons for leaving the church were various. Some could not subscribe to the 39 Articles of Religion. Others refused to take the communion kneeling, as prescribed in the Prayer Book; while others, desiring to pray extempore and refusing to have read prayers forced on them, however good they might be, felt unable to remain within the Established Church. And so began a period of repression and persecution which was to remain to some greater or lesser extent into the last century.

The names of many of the men who dissented at this time are well known: William Bates, John Flavel, Thomas Manton, Thomas Watson, Thomas Brooks, Joseph Caryl, Edmund Calamy, Richard Baxter... the

list could go on. However, I want to look at a relatively unknown man: Thomas Hardcastle. Palmer's revision of Calamy simply states of him:

Mr Thomas Hardcastle. Born at Barwick upon Holm, and trained up under Mr Jackson of Barwick, a learned divine. He was but a young preacher when the Act of Uniformity came out. Afterwards he preached at Shadwell Chapel, and other places. He was a man of good abilities and a bold spirit, fearing no danger; but of great moderation and Catholicism. He was several times a prisoner at York, and at Leeds, and at Chester. He became pastor to a society of moderate Baptists at Bristol, where he was sent to the house of correction. He died in that city, in 1679.¹

Hardcastle was born around February 1636.² It is recorded that he was taught as a boy by Christopher Jackson, who was also ejected in 1662 for his puritan sympathies from the parish of Crosby, Westmoreland. Hardcastle matriculated at St. John's College, Cambridge in 1652, taking a BA in 1656. He was ordained in the church and became vicar of Bramham, near Leeds, Yorkshire.

Having been ejected in 1662 for his nonconformity, Hardcastle preached for a few years at a "chapel of ease" in Shadwell, but he was arrested for this in August 1665. Arrested again for preaching in January 1666, he was imprisoned at York and then at Chester Castle. On this occasion twenty-four members of his congregation were also arrested.³ After a year in prison in Chester his friends raised £1000 in security and he was released on parole on 20th December 1667; but was re-arrested for preaching again just thirty-two days later in January 1668. Several further periods of release and imprisonment followed. His time in gaol was not altogether unprofitable, for while imprisoned at Chester he became acquainted with Ann Gerrard, the daughter of the Governor of Chester Castle, and she, in time, became his wife.

¹ Palmer (1778) *The Nonconformist's Memorial*. Hogg, London, UK. vol. 2 p. 557-558. The account continues: "Works – Treatise upon Matt. vi. 34. called *Christian Geography and Arithmetic*. He printed some excellent Discourses of Mr Garbutt's, entitled, *One come from the Dead to awaken Drunkards*." Several of his manuscript sermons and addresses are in the library of Bristol Baptist College.

² This sketch of Hardcastle is sourced from information in: Neal (2002) *History of the Puritans*. Tentmaker, UK. Vol. 3 p. 413-414; Crosby (1740) *The History of the English Baptists*. London, UK. Vol. 3; p. 27-28; Hayden (1974) *The Records of a Church of Christ in Bristol, 1640-1687*. Bristol Record Society, UK. p. 34-42.

³ Whitley (1914) Two Hardcastles, Presbyterian and Baptist. *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*. 4: p. 33-45.



Thomas Hardcastle

Around 1670 Hardcastle moved to London, was baptised, and became a member of the church at Swan Alley. In 1670, the Baptist congregation meeting at Broadmead, Bristol, was without a pastor and they approached Vavasor Powell, the famous Welsh Baptist minister, for a recommendation of whom they could call. Powell recommended his brother-in-law Hardcastle to them. Consequently they wrote to Hardcastle, although he was in prison at the time, to invite him to come as pastor.⁴ Sadly, despite support for Hardcastle's move from such

eminent men as William Kiffin and Dr John Owen, the church at Swan Alley were not keen to lose Hardcastle and objected to his removal to Bristol at every opportunity.

With the Declaration of Indulgence on 15th March, 1672, Hardcastle was free to minister to the congregation at Bristol, and his ministry there seems to have been abundantly blessed. He does not appear to have ever been formally settled as pastor and, throughout the remainder of his life, the Swan Alley Church continued to dispute with the Broadmead Church about their right to have Hardcastle as their pastor. When the indulgence was withdrawn in March 1673, persecution returned and Hardcastle was again imprisoned in Newgate Prison, London, for considerable periods of time. This imprisonment drew forth a series of most blessed letters from the pastor in his cell to his congregation languishing many miles away in Bristol. We cite just one or two spiritual fragments of them to show that while the persecution may have outwardly appeared to have hindered the work, the blessing of the Spirit was abundantly poured forth in the souls of the persecuted children of Jesus Christ:

Though men may deal unjustly with us, and our sufferings, with respect to them, are for righteousness' sake, yet, with relation to God,

⁴ The letter was signed by 98 church members (White (1996) *The English Baptists of the Seventeenth Century*. The Baptist Historical Society, UK. p. 151 (there is also a picture of Hardcastle on p. 114)).

we must acknowledge ourselves guilty, and that He has punished us less than our iniquities have deserved... I am here a while for yours and the Gospel's sake and service. Watchmen must endure hardship – the heat of the day and the cool of the night. Christ forbore meat and drink to preach, and Paul his sleep; and so we must deny our liberty when God calls for it, and take up the cross of imprisonment when it directly lies in our way.

Be more angry at your corruptions, than others are at your profession...Our wills have been the cause of all our woes. We have chosen rather to fulfil our own desires, than obey the commands of the great Creator and gracious Redeemer...Every little wheel of Providence has its proper notion, and, how cross and contrary soever the motion be, they all tend to bring about the great ends of God's glory and His people's good. And thus imprisonment many times comes to be a furtherance of the Gospel...A true believer always desires that the will of the Lord might be done, that God always may have His will; and then he has his own when God has His...

Do not expect a final end of your troubles, nor a total immunity from them. The Canaanites are yet in the land, and will be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides... Our condition seems to be various as April weather, sometimes showers and sometimes sunshine, and both necessary towards the spring. And of such influence must we account the diversity of the Lord's dispensations towards us, all of them working together for our further prospering in the house and ways of God. The flowing out of the spices, and the pleasantness of the fruits, were beholden to the north wind as well as to the south (Canticles 4: 16). It is a great mercy that the Lord will vouchsafe to give a call to a backsliding people. It is a greater mercy when the Lord makes them willing to come to Him. Pliableness under the Lord's correcting hand is a singular mercy, and a sure sign of a gracious heart.⁵

The church book of the Bristol congregation records: "Upon the 29th day of the 7th Month, 1678, about three of the clock in the morning, being the Sabbath Day, our pastor, Brother Thomas Hardcastle, departed this life. His death was very sudden, for he seemed to have been as well when he went to bed as he usually was at other times."⁶ He had been pastor for seven and a quarter years. The church book describes their late pastor in the following terms: "He was a man, as it were a champion for the Lord, very courageous in his work and

⁵ Quotes taken from: Haycroft Ed. (1865) *The Records of A Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol (1640-1688)*. Heaton and son, London, UK. p. 325f.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 178.

sufferings. His zeal provoked many...He was seven times imprisoned, for Christ and a good conscience, after he left off conformity.”⁷

At the time of his death, Hardcastle’s wife was, the church book informs us, “big with child.” She gave birth to a son, “born as an answer to prayer”, on the 6th day of the 9th month, 1678. Perhaps a token of their esteem for their late pastor, in the two months after her husband’s death, the church collected £150 which they gave to Mrs Hardcastle “towards her and her children’s relief”; it was a very considerable amount of money at the time. The church book quaintly attributes this to the fact that the collection was started on the day of Mr Hardcastle’s funeral and people were asked to subscribe to the fund while their “bowels were warm”. The record continues: “the praise be to the Lord, who stirred up the hearts of his people so willingly to give, to the glory of His name, and for the better support of the widow and fatherless.”⁸

Hardcastle was by no means the only Baptist to be involved in the ejection. It is estimated that approximately seventy ministers practiced believers’ baptism following their ejection in 1662.⁹ However, most Baptists, men such as Bunyan, Kiffin, Knollys and Jessey, to name a few, had been nonconformists for some considerable period before the ejection. Consequently, although the events of 1662 did not affect them directly, they later suffered alongside the ejected ministers for their nonconformity. We must remember that the monarchy was very fragile in the early years following the Restoration; nonconformists were judged to be a threat to the peace of the kingdom. In consequence, several orders of council were issued forbidding seditious conventicles under the guise of religious worship. Baptist meeting houses were attacked, congregations broken up and ministers summarily imprisoned. John Bunyan’s famous arrest on 12th November 1660 and subsequent imprisonment arose from these orders, the blessed fruit of which was *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.¹⁰

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 179.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 181-182.

⁹ See: Whitley (1908) Baptists and Bartholomew’s Day. *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*. 1: p. 24-41. Geoffrey Nuttall suggests the number of actual practicing Baptists ejected was considerably smaller; see: Brackney et al. (1999) *Op Cit.* p. 185-188.

¹⁰ White (1996) *Op Cit.* p. 96f.

The persecution brought upon nonconformists following 1662 was not just the fruit of the Act of Uniformity. It arose from a series of Acts which became known as the Clarendon Code. The first of these Acts, The Corporation Act, as already mentioned, was passed in 1661. This was followed by The Act of Uniformity in 1662. These remained in force until 1828 and 1872 respectively. The Third Act of the Clarendon Code, The Conventicle Act, was passed in 1664. This Act forbade the gathering for worship of more than five people unless they were members of the same household and thus effectively banned dissenting worship, forcing the nonconformists to worship in secret. Finally, the Five Mile Act of 1665 forbade ministers who had been ejected by the Act of Uniformity, from preaching within five miles of the parishes in which they had formerly held charges within the Church of England. It also forbade nonconformist ministers to teach in schools. Although largely repealed in 1689, it remained on the statute Book until 1812.

These Acts jointly brought great bondage for all nonconformists, including those who had dissented in 1662, whether Presbyterians or Independents, but also for the Baptists, Quakers, Unitarians and Roman Catholics. These Acts, together with one or two other pieces of legislation, barred nonconformists from office in the state and military and from being awarded university degrees. Many restrictions on nonconformists remained well into the nineteenth century. The final direct disabilities imposed on nonconformists were lifted by the removal of the Test and Corporation Acts in May 1828. However, many issues of inequality still remained.

It was not until 1836 that Acts were passed to allow the registration of marriages in dissenting meeting houses and not until 1868 that the compulsion of nonconformists to pay church rates (payment for the upkeep of the parish church) was removed.¹¹ A nonconformist could not graduate at university; indeed it was not until the Act of 1871 that Oxford, Cambridge and Durham opened their doors to nonconformists

¹¹ Of particular interest on this point is Fredrick Tryon's pamphlet entitled *A Letter to the Parishioners of James Deeping on the subject of "Church Rates"* (Stamford: 1848). Tryon had seceded from the Church of England in 1839, having been vicar of Deeping St. James. His congregation who departed with him built him a chapel in the village which was constituted as a Strict Baptist church. It is of interest to read the arguments against church rates from one who had been a conformist. For further information on Tryon see: T. R. Hooper (1933) "Frederick Tryon of Deeping". *Baptist Quarterly*. 6 (8) p. 367-370.

to study for all degrees, but even then Divinity was excepted. Of course, University College London, or “Unholy college” as it was known, from its formation in 1836, did not require subscription to the articles of the Church of England at admittance, allowing dissenters to study for a degree there. Furthermore, it was as late as 1880 that the Burial Law Amendment Act finally gave access to burial in parish graveyards for nonconformists. Even into the last century, nonconformity was a stigma. I can remember an old man telling me that as a boy in the 1930s he used to get the cane on a Monday morning because he could not tell the teacher what the minister’s text had been in the parish church on the Sabbath; that he had attended two services at the local Strict Baptist chapel was not good enough. Even today, the local clergyman is a man of standing in the community and society; the nonconformist minister is always second!

In considering these things, let us remember how our religious freedoms were gained for us. May we value them! Our freedom to worship without let or hindrance has not come without considerable cost. Men lost home, friends, family and spent years in prison for the sake of religious toleration. They valued ease of their conscience more than their comforts. Do you? You may feel these things are history of 350 years ago, but they are more recent than that.

We could mention the Disruption in the Church of Scotland and the formation of the Free Church of Scotland in 1843, or later the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church as a secession from the Free Church of Scotland in 1893. In particular our mind goes to Rev. Donald MacDonald of Sheildaig, on the west coast of Scotland. When he came to Sheildaig as pastor of the Free Church in 1872, the charge still had no church or manse for the minister to live in, as a result of the 1843 Disruption. It is said of MacDonald that, “...he laboured among circumstances of peculiar difficulty, preaching on the hillside in all kinds of weather, exposed to summer heat and winter cold, within sound of the Atlantic breakers. Sometimes he had to brush snowflakes off his Bible before he could see his text.”¹² Not long after the new Free Church building was finally completed in 1893, after twenty-one years in the parish, Donald MacDonald was forced to secede from the Free Church of Scotland over an inability to conform to the recently passed Declaratory Act which questioned the fundamental doctrinal standing

¹² MacLeod (2000) *The Second Disruption*. Tuckwell Press, UK. p. 236.

of the Free Church of Scotland and brought liberalism into worship. By his action he was again left without a home and without a church to preach in. Can we imagine giving up our warm church to worship again exposed to the elements, rain or shine? Would we do it once, let alone twice?

How valuable are our religious principles to us? O to be found amongst those who, like Moses, are enabled to esteem “the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt” – in this world – having “respect unto the recompence of the reward” (Heb. 11. 26). Whatever lies ahead of our churches in the future, for persecution certainly seems to be increasing, may we take comfort from the promise of God: “And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6. 16-18). It is true that “Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him” (Ps. 103. 13). “What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?” (Rom. 8. 31). Despite all the persecution man can throw at the church, it cannot be overcome. May we prove and live to testify to the fact that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose” (Rom. 8.28).

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John Newton (1725 – 1807)

By J. R. Broome

Born in London on 24th July 1725, Newton was an only son, his mother dying before he was seven. When his father married again he was sent to a boarding school. His father was then at sea on the Mediterranean trade route and Newton went to sea with his father at the age of eleven. In 1742 he was sent to a post in Spain but would not settle to work. He had some serious convictions when young and read his Bible and prayed, but it apparently meant little to him as he later took to swearing and blaspheming. He had one or two checks, once when thrown from a horse when near a newly staked hedge, but his

concern soon passed off. He tried to reform, reading and praying, and managed at one period to keep this up for two years. A friend of his father suggested sending him to Jamaica and everything was prepared for the voyage. Just before he was due to leave, his father sent him on business to Kent; while there he called to see some distant relatives and became very attached to one of the daughters of the family. When in his worst state in later years and deaf to all calls of conscience, he says his regard for her was always the same, and he thought of her daily during the seven following years.

Determined not to go to Jamaica, he stayed in Kent three weeks, instead of three days, by which time the ship had sailed. So he sailed instead for Venice. When he returned home in December 1743 he went down again to Kent and overstayed his leave. Then he was caught by a press gang for the Navy and sent on board a warship, *The Harwich*. His father managed to have him made a midshipman. Due to sail for the West Indies, the Captain allowed him to go to Kent, where he overstayed his leave again, and though not punished for it, he lost the good-will of the Captain. When on the way out the ship called at Plymouth, Newton deserted, was recaptured by a party of soldiers, put back on board his ship in irons and publicly whipped and demoted from being a midshipman. Now a common seaman, he was exposed to the insults of all the crew. He was tempted to commit suicide. The only restraint he felt was his affection for the girl he loved in Kent. When the ship reached Madeira, Newton transferred to another ship going to Sierra Leone. The Captain knew his father, and he received better treatment until his behaviour lost him the favour of this Captain. His language and conduct he describes himself as very bad. When this ship was leaving Africa, he decided to stay and engaged himself to a slave buyer. He was badly treated here even by African natives of his master; notable because these natives at that time were considered inferior to white men. Later he went to another trader who treated him more considerately. At last a ship came to Sierre Leone with instructions from his father, to whom he had written, to take him home to England, and he set sail in January 1748. When the ship met with many disasters on the way, the Captain, knowing of Newton's evil language, felt that he was like Jonah on board. Once, when drunk, Newton nearly stepped overboard and would have drowned in the night, had not one of the crew dragged him back. On this voyage the Lord began to deal with him.

On opening a religious book, the thought suddenly struck him, "What if these things are true?" and he quickly shut the book. He went to bed and a bad storm arose. A wave broke over the ship, filling his cabin with water, and the cry went out that the ship was sinking. As Newton was attempting to go on deck, the Captain ordered him to go back and fetch a knife. While he went back, another man went up the ladder in his place and was immediately swept overboard to his death. The ship was a wreck, and all the crew could do was man the pumps and stop the leaks with clothes and bedding. After all was done and Newton had gone to speak to the Captain, unthinkingly he said to himself, "If this will not do, the Lord have mercy on us!" This he says was the first desire for mercy he had breathed for many years. Then the thought occurred to him, "What mercy can there be for me?" Now he dreaded death and felt a sullen frame of mind. He thought he could never be forgiven for his past life. Having pumped for so long he was too weak to continue and so he took over the helm of the ship and there had some time for reflection. He thought of his former attempts to be religious; the extraordinary turns in his life; calls, warnings and deliverances; his licentious conversation and constant ridiculing of the Gospel; and concluded there was no sinner like him and he could not be forgiven.

When eventually they freed the ship of water, he felt the hand of God had gone out in his favour and he began to pray. "I now began to think of that Jesus, whom I had so often derided. I recollected the particulars of His life and of His death; a death for sins not His own...And now I chiefly wanted evidence. The comfortless principles of infidelity were deeply riveted and I rather wished than believed these things were real facts...Upon the Gospel scheme I saw at least a peradventure of hope." After a calm and false hope of land, the storm returned and again they had to fight to keep the ship afloat. Food and clothes ran short and the only thing in plentiful supply was fresh water. The Captain hourly reproached Newton as the cause of the trouble and even said that he was confident that if he were thrown overboard the storm would stop, though he dare not try the experiment. But at last the wind veered to the exact direction the ship needed and became gentle and soon they sighted Ireland on 8th April, four weeks after the storm first struck the ship. Their last supplies were cooking in the galley as they landed and within two hours of reaching harbour the wind rose again; had they still been at sea the ship must have sunk.

“About this time”, writes Newton, “I began to know that there is a God that hears and answers prayer. How many times has he appeared for me since this great deliverance! Yet alas! How distrustful and ungrateful is my heart unto this hour! My companions in danger were either quite unaffected or soon forgot it all but it was not so with me; not that I was any wiser or better than they, but because the Lord was pleased to vouchsafe me peculiar mercy; otherwise I was the most unlikely person in the ship to receive an impression, having been often before quite stupid and hardened in the very face of great dangers and having always till this time, hardened my neck still more and more after every reproof.” He was struck at this time in reading the New Testament with several passages, especially Luke 15 on the prodigal son, particularly the goodness of the father in running to meet the son. “This gained upon me. I continued much in prayer. I saw the Lord had interposed so far to save me and I hoped he would do more.” So before he reached Ireland he says, he had a satisfactory evidence in his own mind of the truth of the gospel and, “its exact suitableness to answer all my needs. I was in some degree affected with a sense of my more enormous sins, but I was little aware of the innate evils of my heart. I had no apprehension of the spirituality and extent of the law of God.”

Newton now became very religious, went to church regularly and prayed twice a day. For six years he did not come under a gospel ministry, but the Holy Spirit taught him gradually the truth. He accepted the truth of the Scriptures and no longer mocked them. At this stage in his career he was offered the command of a ship but refused it and went as Mate. On the voyage he fell back into many of his old ways until all his former convictions seemed lost, but God brought him to his senses in Africa in a fever. On completion of the voyage he returned to England and in 1750 married the young girl he had met six or seven years before. He was now twenty-five, and was appointed commander of a ship and sailed from Liverpool in August. He returned in November 1751 and sailed again in July 1752. He was a slave merchant and faced the hazards of attempted mutinies among the crew and insurrection among the slaves. He returned in August 1753 to Liverpool but sailed again in a few weeks. On this voyage he had an illness which nearly proved fatal. He writes, “I had not that full assurance which is so desirable at a time when flesh and heart fail, but my hopes were greater than my fears. My trust, though weak in degree, was alone fixed upon the blood and righteousness of Jesus; and these

words, 'He is able to save to the uttermost', gave me great relief." After about ten days he recovered and returned to England in August 1754.

He now prepared for another voyage but his sea career was at an end. Though he did not see the wrong of the slave trade, he had often prayed for a more humane occupation. Two days before the ship was due to sail he suffered a sudden illness and was forced to relinquish command of the ship. He remained in England and came to know George Whitfield whose ministry was made a great help to his soul. In 1755 he was appointed Tide Surveyor at Liverpool. When reflecting at about this time on Galatians 1. 23-24, the ministry was impressed on his mind. He preached for the first time at Warwick in 1759 in a Nonconformist chapel and during the next few years on several occasions in Liverpool. He was uncertain whether to go among the Nonconformists or enter the Established Church. Having decided to enter the Church of England, he was ordained by the Bishop of Lincoln, through the influence of the Countess of Huntingdon, and went as Curate to Olney in 1764. He stayed at Olney until 1779 when he moved to St. Mary Woolnoth, London, where he remained for the rest of his life. He preached his last sermon in 1806 for the benefit of the sufferers of the Battle of Trafalgar when over eighty. His sight, hearing and memory were then failing him. He died 21st December 1807.

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DOCTRINE AND TRUTH

Gethsemane

By J. Hart

Jesus, while he dwelt below,
 As divine historians say,
 To a place would often go;
 Near to Kedron's brook it lay;
 In this place he loved to be,
 And 'twas named Gethsemane.

'Twas a garden, as we read,
 At the foot of Olivet,
 Low, and proper to be made
 The Redeemer's lone retreat;

When from noise he would be free,
Then he sought Gethsemane.

Thither, by their Master brought,
His disciples likewise came;
There the heavenly truths he taught
Often set their hearts on flame;
Therefore they, as well as he,
Visited Gethsemane.

Here they oft conversing sat,
Or might join with Christ in prayer;
O what blest devotion's that,
When the Lord himself is there!
All things to them seemed to agree
To endear Gethsemane.

Here no strangers durst intrude;
But the Prince of Peace could sit,
Cheered with sacred solitude,
Wrapped in contemplation sweet;
Yet how little they could see
Why he chose Gethsemane!

Full of love to man's lost race,
On his conflict much he thought;
This he knew the destined place,
And he loved the sacred spot;
Therefore 'twas he liked to be
Often in Gethsemane.

They his followers, with the rest,
Had incurred the wrath divine;
And their Lord, with pity pressed,
Longed to bear their loads – and mine;
Love to them, and love to me,
Made him love Gethsemane.

Many woes had he endured,
Many sore temptations met,
Patient, and to pains inured;
But the sorest trial yet,
Was to be sustained in thee,
Gloomy, sad Gethsemane.

Came at length the dreadful night,
Vengeance, with its iron rod,

Stood, and with collected might
Bruised the harmless Lamb of God;
See, my soul, thy Saviour see,
Groveling in Gethsemane.

View him in that olive press,
Squeezed and wrung till 'whelmed in blood,
View thy Maker's deep distress!
Hear the sighs and groans of God!
Then reflect what sin must be,
Gazing on Gethsemane.

Poor disciples, tell me now,
Where's the love ye lately had,
Where's that faith ye all could vow?
But this hour is too, too sad!
'Tis not now for such as ye
To support Gethsemane.

O what wonders love has done!
But how little understood!
God well knows, and God alone,
What produced that sweat of blood;
Who can thy deep wonders see,
Wonderful Gethsemane?

There my God bore all my guilt;
This through grace can be believed;
But the horrors which he felt,
Are too vast to be conceived.
None can penetrate through thee,
Doleful, dark Gethsemane.

Gloomy garden, on thy beds,
Washed by Kedron's waters foul,
Grow most rank and bitter weeds;
Think on these, my sinful soul;
Would'st thou sin's dominion flee,
Call to mind Gethsemane.

Sinners vile like me, and lost,
If there's one so vile as I,
Leave more righteous souls to boast:
Leave them, and to refuge fly;
We may well bless that decree
Which ordained Gethsemane.

We can hope no healing hand,
Leprous quite throughout with sin;
Loathed incurables we stand,
Crying out, "Unclean, unclean!"
Help there's none for such as we,
But in dear Gethsemane.

Eden, from each flowery bed,
Did for man short sweetness breathe;
Soon, by Satan's counsel led,
Man wrought sin, and sin wrought death;
But of life, the healing tree
Grows in rich Gethsemane.

Hither, Lord, thou didst resort,
Ofttimes with thy little train;
Here would'st keep thy private court;
O confer that grace again;
Lord, resort with worthless me
Ofttimes to Gethsemane.

True, I can't deserve to share
In a favour so divine;
But, since sin first fixed thee there,
None have greater sins than mine;
And to this my woeful plea,
Witness thou, Gethsemane.

Sins against a holy God;
Sins against his righteous laws;
Sins against his love, his blood;
Sins against his name, and cause;
Sins immense as is the sea –
Hide me, O Gethsemane!

Here's my claim, and here alone;
None a Saviour more can need;
Deeds of righteousness I've none;
No, not one good work to plead;
Not a glimpse of hope for me,
Only in Gethsemane.

Saviour, all the stone remove
From my flinty, frozen heart;
Thaw it with the beams of love,
Pierce it with the blood-dipped dart;

Wound the heart that wounded thee;
Melt it in Gethsemane.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
One almighty God of love,
Hymned by all the heavenly host
In thy shining courts above;
We poor sinners, gracious THREE,
Bless thee for Gethsemane.

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The Marriage of Adam

By S. F. Paul

When God formed the lower creation He created them male and female. Each beast or fish or fowl had its mate or companion, but Adam was created alone. Yet the purpose of God was not to leave him alone, for He saw that this would not be good: “*It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.*” That is, he would create a “help” or companion for him which should be “meet” or suitable to his nature, so that they could hold communion together and comfort and solace one another, as well as to multiply on the earth. But we shall find that as the creation of Adam was superior to, and distinct from, that of the lower creation, so the formation of a help or wife for him was a distinct work of God; and that too because it was to have a special significance as a type of what was to come. As the fashioning of Adam was such that he might be a “figure of him that was to come,” that is of Christ, so the formation of his wife was also destined to have a figurative meaning concerning the same blessed Person.

Let us look then at the creation of Eve, and we have a definite and clear description of it in the 2nd chapter of Genesis: “And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made” (or builded, margin) “he a woman, and brought her unto the man.” This deep sleep which the Lord caused Adam to fall into was a specially given state of unconsciousness whereby he would be insensible to the pain occasioned by the removal of the rib and the closing up of the flesh again. The expression “deep sleep” is used in other instances when it

has been caused to come upon persons by the Lord, especially when He had something to communicate to them in a vision. Thus when He foretold Abram what should happen to his seed in years to come, it is said: "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram" (Gen. 15. 12). Also as Elihu said to Job: "For God speaketh once, yea twice, *yet man* perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction" (Job 33. 14-16.). Again Daniel speaks of such sleep when he was given visions or Prophecies of the future (Dan. 8.18; 10.9). In other cases an intense sleep was caused by the Lord in order to fulfil His purposes, as when David took away Saul's spear and cruse of water, "for they *were* all asleep; because a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them" (1 Sam. 26. 12).

Here we have the omnipotence of the Creator manifested in the formation of Eve, as much as in the creation of Adam out of the dust of the earth. For not only was Adam put into this deep sleep, but out of the rib which was thus taken from Adam the Lord made or builded a woman. If the Lord had so willed He could have formed Eve out of the dust as He did Adam; but there was a special purpose in creating his wife out of a part of his own body, as we shall see. Although Adam being in this deep sleep was unconscious of what was happening when the Lord took the rib and fashioned it into this beautiful and "meet" or suitable companion for him, it is evident that the Lord revealed to him how it was done. For when she was brought to Adam he said, "This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Then it is added: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife" (Gen. 2. 23- 24).

This then is the divine record both of the creation of Eve, as Adam called the loving companion whom the Lord made for his comfort and help, "because she was the mother of all living" (Gen. 3. 20); and also of their marriage as husband and wife so that they should be one flesh. Herein was the institution of the sacred and divine estate of matrimony, that the man leaving his own father and mother should henceforth cleave unto his wife, and that they should remain thus united until either be taken in death. Here is no mention of divorce or any separation or severance of the union, other than that caused by death, as Christ Himself confirmed in reply to the Pharisees when they asked

Him if it was lawful for a man to put away his wife: “Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” When they insisted that Moses gave a writing of divorcement to put a wife away, “He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so”, although making an exception in the case of “putting away” for fornication: “And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Matt. 19. 3-9).¹³

This original institution of marriage to continue while both parties were alive is again referred to in the Prophecy of Malachi: “The LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet *is* she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away” (Mal. 2. 14-15).

How these Scriptures testify against men today who lightly regard the solemn obligation resting upon husband and wife by seeking divorce upon other pretexts than that for which the Lord made an exception to the Pharisees! And there is a sacred and important reason why the covenant entered into at the marriage of husband and wife should thus be adhered to, and that is because it is typical of the union which exists between the Lord Jesus Christ and His church, which we will now endeavour a little to consider. This blessed truth is very clearly stated by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians, where he is treating of the relative duties of husbands and wives. First he observes that the husband is the head of the wife. This he had declared also to the Corinthians: “I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman *is* the man; and the head of Christ *is* God” (1 Cor. 11.3). But here to the Ephesians (Eph. 5.22) he

¹³ See also 1 Cor. 7. 15 for the case where an unbelieving partner “departs” from a believer.

brings out more clearly that the husband is the head of the wife, and how this is so because it is typical of the union between Christ and His church: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing." Then he says to the husbands: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." This is an exceedingly plain statement of the fact that the marriage union between Adam and Eve, or between husband and wife, is typical of the indissoluble one between Christ and the church; and he sums it all up by saying. "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5. 22-33).

This blessed truth of the eternal union which exists between Christ and His church is set forth in other parts of Scripture, some of which we may here refer to. In the present state of the church and while the earth remains, Christ is referred to as the bridegroom and the church as the bride; as for example in the testimony of John the Baptist when he averred that he was not the Christ, but His forerunner and friend: "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom," (that is John) "which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled" (John 3. 29). Christ also referred to Himself thus when asked why His disciples did not fast: "Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast" (Matt. 9.15). Again in the parable of the ten virgins; they went forth to meet the bridegroom (Matt. 25). But when the whole church has been called by grace and gathered to Christ in glory, the marriage of the Lamb will then be consummated as described in the Revelation (see Rev. 19.7-9;

21.2). This marriage of the Lamb is also prophesied of in the Old Testament; as for instance in Psalm 45.10; and Isa. 61.10 and 62.5.

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LETTERS, ADDRESSES AND SERMONS

A sermon preached by Mr J. R. Broome, at Bethel Chapel, Luton, on Lord's Day 16th September, 2012

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2. 5)

The apostle is here peculiarly speaking to those who know God themselves. He opens this chapter clearly defining those people and what they knew of their God. I hope you will search your hearts and ask yourself, Do I know anything of Him? It may be very little, and some of you young ones may feel sometimes that as you listen to the ministry of your Pastor, you know so little of what he is speaking about. I think sometimes of one answer to prayer. I remember listening to my late father and hearing him preach on the blood of Christ, and I left the chapel that day – and perhaps some of you feel the same – feeling in my heart I knew nothing of what he was preaching about. But as I stood on the doorstep of the chapel, that hymn dropped in:

“Every grace and every favour
Comes to us through Jesus’ blood.”

I felt in prayer, there is a looking upwards to Him, and what a mercy if in your heart you do have one answer to prayer and you treasure it.

I turn to the first verse: “If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ”. You may sit all your life in the sanctuary of God and be out of this secret. O the blessed nature of the truth that lies here: “Consolation in Christ.” To be brought to know something about Him; His presence, His love, His mercy and those everlasting arms underneath; and to know that He is a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God, and to come to know something of that consolation of His precious blood in the hearts of His children in their guilt and filth and condemnation and sin. Here is the characteristic, as the apostle says: “Let this mind be in you” – those who know something of Him, who hope they know something of Him and a little of His consolation.

As we pass through life's pathway – I have proved it since the Lord began with me when I was about sixteen or seventeen under old Eben

Clark of Barton. As a lad, I heard him preach from the text, “That we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom.” That went home to my heart with power and sweetness, but I had to walk it out and am still walking it out. There is the consolation in it. We think of your brother deacon this morning in hospital. Our steps are ordered by God. As I said in prayer, the hospital bed and deep afflictions have been to me oases in the wilderness here below, spiritual oases. I have walked in sweet communion with my Lord and proved what I felt in prayer this morning: “We also are weak with him.”(margin) He brings us down that we might enter into some sweet consolation, and in this affliction I have passed through, I have learned some things, seen things I had never seen before, and they lie in the heart of our text this morning.

I had such a sight in my weakness, one morning, such a view of Christ in all His meekness and poverty and as He describes Himself here, though He “thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” He “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant.” The words that rested with me were these: “He humbled himself.” O the consolation in Christ! How He would be conformed to his brethren. And thus in the third chapter of this epistle, the apostle could desire fellowship in His suffering. Well, He will conform His people to His own image and bring His church down to a little sweet understanding of the pathway He walked. He gives to His church solemn thorns in the flesh, solemn weakness, solemn temptations, solemn crosses. “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” He does it in love. He does it with a divine purpose. Why? “Consolation in Christ” – to look up to Him in our weakness and in our need and to enter into that sweet consolation.

“Let this mind be in you.” I say these words are directed to those who have this consolation. “If any comfort of love.” That is so blessed! I do say to you this morning, search your heart. Have you known the love of Christ? Has He spoken to you? I remember when the Lord spoke to me in a great bereavement: “Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” My heart moved and walked in the sweet love of Christ, the sweet “peace of God, which passeth all understanding.” And you know, “If any comfort of love.” When we are brought into great weakness and need, the Lord gives to us promises, and He has to me in my life. I look back now forty or fifty years, to promises He gave me which are my support now. Have you a promise? Has He spoken one promise into your heart?

It will be a comfort. It will be love. It will be strength. It will be your support. And once given, given forever, never to be taken away, given to be pleaded again and again. The Lord will speak it again and again into your heart, and you will find the consolation and the comfort of it, and it will be your mercy if the Lord has dealt with you so in your life that you have a need, and the Lord has given you a need, and you have to look up to Him and press your case like Jacob did. "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

"If any comfort of love." O the love of Christ to His dear church! It is eternal and everlasting. It has no beginning or end. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." I do say to you this morning, has the Lord drawn you? Look back, some of you over a long life, and ask yourself this, where did the Lord begin with me? Where did He first call me out of nature's darkness? How did He do it? Can I mark the spot and place? Do I know exactly where He began? You may not be able to pinpoint exactly where He began, but can you mark that change in your heart and pathway that brought you out of the world that lieth in wickedness and brought you to His mercy seat?

"If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit." I sit here; I look back over the years. I was speaking to your Pastor this morning of a help and blessing I had in this chapel in 1959, and I think back to those days, the deacon I was staying with, dear Fred Gurney, and the love and union of heart and fellowship in the bonds of the gospel, and I felt it in prayer. There are those here in this house of God to whom I have felt a union and fellowship in the bonds of the gospel, and I say this openly this morning: that was to your deacon here who is in hospital now. Who has felt any fellowship of the Spirit one to another, union and communion one with another? It is a blessed thing in the church, this fellowship of the Spirit, when the Lord works in the hearts of His dear people by the power of His Holy Spirit. How they are brought into love and union one with another. They may not say anything to each other, but they feel a great bond and union. I mentioned Eben Clark of Barton. I do not think in the time I knew him we ever spoke more than a few words to each other. I remember meeting him once at an anniversary and he said to me, "Are you the young man blessed under my ministry?" And I said, "Yes, I am." That is all we said. We parted, but there was a bond.

Do you know anything of the fellowship of the Spirit? I say all this because of my text.

“Let this mind be in you.” These characters that are spoken of in this opening chapter, can you join them? God searches our hearts. With all honesty, can you join them? “If there be therefore *any* consolation in Christ.” Have you any? “If any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit.” I will open my heart to you this morning. The first one I had a real fellowship of the Spirit with was dear John Rayner. He and I walked together from our student days in unbroken fellowship. Never do I forget his end. I stood beside his bed in the hospital at Hemel Hempstead, and he said, “John, I am going to heaven. I know I am.” Fellowship. What a bond there is, and I felt sitting here this morning with so many memories in this chapel, I felt they are unbroken. O how we hope one day to pass into that sweet fellowship one with another in glory and that blessed, eternal consolation and comfort of love in heaven, and to be one in that great company that sings that heavenly anthem in Immanuel’s land: “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.” I have said this many times, but I say it again solemnly this morning. That anthem, we must learn here below. We shall be prepared and made ready to sing that anthem in heaven above, but we shall be prepared here below. Is the Lord preparing you to sing that anthem?

“If any bowels and mercies.” Blessed word, “Bowels and mercies”! It speaks of love and kindness, union one with another, a knowledge of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus His dear Son. O to know it in our hearts! What do you know of His compassion? It is the pain occasioned by the sinners before God, wretches of unbelief and rebellion, and to know His merciful hand extended to such rebels. He has bowels of compassion towards His dear people and their salvation rests upon His sovereign grace. Ask yourself, Do I know anything of mercy? What do I know of mercy? When the Lord once blessed my soul and touched my heart as a student, He touched it with that word of Jeremiah to Ebed-melech: “Thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me.” Never do I forget that night when that promise was given me and how I wept, and if ever I said it in my life, I said it that night: “Why me?”

“Why was I made to hear his voice,
And enter while there’s room;

When thousands make a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?"

"If any bowels and mercies." Have you known any? You will be brought to that place, to feel your wretchedness, your ruin, your nothingness before God. Why did He speak to me?

Now we come to the text: "Let this mind be in you." The Apostle Paul says in his first letter to the church at Corinth: "We have the mind of Christ." I do say this to you this morning: Have you the mind of Christ? Have you been given a spiritual discernment? Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and this is what lies in the heart and centre of our text. "Let this mind be in you," the mind of Christ. And the verses which follow are peculiarly blessed. We see in them the incomprehensible condescension of the eternal Son of God who created this universe, without whom nothing was made that was made, (as we read in the gospel of John). "Who...thought it not robbery to be equal with God." We see Him setting us a heavenly example of how we should walk before Him in our Christian profession, for it is to the Lord's church that these words are directed; how we should walk before Him in humility and in the pattern that He has set us. "No reputation", and humbling ourselves.

I have been greatly taken in my illness with the precepts. I read the book the Gospel Standard Trust has just published on J.C. Philpot's *Gospel Precepts*. What a blessed book that is. J.C. Philpot says there that not until the end of his days in the ministry did he come fully to appreciate the value of the precepts. And they lie here in our text. Philpot says that he did not preach them as he ought to have done. That is walk and conduct. We ministers spend much time in speaking of experience and doctrine and truth. What about walk and conduct? Mr. Philpot says quite a lot about why ministers do not preach it – because they feel to come so far short in walking out the precepts themselves. But they are here to be preached.

Here is the glorious example of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." I thought of this word. We do treasure our reputation. Poor, fallen nature wants to be far bigger than it is. Pride in the heart has to be brought down. God's dear children have to be humbled. They carry the old man and the new together, and they are poor, fallen creatures, but the Lord knows it, and He will work so that like their Lord and Master they do not mind being of no reputation. The Lord spoke that parable in His day

of the man who said it was better to take the lowest place. Naturally, poor, fallen nature would take the highest place, to be something and somebody, and carries within the heart judgmentalism, not necessarily spoken, but secretly thought. O to be brought to this: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation".

He came here to be despised. Have you ever been despised? I lay in hospital in 2002 at night with the curtains round the bed, praying. I did not realise I was praying – very weak two days after a major operation on my heart. All I was saying was, "Lord, Lord." I remember that ward, and how it came back to me like an echo: "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" In the next bed was a godless undertaker, and suddenly he said in the night with great scorn, "The old reverend is praying." Suddenly the Lord spoke in my heart, and it was this: "They hated me without a cause." How broken I was! I felt it such a privilege to be hated without a cause, to walk myself in the pathway my Master walked in, despised by the world. Jesus Himself was spoken of in the prophecy: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

"Made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." O the pathway He walked! We read in the gospels how He walked and how the Lord was with Him, and blessed Him, and supported Him, and sustained Him. We see Him in prayer in Gethsemane, praying to His Father as He faced the cross, and here we see this blessed grace. "Became obedient unto death." What a word this is. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." To be nothing, to be emptied. The hymn writer says:

"Emptied of earth I fain would be,
The world, myself, and all but Thee;
Only reserved for Christ that died,
Surrendered to the Crucified."

When the Lord works in the hearts of His dear children, He brings them to nothingness, to dependence, and they are of no reputation. They do not mind what others think of them. They are concerned only to know the Lord's love and presence, and to be conformed to His image, and to walk in submission and obedience to their Master's will.

This spiritual obedience. My mind goes to this this morning, and I say it to you. Who here is walking in paths of disobedience? There are those who know the exercise the Lord lays in the hearts of His children and you may have walked in disobedience for years. You know what I am thinking of. Has the Lord laid an exercise in your heart to follow Him in obedience and you have not obeyed? I know what I am talking about. The Lord laid it in my heart in September when I came out of the Army in 1957 to follow Him in the ordinances of His house and I did not. I turned away in fear and I walked in disobedience and darkness. The Lord did not leave me. I never forget attending a baptizing, and as I sat in the back row, I had such a solemn realisation that it should have been me. Never do I forget it. I opened the hymnbook and as I looked at the hymn, a line at the bottom of the page I had opened at, there was this word:

“Come, be baptized without delay,
In honour of your King.”

“The form of a servant.” The Lord walked in obedience, and I say to you this morning, He walked this very pathway. You may say in your heart this morning, I am unfit. I say to you,

“All the fitness He requireth,
Is to feel your need of Him.”

“The form of a servant.” I went to see my father a few weeks later to tell him and I remember what he said to me in the vestry. I said, “I think I will be baptized,” and he looked at me and said, “No, you won’t. You can go away.” I never forget his bluntness. I knew what he meant; there was still a hesitation. And when I went to see him again some weeks later, and said, “I will be baptized,” he looked at me and said, “That’s better.” A servant has implicit obedience. It is not half-hearted. I wonder how many of you have lingered for years. I remember going with my late father to stand at the dying bed of a godly man. I can see it now. And he looked at my father and said, “Fifteen years ago I was exercised about coming forward and never came.” He said, “If I get up, I will be baptized.” I walked out of the door with my father. He turned to me and said, “As far as I am concerned, he is baptized.” The dear man died and went to glory and left behind him a sweet memory.

But He “took upon him.” “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” A sacred purpose. He set His face, we read, as a flint to go to Jerusalem to walk in the paths of obedience to His Father’s

heavenly mind and will, and He calls His dear church to follow Him, to follow Him in submission and obedience, implicit obedience. As I look on some of the young ones this morning, I think like this, and some of you older ones, if this is in your heart and the exercise has lain there, age does not count in this matter. But what a blessed place – “Let this mind be in you” – to walk in paths of submission which the Lord has laid down in His dear church, amongst His people, because here lies the true fellowship in the bonds of the everlasting gospel. “Took upon him the form of a servant.” “Let this mind be in you.” Search your heart and ask yourself this question: how solemn it is if this mind is not in us, this exercise does not lie there.

“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself.” What a sight I had of His humility and His meekness, and as I had that sight of Him, I had such conviction brought to look back over my life and the precepts of the gospel. I found that I had come so far short of the spirit and mind of Christ. And when we get a sight of the pathway He walked, and His sacred humanity, and His nothingness and His emptiness, all the pathway that He walked, how it brings us into a solemn conviction that we have come so far short ourselves of the path He walked!

“He...became obedient unto death.” He passed through that solemn baptism of death, typified in the Jordan. When He was baptized in Jordan He passed through that pathway. Scripture speaks of this ordinance: “Buried with him by baptism”; raised with Him to newness of life.

“Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” It speaks of His sufferings and His sorrows, but as we look upon that glorious death of Christ on Calvary’s cross, we think of the words in the prophecy of Isaiah spoken by His dear people. Led into a knowledge of the benefits and blessings of His death, they are able to say, “*he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace*” – that is, the chastisement which produced our peace – “*was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*” O to be brought to the mind of Christ! It is to be brought into the pathway of suffering and sorrows, and yet in it you walk with Him and have fellowship with Him.

I have long been taken with that simple, short sentence in the Scriptures: “We also are weak with him.”(margin) To walk in weakness

here below, carrying our cross as He did His, and to know what it is to have fellowship with Him in His sufferings, and to enter into the benefits of His cross, even the death of the cross; to prove in the sweet experience of it what John the divine speaks of: “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” It is the fulfilment of that prophecy: “He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities.” If you know anything of what we have spoken of, this sacred consolation, the great core of the consolation is this: peace. When we look at that word, “He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him,” His sufferings end in this glorious peace which the precious blood of Christ brings into the souls of His church. I love that simple word that He spoke at the end of His ministry at the last supper. He said, “My peace” – the peace He was peculiarly to produce on Calvary’s cross when He bore the sins of His church in His body on the tree. He said, “My peace I give unto you.” I say to you this morning, and you young ones rest upon my heart: Have you had a touch of that peace, a moment of it, the sweet peace in your soul? “The blood of Jesus Christ speaks peace within.” Beautiful words!

“Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin?
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.”

“Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?
To do the will of Jesus, this is rest.”

That is peace, a glorious peace.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” And I go back to the precepts that lie in this chapter: how we should walk together, and it is spiritual, not natural. It is to the children of God these verses are spoken, but the apostle felt that they needed it. Here was Lydia, here was the Philippian jailor and the dear children of God at Philippi, but he says to them, “If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.” I felt as I came into this chapel this morning and thought back over the years of fellowship with some of those who have gone before, “*Likeminded.*” Beautiful expression! One in heart, one in spirit, united together.

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CURRENT EVENTS**Marriage**

In writing to my MP recently regarding same sex marriages, I received an assurance from him that churches would not be forced to conduct such ceremonies against their wishes and their conscience.

According to Aidan O'Neill QC, for the Christian Institute, any opt out clauses included by Parliament for the churches will be meaningless. Appeals against such opt out clauses to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) will succeed. O'Neill says, "If marriage is opened to allow two individuals, regardless of their sexual gender, to marry one another, then Article 12 ECHR will apply both to same sex and opposite sex marriages. Any attempt in law to differentiate between same sex and opposite sex marriages would in principle be covered by the non-discrimination provisions of Article 14 ECHR and come under the strict scrutiny of the Strasbourg Court."

The situation is growing daily more serious. The Scottish Government has included a Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill in its legislative programme for its next session and David Cameron has promised such legislation at Westminster by 2015. O'Neill warns that teachers, chaplains and even members of the Armed Forces could face being sacked under equality legislation if they make a stand for conscience's sake. Parents would have no right to withdraw their children from classes where it is taught and people attempting to adopt or foster children would be examined as to their views and could be rejected.

O'Neill says that regarding churches, they would be in a stronger position, if they were to stop conducting weddings. All weddings would then be conducted at a Registry Office followed by a church ceremony afterwards if so desired. This in fact is the case in The Netherlands today. Equally Parliaments that vote for opt out clauses for churches could vote to remove them as has recently happened in Denmark where the Parliament has forced the Evangelical Lutheran Church to perform same sex marriages in their churches.

The American President has declared his support for such a change in the definition of marriage as has the French President. The Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, in a recent press release of a forthcoming speech, described those who opposed the proposed changes as "bigots." Later he stated that it was released without his knowledge and did not represent his views, but it is interesting that it came from his office and shows the attitude of intolerance and bitterness that surrounds the issue. The clouds of persecution are beginning to appear on the horizon for professing Christians in this wholly secular society.

Immortal honours rest on Jesus' head;
My God, my Portion, and my Living Bread;
In him I live, upon him cast my care;
He saves from death, destruction, and despair.

He is my Refuge in each deep distress;
The Lord my strength and glorious righteousness;
Through floods and flames he leads me safely on,
And daily makes his sovereign goodness known.

My every need he richly will supply;
Nor will his mercy ever let me die;
In him there dwells a treasure all divine,
And matchless grace has made that treasure mine.

O that my soul could love and praise him more,
His beauties trace, his majesty adore;
Live near his heart, upon his bosom lean;
Obey his voice, and all his will esteem.

William Gadsby
Nazarene's Songs 1824