

PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. Solomon's Song 2.12.

SPRING 2014

IN THIS ISSUE	Page
Editorial.	1
This Same Jesus - J. Delves.	3
The Moon (Part 3): Its Effect on Us - Andrew Rayner. . .	4
The Diary of the Rev. James Calder	5
Being Helpful - B. A. Ramsbottom.	7
God's Delivering Power - Archibald E. Glover.	9
Susan Mary Cooper.	19
"Is" and "Are" in the Bible.	26
The Book - or A Book.	26
Did Christ Die for all Mankind? - J. H. Gosden.	27
Vestigial Organs.	29
Woe unto thee, Chorazin!	31
Dangerous Places.	32
The Silver-Mine - John Bunyan.	34
A Few Current Matters.	35

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EDITORIAL

“Surely I come quickly. Amen.” Revelation 22.20.

Many years ago, attending a church service as a teenager with a school friend, a hymn was sung with a refrain (or chorus) after each of the five verses. The words of the refrain were these:

Living, He loved me; dying, He saved me;
Buried, He carried my sins far away!
Rising, He justified freely for ever;
One day He’s coming - O glorious day!
(J. Wilbur Chapman, 1859-1918)

This is, of course, a hymn of high assurance, which many of our readers may not feel able to sing except as a prayerful desire that it might truly be *their* experience. However, as a teenager, the words struck deep: “One day He’s coming - O glorious day!” For the next few days we went about thinking, “O, would it be a glorious day for *me*?”

There is perhaps no subject on which gracious men have so widely disagreed as the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. How we need to approach the subject with the deepest humility. Admittedly, it is difficult to be sure at times whether the Lord Jesus, in the prophetic sections of the Gospels, is speaking of the imminent destruction of Jerusalem, or of His second coming. However, just as in the Old Testament many prophecies had not only an immediate fulfilment, but also looked centuries ahead to New Testament times, so it is with the prophecies in the Gospels. By way of example, Isaiah prophesied of the national redemption of God’s people from the Babylonian captivity, but at the same time also of that great work of redemption by the coming of the Son of God.

Difficult though the subject may be there are five points that can, we feel, clearly be laid down from Scripture:

- First, the Scriptures plainly teach that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again *in person*. “The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven.” (1Thessalonians 4.16.)
- Second, His second coming will be as *visible as the first*. “This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” (Acts 1.11.)
- Third, the second coming will be *unexpected*. His coming will be “as a thief in the night.” (1 Thessalonians 5.2.)
- Fourth, the second coming will be *sudden*. The Lord Jesus Christ said that His coming would be “as the lightning.” (Matt. 24.27.)
- Fifth, the second coming will be *glorious and triumphant*. He will come “in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.” (Luke 9.26.) (Note how His first coming was as “a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” Isa. 53.3.)

We cannot accept the view (widely held) that there will be a *secret* appearing of the Lord and a *secret* “rapture” of the saints. This does not seem to be in accordance with Scripture. If His second coming were to be a secret, it would not be “with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God.” Nor can we agree that the world will be converted when Christ returns. It will be found in the same condition that it was in the days of Noah. (Luke 17.26.)

When the Lord comes again, He will come in judgment. The Nicene Creed states: “He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.” The Book of Common Prayer states it in much the same way: “He shall come to judge the quick (living) and the dead.” And so it leads us to the vital question (and may it be a burning question): “How stands the case, my soul, with thee?”

O that it might be even as Count Zinzendorf sings: “Bold shall I stand in that great day.” But to stand bold in the presence of the Judge we shall need a Saviour - and, feeling our sin and shame, we are thankful that Isaiah adds, “And a great One.” Yes, “Jesus is a mighty Saviour,” one suited to the very worst of sinners.

There were few who believed the report of His first coming (Isaiah 53.1), and in these solemn days there are few who believe the report of His second coming. There will be an awful separation when the Lord

Jesus comes again (see Luke 17.36). “One day He’s coming - O glorious day!” *But will it be a glorious day for us?*

With sincere best wishes to you all. The Editor.

* * * *

We follow this editorial with part of a Prayer Meeting address given by Mr. J. Delves in 1955. Subject: “THIS SAME JESUS” Acts 1.11.

The disciples had been witnesses of a most remarkable event. They were with the Lord when He was taken from them and a cloud received Him out of their sight. They must never have forgotten that. While they were looking heavenwards two men in white apparel said, “Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this *same* Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” It is just this word that is so sweet, it must always be this *same* Jesus. There will never be another. We shall never need another.

It was that *same* Jesus who in the fulness of time condescended to take our nature upon Him, and upon this earth suffered, bled and died. It was that *same* Jesus who groaned in the garden of Gethsemane under an inconceivable weight of imputed guilt. It was that *same* Jesus whose holy hands and feet were nailed to the cross and who immediately before He expired said, “It is finished.” It was that *same* Jesus whose precious blood was shed. It was that *same* Jesus who rose again from the dead and appeared wonderfully to Mary Magdalene in the garden.

It was the *same* Jesus who took those disciples out as far as to Bethany, and who, while He blessed them, was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And it is the *same* Jesus who is in heaven now, who is my hope, who is your hope. And it must be the *same* Jesus who blesses your soul, and who blesses my soul. Nearly 2000 years have passed away but He is just the *same* Jesus, the same yesterday, and today and for ever; and if, when we die, it shall be with us, “present with the Lord,” then we will be for ever with this *same* Jesus.

O friends, has there been just a moment or two when you have felt you could love Him? If that has truly been so then one day you will see Him without a veil between, and He will still be the *same* Jesus. Amen.



THE MOON PART 3 - ITS EFFECT ON US

Andrew Rayner

If the Earth affects the Moon by maintaining it in orbit and keeping the same face pointing towards itself, does the Moon have any effect on the Earth or on the creatures which live on its face?

The most obvious effect is on the sea, the way the tides are created by the gravitational attraction from the Moon. The Moon draws the nearest section of the sea towards itself which makes its surface bulge on this face and on the opposite face, i.e. making the water deeper. As the Moon orbits the Earth, the bulges move with it causing a cycle of high and low tides twice each day all around the world. The timings of the tides can be predicted with extreme accuracy due to the reliable movement of the Moon. Once again, we can only marvel at the delicate balance between the two vast objects, the Earth and the Moon, and the effect of that balance. Much could be written on the necessity and benefits of the tides. Again we ask, did this balance just appear from chaos or is it clear evidence of design, of Creation and of a Creator?



*Man sets foot on the moon,
20 July 1969*



*Plaque engraved: "Here men from
the planet earth first set foot on the
moon, July 1969, A.D. We came in
peace for all mankind."*

Another effect is the regulation of time and hence the movement of creatures. This applies much less to humans now than in the past as generally we no longer rely on moonlight to carry out our activities. However, much of mankind is still affected by the Moon's movements

insofar as we rely on the tides. Some fishing schedules, ferry timetables, beach activities, etc. are largely regulated by the tides and hence by the Moon. Each orbit of the Moon is so completely consistent in time, apparently to the millisecond, that accurate tide timetables are produced.

But does the Moon have any effect on mankind? Over the centuries there has been much said on this subject; talk of the full Moon being blamed for lunacy, the very term coming from the word, 'luna.' It seems that there is little evidence for this but, does the sight of the Moon have any effect on you? For some Christians it does. When we have a clear view of the Moon in all its silvery beauty, does it lift our thoughts upwards, heavenwards, towards God? Let us ever remember that the God to whom we pray is the Creator of the heavens and the Earth. "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

* * * *

Editor: This is the last of Mr. Rayner's interesting series on The Moon and the wonders of its creation. The Apostle Paul wrote: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon" (1 Cor. 15.41). We end with a quote from Physics Nobel Prize winner, Arthur H. Compton: "For myself, faith begins with the realisation that a supreme intelligence brought the universe into being and created man. It is not difficult for me to have this faith, for it is incontrovertible that where there is a plan there is intelligence - an orderly, unfolding universe testifies to the truth of the most majestic statement ever uttered - *In the beginning God.*"

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE REV. JAMES CALDER MINISTER OF CROY, INVERNESS-SHIRE.

19 October 1762 - Time wasted. This night, family worship was gone about in a heartless, formal, unsavoury frame. Alas! I have offended the Lord and provoked Him to deny His usual presence and countenance, by my shameful wasting an hour of precious time before worship in an amusement, innocent in itself, but unnecessary and unseasonable, and, therefore, sinful and offensive, at a time when I ought to be employed to better purpose! Oh, how much good might

have been done in the precious hours which I have thrown away so prodigally and to so little purpose! Father, forgive this awful waste and unaccountable abuse of so valuable a talent as precious time, and help by Thy grace to husband and improve it with greater care and vigilance.

1764, following the loss of his only daughter Annie, which heavy stroke was blessed to the tender-hearted father. I understood more of the bliss and felicity of the saints in glory, and of my pious, lovely Annie among the rest, by this day's experience, than I did by reading volumes on this glorious subject. I not only believed, but in some sense tasted, felt, and saw some small pittance of that glory. My soul was feasted, satisfied, happy; so that the grief and sorrow for the death of my now glorified child, my young, chaste, and virgin lover of Jesus, was for the time entirely taken away.

1766, first entry of the year. O may it please the Lord, who sits at the helm of government through all the creation, to make this a glorious and happy year by the propagation of the blessed gospel through the dark benighted nations, particularly through the vast deserts of America. May all the churches be remarkably watered this year, and more especially our poor, parched mother-church in Scotland. May proud Dagon fall down this year in pieces before the ark of the Lord! Amen. O may this be the happiest year we ever saw!

1775, the last entry in his diary. Preparing to set out in the Lord's strength for Rosskeen, to help my dear and worthy son [the Rev. John Calder]. As I go on a good errand, and desire to keep His way for ever, I trust He'll give His angels charge, and that the adorable Angel of the Covenant will surround me with His favour as with a shield. Lord, take care of my flock and family! Amen.

His death. On his return journey from Rosskeen he called at Ferrintosh, where his son, Charles, was Minister. There he was taken ill, and despite all that medical skill could do, he passed away on 24 December 1775. The last words he was heard to utter were: "He's coming, He's coming." When asked, "Who is coming?" he replied, "**Precious Christ.**" All his sons, Charles, John and Hughie were able ministers, and greatly respected as preachers of the gospel.

BEING HELPFUL*B. A. Ramsbottom*

“. . . And Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness” (2 Samuel 17. 27-29).

Years ago in receiving a member into the church, we gave her one word: “HELPS.” We exhorted her always to seek to be helpful; but the opposite also – never to be a hindrance.

It is right for every girl and boy to seek to be helpful – to parents, to old people, to brothers and sisters, to friends, and also to anyone in real need, whoever they are. Never forget that the holy law of God commanded: “If thou see the ass of *him that hateth thee* lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him” (Exodus 23.5). But we feel sure that the thought, when we were asked to write this article, was the ways in which young people who know and love the Lord can be helpful, and how this can be to the honour and glory of God, even before the world. Let us give an example of this.

One day old Mr. Stone of Coventry was visited in his humble home by the Lord Mayor in his regalia and arriving in his chauffeur-driven car. Why was this? As a young boy the Lord Mayor had started work at the firm where Mr. Stone was a carpenter. He did not find the work easy and made many mistakes. Mr. Stone kindly watched him and helped him – so that he could succeed. It must have been over fifty years later, at a Lord’s Mayor’s banquet, when someone mentioned Mr. Stone. “Is he still alive?” said the Lord Mayor. “He is a good man. I will go and visit him.” A simple act of true helpfulness glorified God in the sight of the world.

At the top of this article we have put the beautiful account of how aged Barzillai helped King David in the day of his distress. And David never forgot it, while the Holy Spirit has recorded it to be remembered these thousands of years later. It is a wonderful example of what to “be helpful” is.

It was *self-sacrificing help*. Absalom may have triumphed. Then what would become of Barzillai? Home, possessions, reputation, even life itself might be lost. But in love to David (and to David's God?) he was willing to risk all.

It was *abundant help*, as if nothing could be too much. We are amazed at the plenty of the provision – so much, such different kinds – and given from a loving, sympathetic heart.

It was *immediate help*. It was *suitable help*. And later (2 Samuel 19. 31-39) when David triumphed, Barzillai sought no reward. It was his pleasure to be a help to David, and to the cause of God and truth. He sought no credit for what he had done.

How can young people be a help? If there is a desire, you will pray about it, and the Lord will open up many ways in which we can be a help – sometimes not in the way we expected.

“Use me, O Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where.”

It may be a preacher, or a deacon, a Sunday school teacher, or some unusual service. But often it may be something more menial.

We knew a lady who always looked round the congregation to see who was absent, and enquired why. She then sent a lovely card on the Monday. (She also bought the minister Fishermen's Friends – the well-known throat tablets – in the days when they were new and could only be bought from Fleetwood.) Another lady in a large city kindly met the minister expected and escorted him the difficult journey through the city to where he was staying. A man we remember would meet the visiting minister at the station and walk with him, showing him a short cut over a hill and through a field to chapel, or where he was staying. We were very touched to watch a poor deaf and dumb lady who always took charge of bringing a bottle of water to fill the glass for the minister (there being no water supply). It was a delight to see the happiness with which she did it. We thought of the Lord's words concerning “a cup of cold water” and the word “INASMUCH.” These may seem to be menial things – but they are covered by what Scripture says: “She hath done what she could.”

We read recently of a man named Archie whose delight at chapel was to do anything, whatever it was, to be a help to other members of

the congregation. On one occasion someone phoned him asking him to come over – but it was rather difficult to explain. But that didn't bother Archie. He interrupted saying, "I don't know exactly what you mean, but I'm coming over immediately to help you!"

Incidentally, the first time the word "help" is ever used in the Word of God is Genesis 2. 18 concerning the marriage union: "I will make him an help meet for him."

The Lord knows what abilities He has given to boys and girls who fear His name, and He will make use of them. Immediately after we had openly professed the Lord's name, we began to receive requests to write articles for magazines – as far as we remember, four different ones. There is another side – godly discerning men and women who are glad to receive help from younger people and to make use of them.

Finally, we think of 2 Corinthians 1. 11 – which is perhaps not often considered on the subject of "being helpful." Paul was in great trouble. Only Almighty God could help him, and He did. But then Paul adds a remarkable word: "Ye also *helping* together by prayer for us." Never let it be forgotten that the best way we can help those in need is by praying for them.

GOD'S DELIVERING POWER

Extracted from *A Thousand Miles of Miracle in China* by the Rev. Archibald E. Glover of the China Inland Mission. A personal account of his deliverance with his wife and two small children, and a third missionary, Miss Gates, from the hands of the Imperial Boxers of Shan-Si at the height of Boxer rebellion in China 1899-1901. The Imperial command was given: "Exterminate the Christian religion." All protection was withdrawn, and they were at the mercy of the merciless mob. The peace given in the face of certain death is remarkable.

Condemned to die

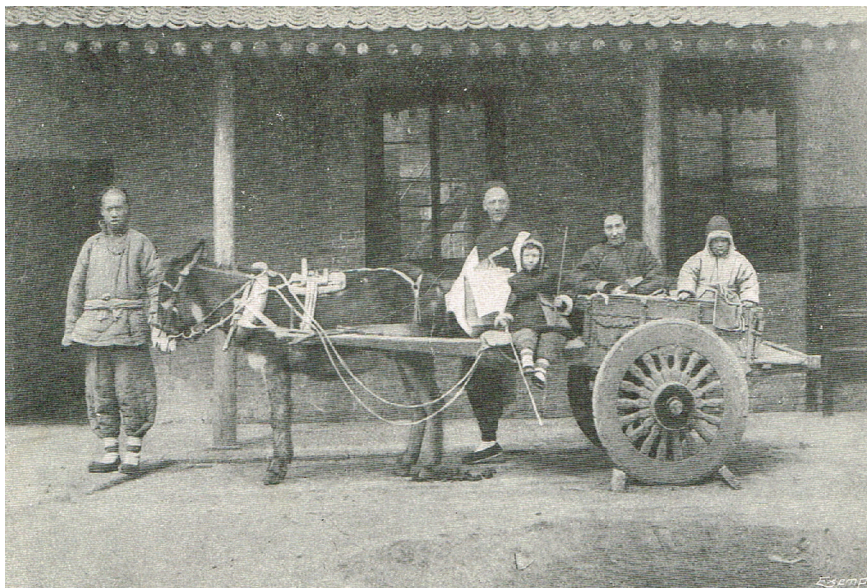
As charge after charge was brought forward and proved to the satisfaction of all, the excitement grew in intensity, until it reached the vehemence of fury. We were unanimously declared unfit to live, and *sentence of death* was passed.

Forthwith they fell to discussing the mode and time of execution. The suggestions selected for consideration were:- to poison us with

opium there and then; to behead us with the sword in the inn yard; to shoot us with a foreign gun they had in their possession; or to carry us outside on the street, and fall upon us *en masse*.

The last proposal found the most general acceptance, and was accordingly adopted. Its great recommendation, apparently, was that it would give an opportunity to all who had a grudge against us to gratify their feelings of revenge. It would, above all, shift the responsibility of the crime from the shoulders of any known individuals to those of the intangible many - always a consideration with a Chinaman, and probably the one that settled the matter now.

The time chosen as most suitable for carrying the sentence into effect was daylight the following morning. And with that the dark conclave broke up.



Mr. Glover with his family sets off to preach before the uprising

Sheep for the slaughter

Little did the mob think that there was One standing amongst them, whom they knew not, but against whom they were imagining vain things, One, in whose sight the souls of the helpless little ones before them were precious, and who was even now their light and their salvation. Of a truth, we realized what it was to be “accounted as sheep

for the slaughter.” But we also tasted in that solemn hour the triumph of the word: “Neither death . . . nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The few remaining hours that were left to us before the death-sentence was to be executed were, so far as our outward circumstances went, nothing but unrest. The Lao-ie [“Lord Father” - a title given to the city’s Mandarin] took up his quarters in our room, and with another - an evil man, his close companion - spread his bedding on our k’ang [a raised platform built across one end of a room used for sleeping]. Far into the night, many were coming and going, all insolence and mockery as the events of the morrow were freely and jestingly discussed before us.

The spoiling of our goods

Our persons and effects were now subjected to close scrutiny and search. The Lao-ie mounted the k’ang and with his own hands overhauled each article in turn. At last he came upon what he wanted - silver. With the exultant greed of a miser he clutched the packet and said, “You foreign devils will have to make this up to two hundred tads before we have done with you. Where’s the rest?” Seeing that nothing was to be gained by remonstrance, and knowing that resistance (even had it been possible) was not after the meekness of our master Christ, who, when He suffered, threatened not, we quietly surrendered our little store, at the same time rebuking the sin.

When all was in his hands, scales were called for and the weight verified. I see him now vividly seated at the table, surrounded by some half-dozen sycophants, intent on the adjustment of the weight to the beam. The lamp had been lifted from its niche to the table, that the figures might be accurately read; and as the taper lit up the sordid features of the bending group, the dirt-begrimed and cobwebbed room looked, what in fact it was, a veritable den of thieves. It was as impressive a spectacle of human depravity as could ever be seen. I understood then, as never before, how the love of money can be said to be “the root of all evil.” Every unholy passion lurked in the lust depicted in their faces. There was no sin those men would not commit to possess the coveted thing. They were possessed by it; it was their life. Their soul was in it, and they would sell their soul to have it.

When the weight was told, it was declared at so much. Turning to us, the Lao-ie said, “There is such and such a deficiency. Come, bring

out the rest of your money, or it will be the worse for you.” We replied that he had our all; that he had already made a thorough search himself, but that if he doubted our word, he was free to look again. Upon this he and his companions searched our persons ; but finding nothing more in the way of sycee [solid lumps of silver formerly used in China as money], he significantly said, “Very well, if you can’t make it up in money you will have to make it up in kind.” Forthwith they hilariously fell to appropriating whatever their heart coveted amongst our goods on the k’ang. That done, the Lao-ie turned to us again: “This is not enough; it will not nearly meet the deficiency. What else have you got? Quick, give it up!” His manner was insolent and abusive; and seeing that he was about to search our persons again, we gave up the last possessions we had - our watches, which were secreted in an inner pocket. These, and my pocket-knife, were evidently considered a great find, and were turned over and over with every mark of satisfaction. But all to no purpose.

Having thus justified themselves in their wickedness, they lay down beside us, not to sleep, but to regale themselves with opium, and to gloat over their spoil. I see the Lao-ie still, in the haze of the smoke, fondling the large fifty-ounce “shoe” of silver, as ever and anon he turned it to the light of his opium lamp and examined the marks of its purity. And so with each article in turn.

The morning dawns

I suppose it must have been about three o’clock a.m., when a man with a large yamen lantern came in, evidently to receive instructions. Almost immediately after he had withdrawn, the deep boom of a gong broke out upon the stillness, and continued at intervals until it was light.

For all this the grace of God sufficed us. Notwithstanding the intense heat, the vermin, and the opium fumes, my dear wife was given a spell of quiet sleep, for which I could not sufficiently thank the gracious Giver. We spoke but little, and that only in whispers, that we might not rouse the suspicions of our captors. But as we communed with our own heart upon our bed, in the near prospect of a violent death, we each experienced the deep peace of the words, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him.”

And now, with the summons of the gong, though it was yet dark, the

stir of rousing life began to make itself heard without. Every now and again the door would open and two or three would look in, leer at us, exchange a few words with the Lao-ie, and go out. Then, as the grey of early dawn appeared, the inn yard began to fill ; and with the broadening daylight the whole place was alive with thronging crowds.

The end awaited

For some two hours longer we were kept awaiting the end. By the help of God, we were enabled courteously to answer the many questions with which we were plied, and patiently to take the cruel revilings of the many who watched us. Among the deep consolations of those bitter hours, not least was the joy of being allowed, in the compassions of Christ, to bless those that cursed us, and to pray for them that despitefully used us. The fact that we did so was remarked upon by our enemies not once nor twice in the course of our many weeks' captivity. They would be heard to remark, "These people cannot be so bad, after all; for while our mouths are full of cursing and bitterness, theirs are only full of kindness and good words."

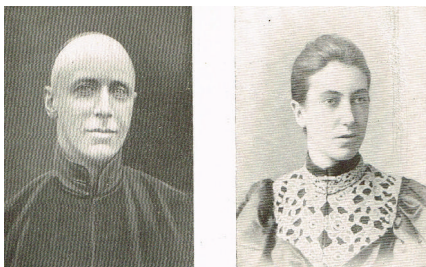
Lifted above the fear of death

Meanwhile, the Lao-ie was busily occupied without. A significant hush told us that the last preparations were being made. With no audible word or outward sign to indicate it, my wife and I took the secret last farewell of each other. The glory of which she whispered to me was even now in her face; and the tender firmness of her hand's pressure told me how completely she was lifted above the fear of death. Only her eyes moistened when she kissed her little son goodbye - that was all.

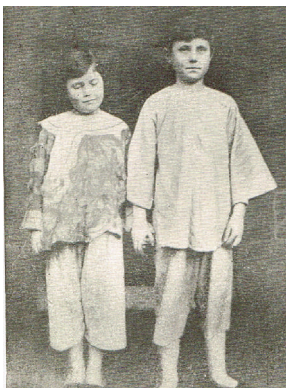
We now engaged unitedly in prayer, in which I commended each one into the hands of our heavenly Father, in prospect of the death we were about to die. But even as I prayed, the petition seemed forced to my lips: "If it is not Thy will that we should die at this time, then, O our God, for the glory of Thy great Name bring their counsel to nought and weaken their arm."

Almost immediately afterwards the Lao-ie entered with his following, and in peremptory tones ordered us out to the litters. I led the way with my little boy, followed immediately by my dear wife, leading baby Hope. But the Lao-ie's impatience could no longer brook

restraint, and brutally broke bounds. Seizing Miss Gates by the hair, he dragged her from the k'ang, and thrust her to the door with a blow from his clenched fist.



Archibald and Flora Glover



Hope and Hedley

The procession

We were scarcely allowed time to seat ourselves before the signal to move on was given. Our boy carriers were dragged back and not permitted to accompany us. So far as I was able to see the three litters started together, that occupied by my dear wife and little girl following close behind mine: for which I thanked God, as the thought that possibly we should be divided in the article of death was the one thing that had burdened me.

As we passed out of the courtyard into the street, what a sight met our gaze. The roadway for the first hundred yards was held by Boxer guards, armed with sword and spear, and brave in Boxer red: while on the other side, as far as the eye could see, was massed in dense formation a countless multitude, eagerly expectant, and all armed with some rude implement or other.

No sooner had we cleared the inn gate than the mob closed in upon us. Then we were halted, and they formed themselves into a procession, headed by the Lao-ie. A young man with a large gong stationed himself beside my litter. When all was ready, at a signal from the Lao-ie the procession moved forward to the measured beat of the gong.

Kept in perfect peace

As we swung on in the midst of the surging mob to the place of sacrifice, it was only to prove afresh the power of Him, on whom our

mind was stayed, to keep each one in perfect peace. To the natural man, the situation was one calculated to inspire the utmost terror; but I bear record that the only dread I felt, so far as my own lot was concerned, was that suggested by the barbarous implements carried by the mob. I am telling the simple truth when I say that at the sight of the keen blades and pointed spearheads of the Boxer soldiery, I fervently thanked God; for they argued at least a speedy despatch.

I longed to know how it fared with my loved ones behind, and also with Miss Gates; and with a great effort, amid the lurchings of the litter, I contrived to turn and tear a tiny hole with my fingers in the straw matting at my back, just large enough to peep through. Oh, the sight! The way behind was a billowing sea of heads and weapons; and the frail litters, oscillating dangerously from the pressure, looked like two cockleshells, tossing on the crest of foaming waves.

I was thankful to see that their occupants were still within; though Miss Gates was so far behind that I could only make out the bare fact that she was there. My precious wife, with wee darling Hope, was sitting well forward, so that I could see every feature perfectly. Her arm encircled the shrinking little one, and she was talking gently to her; and as she talked, it was wonderful to see how her face reflected its own restful calm in the pale features of her baby girl. Ever and again she would gaze out upon the wild scene before her, as seeing not that, but Him who is invisible; for a heavenly smile was on her lips, and her countenance shone with a light that was not of this world. I saw her face, literally, as it had been the face of an angel. My soul could only magnify the Lord as I saw how absolutely, in His weak handmaiden, death was swallowed up in victory, through the power of the indwelling Christ, who was her Life.

The whole business ruined

We had traversed about two-thirds of the long main street when an extraordinary commotion ensued. The Lao-ie dashed at my horse's head, and tearing at his mouth forced a halt. Then, in orthodox Chinese style, he raged and cursed, and denounced the people of the place for their "peaceableness," and for having "ruined the whole business." What this could mean I was at a loss to understand at the time: but evidently the pre-arranged signal for attack had not been responded to. In all probability the Lao-ie's orders were that, at a given spot, and when

the gong ceased to sound, they were to fall upon us. The spot had been reached; the gong had ceased to sound - that, at least, was certain; and the people had failed to answer the call! Yes - but had we not prayed before leaving the inn, that God would bring their counsel to nought?

The Lao-ie's rage yielded at last to the persuasive vehemence of those about him - the men who had witnessed against us - as they urged him to have us taken to the boundary of the town, where they would themselves finish the matter to his satisfaction. Whereupon the procession moved forward, and we were borne rapidly on.

We were well outside the gate, when the Lao-ie thrust his head into my litter, and said, "Throw out your bed-bag quick!" This was easier said than done. Heavily the unwieldy bulk lumped over the side, almost dragging both us and the whole structure with it; but the litter righted like a boat relieved of ballast, and I found myself, with my little boy, lurched on to the sharp edges of the boxes in the ropework below.

The end?

It was now clear to me that the end had come. To remain longer in the litter was an impossibility, unless we committed ourselves to the ropework; and to do this only meant eventual death in the entanglement of its meshes. So, infinitely preferring to die outside rather than in, I took Hedley under my arm, and lifting my heart to God jumped to the ground.

The scene that now passed before my eyes baffles description. The mob that had flocked out after us set upon the three litters simultaneously, and was soon broken up into squads of fighting demons, mad for plunder. Amid fiendish shouts they fought for the spoil. I had not been a moment too soon in leaving the litter; for scarcely had my feet touched the ground before it was crumpled up, and demolished.

Still together

And now I looked anxiously for the other two litters. Not that I expected to see any one of their occupants alive, any more than I expected to be left alive myself. This was death, certain death, for us all: it was only a question of moments. But it was the natural and the uppermost thought in my heart - Where are they? Are we still together? Is it possible for me to know whether they have been already called home?

Miss Gates' litter was nowhere to be seen, and I concluded that she was dead. But there, parallel with mine, about twenty yards away, was my wife's; and between her and me the howling, fighting mob, surrounding and besetting her on every side. Looking back over the whole period of my sufferings, deep as were the waters of anguish that I passed through before and since, I can think of nothing that touched the agony of those moments. If ever a sword pierced through my soul, it did then. I had to be a helpless spectator of what I knew could only be the taking of the life of my nearest and dearest. I saw the litter heave over and fall heavily to the ground, the mules stampeding. I saw it buried the next moment under a seething, struggling mass of devilish humanity. I saw the knives with which they slashed at the cordage and framework; and I called aloud upon God to have mercy upon my precious wife and child, and to shorten their sufferings.

Death was easy to me now, and I was even thanking God that it was as near as it was - when, as I looked, out from the midst of that murderous mass crept the form of my beloved Flora, and sweet Hope was with her! I looked upon them both as one might have looked upon Lazarus coming forth from the grave. Oh, how I sprang forward to meet her! Her hair was dishevelled, and her face ashy white: but she was as calm as when I saw her through the hole in the litter. Both mother and child had come out unscathed. There were bruises and torn clothing, but not a wound, not a scratch; and baby Hope was as calm as her mother. Not only so, but to complete the marvel, Miss Gates was with them, unhurt and calm as they!

A miraculous deliverance

It is impossible to convey to the reader's mind any adequate idea of the miraculous nature of their deliverance. How it came to pass that the frail structure did not collapse under the impact of that great human mass hurling itself upon it; how it was that the occupants were not crushed by the weight under which they lay buried; how it happened that not a knife-blade came near them as their assailants struck at the single mat of straw which formed their only protection; or how it was possible for them to break free, and to find a way of escape, uninjured, through the murderous mob about them - these are questions the answer to which can be found alone in the Word of God: ***"The Angel of His presence saved them."***

I cannot pretend to describe the feelings with which we stood once more together. We drew aside to a clear spot just off the roadway, and lifted our hearts in praise and thanksgiving to Him who alone doeth great wonders.

There was nothing, however, in our actual circumstances to suggest that we had escaped, or could eventually escape, the death to which we had been definitely sentenced.

As soon as one and another possessed themselves of what they wanted or could lay hands on, they made off with their ill-gotten gains. To our amazement, they were presently hurrying in all directions, as if in flight; and we were left standing alone! Was it the breath of God scattering them? Or had they, like one of old, seen the form of Another, like unto the Son of God, standing with us? In a few minutes, there was nothing left of the great throng that had carried us out to death, save a few scattered groups in threes and fours watching us at a distance.

Their counsel brought to nought

When one considers that the extermination of the foreign devil was the express object of their organization, the fact is inexplicable on any other supposition than that of Divine interference and restraint. And we read in it the answer to the prayer we offered unitedly before leaving the inn: "If it is not Thy will that we should die at this time, then, O our God, for the glory of Thy great Name bring their counsel to nought and weaken their arm!" Had He not done both these things?

Editor: The inhuman treatment of this party of missionaries is reflected in our own day one hundred years later, with Christians in many parts of the world suffering life-threatening persecution, their church property destroyed, and the very existence of the Christian church in their countries under threat. An estimated 600,000 Christians in Syria have already fled the country or lost their lives. Those remaining face violence and persecution. May the Lord appear for them.

SUSAN MARY COOPER

Susan, the eldest of four children, passed away on 14 November 2013 at the comparatively young age of 46 years. All had appeared well during the family's summer holiday, but shortly afterwards she began to feel unwell, and was diagnosed with a rather rare cancer. Although regularly attending the chapel at Fenstanton, there had been no evidence of a work of grace in her soul until her last illness, when the Lord graciously convinced her of her sinnership before a holy God. When told she had cancer, she was on her own, but felt underneath were the everlasting arms, describing it as a sense of peace. At times she was very down, rock bottom she called it, but her prayers were answered and that same peace returned, and she was ready to die. She saw out of the window a rainbow, and hoped she was in the covenant it represented. Shortly before she passed away, when in great weakness and no longer able to speak, she was asked by her mother if she was able to indicate whether she still felt underneath the everlasting arms. By raising her eyebrows she was able to indicate that she did.

We are pleased to insert the substance of the funeral service conducted by her Pastor, Mr. B. E. Izzard, on 29 November 2013 which, owing to the number of people expected, was held at Swavesey Chapel.

* * * *

“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” (Job 1.21)

There is evidence that dear Susan had left the world's side by God's grace. She has chosen the hymns for this service. Let us sing the first hymn (Gadsby's, No. 70).

Thrice comfortable hope
That calms my stormy breast;
My Father's hand prepares the cup,
And what He wills is best.

My fearful heart He reads;
Secures my soul from harms;
While underneath His mercy spreads
Its EVERLASTING ARMS

Then followed prayer, and selected scripture readings.

Mr. Izzard then spoke as follows:

I feel directed to speak from the scriptures as my custom is, and especially to the dear family. There are troubled hearts, hearts full of sorrow, hearts so sad, may there be sweetness in the things that God has been pleased to do, especially with regard to our dear departed friend. "It shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts" (Luke 21.13-14).

I will address firstly the dear family and then to us all really, from the words we have just read.

Perhaps we may direct you, the parents, to the time when dear Susan was given to you. There were many prayers and many, many thoughts. As time has gone by, I am sure there have been many anxious thoughts and now there are so many sorrows for you. May it please God that this may turn to you all for a testimony of God's rich, sovereign grace, o'er sin abounding, and comfort your hearts so cast down. Yet with a little God-given sweetness, may the Lord grant a sweet testimony of God's immortal grace and His goodness. We sung only last evening, He is "too good to be unkind." "Settle it therefore in your hearts."

Now what we do need, friends, is the Holy Spirit of God to direct us by His power. Perhaps it is a time when we especially think of a testimony, or words that have been left behind. Our dear friend was called by grace, we believe, in the last few months of her life and I want to direct the dear sorrowing family to the wonder-working of God, so that there is a balancing of the clouds.

God has been pleased to grant the blessing of His grace in a very conspicuous way. "And it shall turn to you for a testimony." That is my desire for the dear family. We have walked together for many years, and who would have thought that dear Susan would be taken from us, but the Lord knew. "And it shall turn to you for a testimony" of God's sovereignty and His rich grace. May there be a sweet consolation, and "settle it therefore in your hearts." It does need the Lord, doesn't it, to comfort hearts, and O may there be a little sweet settling upon the things of God.

The first consideration this morning in this regard, friends, is this, that it is doctrine that gets underneath the sorrowing heart. "Judgment

and truth support his throne.” May you sweetly feel it. These are really God’s appointments, settlements from everlasting, but O may there be a sweet resignation and a gracious knowledge that “It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good.” And “It shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts.” How we feel so much for the dear family, our hearts go out to them. I am sure there are many that feel so deeply God’s dealings and his sovereignty.

It brings me a little further. Perhaps those things that are left behind bear more weight, a testimony. It is not only in word but it is in life, a change of life that God is pleased to give, for “YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.” I was seeking that God might direct me to speak rightly from the words here, and I thought of those that loved dear Susan and those who worked with her. And those colleagues that may not perhaps be knowing our way of worship - well, friends, we believe in the new birth.

Also, there is a hymn, which you all know, that each of us knows this morning, that bears down upon this very truth, “And it shall turn to you for a testimony”. It is a hymn known by so very many:

Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That SAVED a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

It is well known, isn’t it? Now what we need is that grace in our hearts. Let me direct you, very soberly, as the Lord may help me. We are persuaded that God had a gracious purpose regarding our dear departed friend, and she learns this sweet truth more and more to all eternity.

I want to speak, as God may help me, regarding the circumstances that surround us. Dear Susan was so well loved, she was a good friend, and was perhaps one of those characters that will be remembered for a long, long time. We want to come further than all those natural attributes, so many. I had a special union with her, even in things of this life, and I miss her very much. But it is what God did in the last few months of her life: we have reason to believe God called Susan by His rich grace.

She was poorly and then had to go into hospital, and there was a very great trial to walk in, because she was told after some little time that she had a malignancy, a very unusual one. As she heard the doctor, all on her own, speaking those things that we can hardly comprehend,

there was something that happened. Something she had never known before really, the words of God's grace in the hymn that we have sung, those "*everlasting arms*" were made precious. The Lord spoke to dear Susan so sweetly that "underneath were the everlasting arms," and she felt it so sweetly, and she was resting in the Lord. It is right to say that she thought she could walk, as it were, to go to Jesus, whilst being told these most solemn and very, very hard things. The Lord put His arms under her, and helped her. Friends we believe that is how we must speak this morning. Susan was wonderfully helped to rest in the will of God concerning her. Now that is what grace does.

She was then exceedingly troubled and sin was a particular trouble to her soul. Now we have sung of *amazing grace* and the Lord convinced her of her sinnership, a vital thing. No new birth without conviction of sin! and she was brought so very low, very troubled, and brought to cry to God for mercy and I believe she had never cried to God for mercy like that before. She wanted the Lord to appear for her and forgive her sins. Very, very deeply, she was troubled in her soul, and it began with *love divine in her heart*, a vital consideration. It was a time when she was very much seeking God for His sweet mercy, for the Lord to appear - these things are real - and she saw a rainbow from her room and wished and hoped that she might have an interest in God's eternal covenant of love. She was deeply convinced of sin and feared greatly. I believe she had never felt like that before.

I want to speak of this "amazing grace." She reached for a magazine in her trouble, which is well known to some of you, called "Perception." The part that she read, and some of you may know of it, was when the late Mr. John Broome was preaching at Lamberhurst and it was recorded, and the comment she read was this: "What do we know of the blood of Christ?" Then he went on to speak of the evidence of knowing the blood of Christ for forgiveness. He said, "To be able to look back over the way and remember those places where the Lord has visited your soul, where he has been with you and you have felt those EVERLASTING ARMS underneath." Friends, God appeared for dear Susan and so blessed her by that confirmation. She said - of course, she was so very poorly - she said, "I could have got up and gone down to the nurses' desk and told them of what the Lord had done for me."

Now friends that is real religion. That is what Amazing Grace does,

brings a sweet knowledge of the Saviour to the heart to forgive sins. How solemn it is if we are left in nature's darkness and hardness. Dear Susan was blessed of God so much, she felt her sins forgiven and she was able to rest her all upon the will of God. Some of you know what these truths are, it is when grace reaches our sins, our unworthiness, and the favour of God is known, and it is all of grace. She was born again and sweetly brought to know the Saviour. We might well say may this be a testimony of real religion which God is the author of. She had been very worldly, not that she had gone astray in a very outward way, but she was joined to the world, and as one of my congregation I loved her and I was concerned, as pastors are.

After God had blessed her, she said more than once she was able to leave many things behind and did not want those things that she had (in her home) that once were close to her heart. That is what grace does: "Amazing Grace," it turns the heart to Jesus Christ and He will not have a rival, He will reign alone. "Settle it therefore in your hearts." May it be a testimony of God's saving grace in a dark day when these things are reduced to some outdated or long forgotten age - GOD LIVES - REIGNS - and God will bring His people to know Him.

I want to speak just a little more very feelingly, because the Lord knows I feel so much for the family. These things rest in my heart, what God has done. May it be a sweet consolation, may it be a testimony to the power of God's sweet grace. I used to visit Susan and I found her so easy to talk with. Friends, there was something God had done, I had such liberty in speaking to her and I spoke faithfully and she spoke to me, and there was a bond. I said to a dear friend from Swavesey, "She was nice to visit." It was good to visit Susan.

Of course, the desire of our heart unto God was that He would spare her, heal her. There was much prayer. Our own heart went up to the Lord that there might be some purpose of God in sparing dear Susan to the glory of His grace, to speak of those things He had done, but it pleased God to bless her and to take her home.

I want to come a little further. There were many things dear Susan was able to speak of. Her family know those precious things that were spoken by her. Now I want to speak of my own experience with dear Susan; the family do know how deeply it affected me. I had previously said to dear Susan that we are not any better than the worst cynic, the

worst opposer of God's word, His law and His grace. I said, "We are no better whatsoever." She said, "No, we are worse," that is what grace does. I went to see her a few days before she died, rather concerned to speak to our dear friend, in the word of the Lord. I said to her, and she was very, very poorly, "Do you remember me speaking and you saying about being worse than all?" and she knew what I was saying. I said I am going to read to you the hymn I have been thinking about, and it is the hymn we shall close the service with. It ends with this verse:

Yes, the very worst of sinners,
Who upon his grace rely,
Shall of endless bliss be winners;
And shall sing, beyond the sky,
Songs of praises
To the Lamb that once did die.

We had a sweet time in prayer and I repeated in my prayer, "the very worst of sinners." Dear Susan said, "Amen, Amen." It went right to my heart, feeling that the Lord had given her a dying testimony. It brought me to tears. Friends, it is the power of it, the truth of it, God's rich grace reaching to the heart, into the life, preparing for all God's holy, sovereign will. She could rest as the Lord helped her.

Sometimes she was very tried and tempted. She was not always rejoicing, and said at one time, "I love Him, but does He love me?" The Lord was pleased graciously to deal with Susan in a saving way, there is no doubt about it, and she left the world's side, and the dear Lord gave her a religion to die by. It pleased God to take her peacefully from this life, we believe, resting upon those "everlasting arms." These are vital truths, how sweet it is when God makes a change. These things are a testimony to God's saving grace, and wrought out according to God's eternal grace until the world is no more. We could perhaps say more.

I want to speak lastly, as we are bidden to do, of the need to be aware that life is so short. We are given responsibility to proclaim very clearly man's poor lost, ruined condition, absolutely impotent, helpless, but subject to God's holy law. How solemn that is! We sometimes sing, "Not to propose, but call by grace." We read of "watchmen" that God appoints, there is a time when they must speak. We read in Ezekiel 33. 8, "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked

man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

How solemn, friends, to live and to die on the side of those that are careless and indifferent, left to nature’s darkness. We feel it ourselves.

Now, there is one thing I want to leave with you, a thought. Susan was of a younger generation. It pleased God to take Susan from this life at the relatively young age of 46. I want to make comment to our young people. We are watchmen, and we need to be very, very clear. We need the same vital truths in our generation that God has owned and blessed. There is among several that desire to seek for something lighter, easier, or to think that more would be saved if we are not quite so strict, or think that we ought to embrace more and different things. Well friends, let me say very, very clearly: we thought like that until God directed us, and still directs us, to the vital need of the new birth, a change that God can look upon. We need grace to understand the malady, how great it is. “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” And there is a very great need to be found among those the Lord Jesus speaks of when He said, “Ye must be born again.” It reaches right into the life, into the heart. Ministers cannot give it, but God does. May there be something abiding and something remaining today.

Lastly, there is a part in Revelation that has been upon my mind, I hope as a watchman, that concerns us so deeply. It is in the first chapter of Revelation. We read of the Lord Jesus in a very different way to what we may understand. John saw Him, CHRIST, the Son of man, clothed with a garment, girt about with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were like wool, eternal, as white as snow. His eyes, we read, are as a flame of fire, searching the churches and our lives. We read in the word of God, “Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.” It is time, by God’s grace (alone) to look very, very carefully to our standing before a holy God and His CHRIST. He searches for the wedding garment. “How camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment?” It is a solemn thing to come to die and to be on precarious ground indeed.

Many things I must leave with you. May it turn to you for a testimony in a godless day. There is a reality in God-given real religion. May He have mercy upon us and may impressions last, friends. May our religion wear in and not wear out.

It pleases God to help me to leave a few things to the glory of His

grace, and the need of our souls, and for the Lord to return to the churches, to stem the tide of sin and carelessness, for the Lord to have mercy and grant the new birth and eternal life by His rich grace. We will leave it there. Amen.

Let us sing together our last hymn (593):

Jesus is a mighty Saviour;
 Helpless souls have here a Friend;
 He has borne their misbehaviour,
 And his mercy knows no end;
 O ye helpless,
 Come, and on his grace depend.

“IS” AND “ARE” IN THE BIBLE

In our last edition, Bishop Ryle writing on ‘The Lord’s Supper’ (page 29) referred to the Lord’s words, “This *is* my body.” He explained the meaning as “This bread *represents* my body. This wine *represents* my blood.”

We understand that the learned Bishop George Law (Bishop of Chester 1812 and from 1824 of Bath and Wells) stated that there is no term in the Hebrew language which expresses to *signify*, *denote* or *represent*. The Greek in the Gospels naturally takes the impress of the Hebrew idiom, *it is* being used for *it signifies*. Hence the similar use of the verb in various passages. “The three branches *are* three days” (Gen. 40.12); “the seven good kine *are* seven years” (Gen. 41.26); “the ten horns *are* ten kings” (Dan. 7.24); the field *is* the world” (Mat. 13.38); “the seven stars *are* the angels of the seven churches” (Rev. 1.20).

THE BOOK - OR A BOOK?

“And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of THE book” Isa. 29. 18.

What a difference one word can make! We feel sure that the prophet Isaiah, when speaking of “THE book” had in mind the holy Scriptures - the one and only perfect book. However, we find that many modern versions of the Bible read ‘A book’ instead of ‘THE book.’ Perhaps you might think, there’s not much difference between ‘a’ and

‘the.’ But in this context there is a very great difference. Matthew Henry explains the verse in this way: “The poor Gentiles shall then have the divine revelation brought among them. Those that sat in darkness shall see a great light.”

The divine revelation is given only in THE book. How we should value the accurate translation of the Authorised Version of the Bible!

Speaking of perfect books, some years ago one of our chapels felt they would like to start a chapel library. Some books were given by kind friends, others were purchased and the library began to take shape. Then one or two people began to criticise this book and that book - they wondered whether perhaps they were not quite suitable. Whilst we do, of course, need to be very careful which books we select, the Pastor wisely said, “Friends, there is only *one* perfect book.”

DID CHRIST DIE FOR ALL MANKIND?

From *Brief Comments on Our Articles of Faith* by John Hervey Gosden

If Christ died for all mankind, then either (a) all men are saved, or (b) Christ suffered in vain for those who are not saved.



Mr. John H. Gosden

It appears very sadly evident that the great majority of human souls are lost in perdition, for (while exercising the utmost charity and being unwilling to judge harshly) we cannot avoid the conclusion that apparently but an infinitesimal fraction of the whole of the human race have any notion of needing salvation. Still fewer have any desire after God and holiness and Christ, whose is the “only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4. 12).

But surely it is inconceivable that the holy Son of God redeemed to God by His blood those who are eventually lost! Or that His dying for their sins depends upon their acceptance of His salvation! To speak thus would be to contradict the Word of God, to overthrow the work of the Holy Spirit and invalidate the whole covenant of grace.

The great Shepherd of the sheep Himself declared (and who should know, if not He?) that He laid down His life for the sheep (John 10. 15). If He died for all mankind, then why did He thus speak? Are goats sheep? Do not they stand at last on the King's left hand? Would their sentence pronounced upon them by the Redeemer Himself: "Depart, ye cursed," be consistent with His having made atonement for their sins? Would not that involve failure on the part of God to make good His promise? We reverently submit these questions.

Paul by divine inspiration tells us (alas that today it should be fashionable to speak of Pauline theories!) that "Christ 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" (Eph. 5. 25-27). Is the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ever effected in those who are finally lost?

Hence we conclude that all men are not saved, nor did Christ die for the unsaved, but that He died for all the sins of all the Father's elected and adopted people: for the very same people - not one more, not one less - for whom He prays and who, being drawn, come unto God by Him who ever liveth to make intercession for them (John 17. 9; Heb. 7. 25). These are indeed a blessed people, innumerable, but definitely known to God, being saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation (Deut. 33. 29; Isa. 45. 17).

To teach that the Son of God died for those who are never saved violates the righteous character of God and infringes divine faithfulness. For Jehovah pledged Himself that His righteous Servant should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied (Isa. 53. 11). Paul also connects Christ's steadfastness in His awful sufferings, His shame, and death of the cross with His sacred anticipation of the joy set before Him (Heb. 12. 2). Was that joy to consist in His having with Him for ever only some for whom He died? Did He not solemnly declare, "None of them is lost, but the son of perdition" (John 17. 12)?

There is no end to the terrible and absurd consequences of swerving from the teaching of the Word of God. To many God will one day utter those awful words: "Depart from Me, I never knew you!" We dare not believe that Christ redeemed these!

The suggestion that any for whom Christ shed His precious blood may after all be lost infers either the blood of Christ was insufficient, or that the Holy Ghost is in default; both of which are blasphemous.

May we humbly submit to the Word of God, seeking the light of the Holy Spirit thereon.

VESTIGIAL ORGANS

No support for the theory of evolution

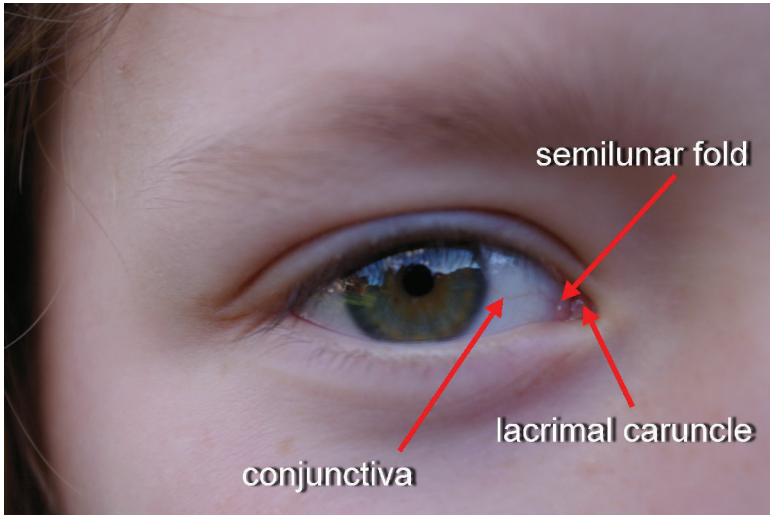
The existence of vestigial organs in the human body is often cited as evidence for its evolution. The standard definition of ‘vestigial’ is an organ that once was useful in an animal’s evolutionary past, but is now useless or very close to useless and has no purpose in its present form.

They are said to be in the process of evolutionary decay and can therefore be expected to disappear completely during the course of future evolution.

The crucial question is: ‘Does the human body have any vestigial organs, that is, organs that no longer serve any useful purpose in our bodies?’ In Charles Darwin’s 1871 book *The Descent of Man*, he identified about a dozen of man’s anatomical features he believed to be useless because we do not use them in the same way that other creatures do. This, to Darwin, was proof that we had evolved from our primitive ancestors. However, much of the identification of vestigial organs in the human body, was done by the German anatomist Wiedersheim. In his book *The Structure of Man*, Wiedersheim gave a list of eighty-six vestigial organs, as well as many others he considered to be retrogressive.

Some of the organs listed as vestigial and having no function at all included the pineal gland, the pituitary gland, the lachrymal glands (tear glands), wisdom teeth, body hair, and the appendix. We now know that all of these organs have an important part to play in the regulation and function of our bodies. Wiedersheim’s list was investigated thoroughly by S. R. Scadding of the Department of Zoology at the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada. He concluded: ‘On the basis of this analysis, I would suggest that Wiedersheim was largely in error in compiling his long list of vestigial organs. Most of them do have at least a minor function at some point in life.’

As our knowledge of physiology has increased, it has been found that these organs do have some purpose. It has been suggested that the term "vestigial" is really a word biologists use in place of admitting their ignorance of the function of some organ!



Yet, in spite of the fact that our bodies do not contain functionless vestigial organs, examples of vestigial organs in the human body are still cited in modern biology textbooks. The most common examples given are the appendix, the coccyx (often referred to as the vestige of the human tail) and the semilunar fold of the eye (often called the third eyelid). But all of these organs perform a function and should not therefore be considered as vestigial. In fact, Scadding points out: ‘Anatomically, the appendix shows evidence of a lymphoid function since the submucosa is much thickened and almost entirely occupied by lymphatic nodules and lymphocytes. There is evidence that the appendix acts as a reservoir of antibody producing cells. The coccyx serves as a point of insertion for several muscles and ligaments including the gluteus maximus. The semilunar fold of the eye is a small fold of membrane containing lymphoid tissue near the corner of the eye and aids in the cleansing and lubrication of the eyeball. Similarly, for other “vestigial organs” there are reasonable grounds for supposing that they are functional albeit in a minor way.’

To say that organs such as the appendix, coccyx and the semilunar

fold of the eye are vestigial because they serve no useful function is to exhibit a complete lack of understanding of the functions of these organs. The human body does *not* contain *any* vestigial organs and so such a concept cannot be used to support the idea that humans have evolved from other creatures.

We can be assured from Scripture that all of God's creation is perfect, He Himself having declared it to be good. Sadly men will believe anything rather than acknowledge the Creator. Truly each of us can say: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139.14).

WOE UNTO THEE, CHORAZIN!

The three cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, had experienced the mighty works of Christ. They were prosperous cities, but they had despised and rejected the Son of Man. They were, said the Lord Jesus, to be thrust down into hell. "It shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city." Today we can visit Bethlehem or Nazareth, we can walk their streets, we can see the historical sights. But what of the cities against which Jesus pronounced a woe? Nothing now but a heap of rubble, not one stone left upon another.

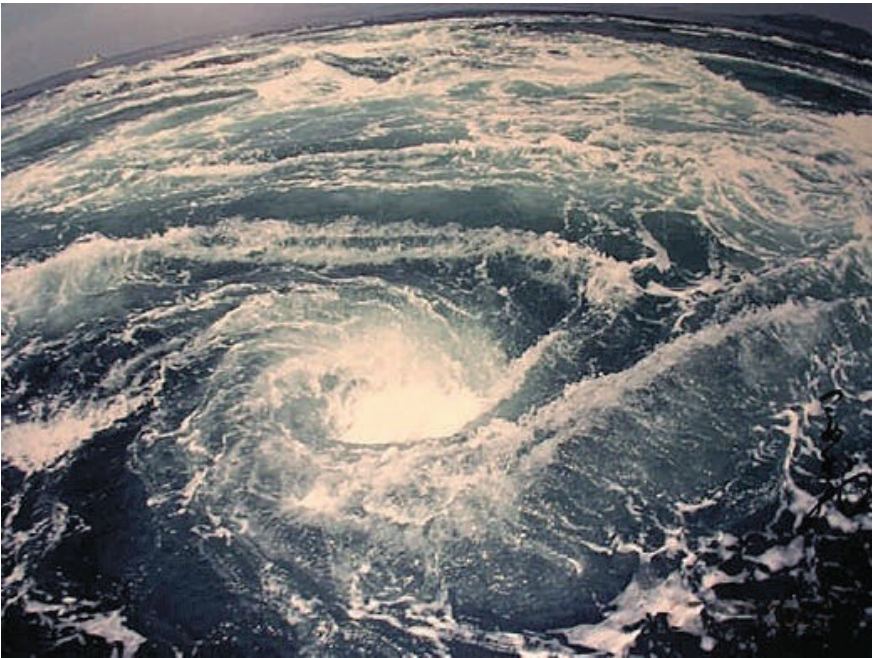


Ruins of Biblical Chorazin. The sea of Galilee is just visible beyond.

DANGEROUS PLACES

Just off the coast of Norway is found a famous whirlpool, the Maelstrom, located near the Lofoten Islands.

Whirlpools are ocean currents that move in a rotating direction, produced by rising and falling tides. Some of these exhibit a downward pull, called a vortex. The Maelstrom is an extremely dangerous natural phenomenon easily capsizing or sucking down small sea vessels. Only local fishermen who know the waters well will fish in the vicinity.



The Maelstrom

It would be a dreadful thing to be in a ship drawn down by such a whirlpool. Yet, in a different way, there are other places quite as dangerous, and it may be that some of you are in them now, or at least on one of the outer rings of the vortex.

One of those dangers is drink. It seems that a whole generation of young people are growing up who cannot enjoy themselves socially unless fortified by alcohol. We have been appalled recently by reports of drunkenness and consequent loutish behaviour amongst students at

even our most prestigious universities. Sadder still is that they consider such behaviour is normal and acceptable. There is no commandment in the word of God that we should be total abstainers, though we certainly can understand those who feel this to be the best course. But we hope that our readers will be aware of the huge problems regular social drinkers are laying up for themselves in the future. “Wine and new wine take away the heart,” said the prophet Hosea. May those on the outer rings of the vortex, BEWARE.

Another danger today is “getting used to” the open immorality and wickedness found around us on every hand. Do we find ourselves accepting those things that once shocked us? Take, for example, couples living together before marriage. “Everyone does it today,” is the cry. But remember, any sexual relationship outside of marriage is fornication. The Bible warns us that fornicators shall not inherit the kingdom of God. May those even thinking of living together before marriage realise they are on the outer rings of the vortex. BEWARE.

Finally, there is the toxic digital world, and the ease with which children and young people can access the most vile online blogs. They enter a world where the line between fantasy and reality becomes blurred. It is completely unmonitored. Recently there has been much publicity over “self-harm” websites. If you are playing around the edges, you go on, you are encouraged to go on, you are urged to go on, you are within the vortex, and who knows how long it will be before you are swept away. BEWARE.

God is able to keep His people, we know. But how we need to pray, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” May the Lord keep us each from the many snares and traps which catch the feet of the unwary. Septimus Sears, in his well-known hymn, wrote, “The pathway of life is surrounded with snares.” And so it is. May we ponder well the other lines in the same hymn:

“What thousands of death-beds have solemnly told,
The knowledge of Christ is more precious than gold.”

May we be favoured to find that inestimable treasure, the knowledge of Christ.

THE SILVER-MINE

From *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan

Now at the further side of that plain was a little hill called Lucre, and in that hill a silver-mine, which some of them that had formerly gone that way, because of the rarity of it, had turned aside to see; but going too near the brink of the pit, the ground being deceitful under them, broke, and they were slain; some also had been maimed there, and could not to their dying day be their own men again.

Then I saw in my dream, that a little off the road, over against the silver-mine, stood Demas (gentleman-like) to call to passengers to come and see; who said to Christian and his fellow, Ho, turn aside hither, and I will shew you a thing.

CHRISTIAN. What thing so deserving as to turn us out of the way?

DEMAS. Here is a silver-mine, and some digging in it for treasure. If you will come, with a little pains you may richly provide for yourselves.

HOPEFUL. Then said Hopeful, Let us go see.

CHRISTIAN. Not I, said Christian; I have heard of this place before now, and how many have there been slain; and besides, that treasure is a snare to those that seek it, for it hindreth them in their pilgrimage.

Then Christian called to Demas, saying, Is not the place dangerous? Hath it not hindered many in their pilgrimage?

DEMAS. Not very dangerous, except to those that are careless: but withal, he blushed as he spake.

CHRISTIAN. Then said Christian to Hopeful, Let us not stir a step, but still keep on our way.

HOPEFUL. I will warrant you, when By-ends comes up, if he hath the same invitation as we, he will turn in thither to see.

CHRISTIAN. No doubt thereof, for his principles lead him that way, and a hundred to one but he dies there.

Then Demas called again, saying, But will you not come over and see?

CHRISTIAN. Then Christian roundly answered, saying, Demas, thou art an enemy to the right ways of the lord of this way, and hast been already condemned for thine own turning aside, by one of his majesties judges; and why seekest thou to bring us into the like condemnation? Besides, if we at all turn aside, our Lord the King will certainly hear

thereof, and will there put us to shame, where we would stand with boldness before him.

Demas cried again, that he also was one of their fraternity; and that if they would tarry a little, he also himself would walk with them.

CHRISTIAN. Then said Christian, What is thy name? Is it not the same by the which I have called thee?

DEMAS. Yes, my name is Demas, I am the son of Abraham.

CHRISTIAN. I know you, Gehazi was your great grandfather, and Judas your father, and you have trod in their steps. It is but a devilish prank that thou usest; thy father was hanged for a traitor, and thou deservest no better reward. Assure thyself, that when we come to the king, we will do him word of this thy behaviour. Thus they went their way.

By this time By-ends and his companions were come again within sight, and they at the first beck went over to Demas. Now whether they fell into the pit by looking over the brink thereof, or whether they went down to dig, or whether they were smothered in the bottom by the damps that commonly arise, of these things I am not certain; but this I observed, that they never were seen again in the way.

A FEW CURRENT MATTERS

Prime minister regrets forcing though gay marriage

The Prime Minister, David Cameron, has admitted in a private meeting that he regrets the way he forced gay marriage through Parliament. He has conceded that it was the biggest political mistake of his premiership, having under-estimated the scale of opposition from his own supporters and the church. Sadly, he remains a passionate believer in so-called equality of marriage.

High Street betting

Gamblers spent £46billion on high street betting terminals last year. The machines allow punters to lose up to £100 in every 20 seconds. These highly addictive gaming machines have wrecked the lives of countless individuals and families. Younger friends, beware of dabbling in any kind of gambling, however small or innocent it may seem. Some years ago, a young chapel girl in her first job was asked if she would

care to place a bet on a horse in the Derby. All the office was joining in. Hardly knowing what it was all about she duly placed her bet. The prize apparently was a bag of coal! How she hoped her horse would not win. How would she explain to her father where the coal had come from? Thankfully her horse came second. But her conscience was troubled. She had narrowly escaped from something that may well have damaged her reputation with family and friends. “The way to ruin thus begins, Down, down, like easy stairs” (Hymn 98 YPH).

Church facing extinction

The Church of England is just ‘one generation away from extinction’, the former Archbishop of Canterbury has said. Lord Carey blamed church leaders for failing to bring young people into their services. But what hope of prosperity can there be in a church which has abandoned basic Biblical standards? We understand that the General Synod of the CoE has voted recently by 378-8 in favour of plans that will pave the way for women bishops by 2015. The Scriptures most clearly state: “Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak.” How we long to see some godly Bishop Ryle’s and Rev. J. J. West’s in the CoE today.

Marrying before children

Only a minority still believes that you should marry before having children. Just 42 per cent now think those who want children should get married. In 1989 the figure was 70 per cent. Marriage rates are at their lowest since Victorian times and almost half of all babies are born to unmarried parents.

The Devil dropped

An alternative Baptism service prepared for use in the Church of England has removed the name of the Devil. The old Book of Common Prayer asks the godparent: “Dost thou, in the name of this Child, renounce the devil and all his works?” The new alternative asks: “Do you reject evil? And all its many forms?” Even the Pope said recently: “The presence of the devil is on the first page of the Bible; and the Bible ends as well with the presence of the devil, with the victory of God over the devil.” Has the CoE forgotten that “your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour”?

SPRING HYMN

Oh Thou whose eye beholds
The beauty Thou hast made,
Creator, Lord, Redeemer
In majesty arrayed!

We praise Thee for the spring time,
And all its golden hours,
For lake and sparkling fountain,
For sunshine, birds, and flowers.

The winds have ceased their moaning,
The winter storms have passed,
The lovely face of nature
Is wreathed in smiles at last.

And when Thy voice shall call us
To yonder blissful shore,
Where spring abideth ever
And winter comes no more,

Beside the crystal river,
Among the ransomed throng,
We'll blend our harps triumphant
In one eternal song.

Miss Frances Crosby, the author of the above hymn, became blind at six weeks. She remarked: "It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God, that I should be blind all my life, and I thank Him for the dispensation. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things around me." It is estimated that she wrote over 9000 hymns in her lifetime. The above hymn is the only one for which she composed a tune. She died in 1915 at the age of 95.

For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. Solomon's Song 2.11

PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



"Build ye houses, and dwell in them." Jeremiah 3.5.

SUMMER 2014

"The great houses shall have an end." Amos 3.15.

IN THIS ISSUE	Page
Editorial.	1
Douglas Edward Bradford.	4
A Good Answer.	12
The Larger Room.	13
Instances of Divine Judgment.	14
Upheld	15
The Five Points of Calvinism.	17
The Annual Denominational Meetings.	22
The Pillar of Salt - John Bunyan.	24
The Hungarian Miners.	26
The True Church - J. C. Ryle.	26
Baptized on a Stretcher.	28
Being Helpful - A Worldly Man's Opinion.	35
Same-Sex Marriage: Guidance for Schools and Teachers.	36
A Few Current Matters.	38

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EDITORIAL

“Amen.” “Verily, verily.”

When George Frideric Handel concluded his monumental oratorio *Messiah* he did so with a chorus containing a single word: ‘AMEN.’ The grandeur of this finale, known now as the Amen Chorus, is a moving experience. How amazing to think that Handel composed the whole work in just 24 days! At the end of the manuscript he added the letters SDG - Soli Deo Gloria “To God alone the glory.”

It is, of course, very sad that all too frequently oratorios and anthems are sung by those with no fear of God in their hearts and with no real interest in the sacred words they are singing (though we are not their judge). David, in sending a Psalm to the chief Musician, did not forget to include in his Psalm the exhortation, “Sing ye praises with understanding,” which exhortation has found its way into the front of our hymnbook!

Recently in Sunday School, the children were asked, “What is the last word we always hear in our services at chapel?” And, of course, even the youngest knew the answer - “Amen.” When we were just a young boy, we had a minister to preach who, when pronouncing the benediction at the close of the service, invariably finished with “Amen, and Amen.” When he came, we listened carefully to hear whether he would say it again - and he always did! This was, of course, a very fitting way to conclude the service, and in accordance with David’s own pronouncement in Psalm 72, “Blessed be His glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen.”

Some may wonder why we do not conclude our hymns with an Amen, especially if the hymn is a hymn of prayer. In the Golden Age of English church music, Tudor composers such as Orlando Gibbons, Richard Farrant, Thomas Tallis and others, to whom we owe some of our finest hymn tunes, wrote most exquisite “Amens” to their compositions. In *Hymns Ancient and Modern* all 638 hymns are

provided with a full musical Amen with which to conclude the hymn. At senior school, every day we sang to a traditional CoE chant one of the Psalms, always concluding with the *Gloria*, “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

In *Gadsby’s Hymnbook* there are twelve hymns in which Amen appears, but of these only five conclude with it, all but one by William Gadsby. Joseph Hart concluded Hymn 449 with “Amen, and Amen.”

Although we normally conclude our prayers with an Amen, it is not something that is essential to prayer. It does not in any way “validate” our prayers, and is certainly not something we need to say to make our prayers acceptable to God. We know that prayer can be “uttered or unexpressed” (Montgomery’s hymn 1002), and a heartfelt sigh or groan with no words at all, is, to God, a perfectly valid prayer.

However, it does seem right that an Amen is said at the end of our prayers seeing that the Lord Jesus gave us an example in the prayer we usually call the Lord’s Prayer: “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.” We use it to express an earnest wish, or desire, or assurance that our prayers might be heard.

So what is the significance and meaning of this four-letter word? Amen is not an English word at all, but is derived directly from the Hebrew, and is used in many languages. It signifies *true, faithful, certain, so shall it be*. An example of its meaning can be found in Jeremiah 11.5: “Then answered I, and said, *So be it, O Lord.*” In the margin of our Bibles we find that the alternative reading is *Amen*.

The Lord Jesus Christ made frequent use of the word when he wished emphatically to affirm any vital matter. He would solemnly assure His hearers of the truth of what He said with the words, “Verily, verily, I say unto you.” As ‘Verily’ is exactly the same word as ‘Amen,’ it could equally well be rendered, “Amen, amen, I say unto you.”

In Deuteronomy chapter 27 (a chapter, we confess, with which we were not very familiar) the Levites were told to recite before the people twelve abominable things that were forbidden by God. After each one the people were to acknowledge their acceptance of what they had heard by saying “Amen.”

We are assured by the Apostle Paul that everything we are told and promised in the Word of God is perfectly true. “All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen” 2 Corinthians 1.20. Yes, the

promises of God are verily, verily true. In the Book of the Revelation many times something is said, which, to the natural mind, may seem unbelievable. But an Amen is added to it. He *is* alive for evermore. He *will* come quickly. He *will* come as the faithful witness. Not only that, but it is one of the names given to the Lord Jesus Christ. “These things saith the Amen” Rev. 3.14. Christ is so called because He *is* the God of truth, and is truth itself.

In Isaiah 65.16 God is twice referred to as “the God of truth, ” or, in the Hebrew, “the God Amen.” Now unless we know this true God we can never possess eternal life: “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God” John 17.3.

Many today deny that Jesus is truly God. “We believe He is the Son of God,” they say, “but we do not believe He is actually God.” Well, John gives us a text that puts the matter out of all doubt: “. . .that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. ***This is the true God*** (the Amen God)” 1 John 5.20.

There can be no greater blessing than to be brought to know the true God! If, through grace, we do know Him as our God and Saviour, then one day we shall be found with the redeemed in heaven singing that new song, recorded in Revelation chapter 5, “Worthy is the Lamb.” The song ends, “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” Then we shall be able to join our voices with the four beasts who, at the end of such a glorious song, uttered their unanimous “AMEN.”

That this greatest of blessings, through God’s mercy, might be granted to all our readers is our sincerest desire. It will be an everlasting song - for ever and ever - for all eternity. How wonderful it will be to

*“Join in the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all.”*

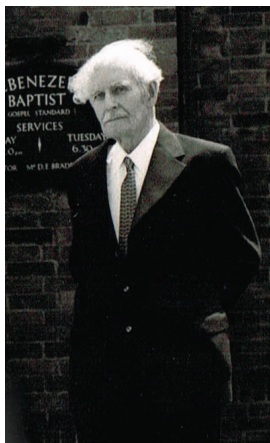
With greetings and best wishes to you all.

The Editor.

DOUGLAS EDWARD BRADFORD

This year marks a century since the outbreak of the First World War, a conflict from which so many would never return. The causes of the war are complex. Here is the briefest of summaries: Britain was appalled at the thought of a Europe dominated by Germany, whose ambition was to become a world power. Germany delivered an ultimatum to Belgium to grant passage to its army. This was refused, but Germany marched into a neutral Belgium nevertheless. Then Britain delivered an ultimatum to Germany to leave Belgium. Germany refused outright, and war was declared on Germany. The barbarity and savagery of the German army towards Belgian and French civilians was truly awful. Six million British soldiers eventually served in this war.

In recognition of this important anniversary, we felt it would be appropriate to include in the magazine the interesting autobiography of the esteemed minister of the Gospel, the late Mr. D. E. Bradford, who served in the Royal Navy throughout the period of the War. Mr. Bradford was appointed Pastor of Ebenezer Chapel, Matfield in 1945 where he continued until his death in 1981.



Birth and early days

I was born in Park Lane, London on 23rd June 1889 at 8 a.m. I would not have mentioned this had there not been a very special display of God's providence at this very hour of my entrance into the world and I truly can say: "I was cast upon Thee from the womb."

At this time my parents were living at Clapham, which was then a very pretty residential place with its large open common. Here my brother was born. Mother was brought very low on that occasion and when she knew I was coming she felt she could not have this birth at Clapham. Consequently it was arranged that this should be, God willing, at my uncle's. He was a doctor and lived at Maida Vale, at that time a suburb of London.

In the early hours of 23rd June it was evident that this event was at hand. Father apparently was able to hire a four-wheeler cab to drive them to my uncle's. On the journey, in Park Lane, I arrived!

Poor father wrapped me up in his coat. On arrival at Maida Vale it was not thought I could live and mother was given the first attention. However, God thought otherwise, and my life was preserved - how at times Ryland's beautiful hymn has been wonderfully sweet to me in looking back to the day of my birth:

*"He that formed me in the womb,
He shall guide me to the tomb,
All my times shall ever be
Ordered by His wise decree."*

I was a very delicate child and suffered with bronchitis and lung congestion. To this day, I can remember the remedy used for this malady - hot mustard and linseed poultice put on the bare skin. I think they were called 'blisters' and a more applicable name could not be found. Mother dreaded the winters and often feared my being brought through, but God preserved my frail constitution.

Death of my father

When I was seven my father died. Mother was left very poor and had to go out into the world to earn her living. Eventually she qualified to be a maternity nurse in private practice. This meant I had to leave home and here again my gracious Covenant God was overruling my life's changing scenes. An aunt (my father's sister) kindly took the burden of my upbringing off my mother's shoulder, took me into her home and sent me to a private school.

School days

At the age of eight it was decided to send me to a boarding school at Watford. This was a very large orphanage school with about five hundred boys and we were brought up very toughly. Considering my weak constitution, it is wonderful how God wrought for me, as during the seven years there I was never ill, and at the end I was a robust lad.

Before leaving this school I was confirmed "in my sins," (as Mr. Philpot said) by the Bishop of St. Albans. I took this event very seriously and worked hard to prepare myself for the ceremony, during

which the Bishop told me that, by the laying on of his hands, "I was a child of God and an inheritor of the Kingdom of God." O, how I have since felt the solemn deception of all this.

I was now fifteen and the time had come to make the vital decision as to my future career. This was, humanly speaking, left in the hands of my aforesaid aunt, who thought the best and most healthy calling would be the sea. This my poor mother was very sad about, as she felt I should be exposed to so much temptation, which indeed was only too true. But what a mercy I had a praying mother and was kept from much open sin.

H.M.S. Worcester as a cadet

The next two years were spent as a cadet on H.M.S. Worcester. Now being a strong healthy lad I greatly enjoyed life on this ship and in my last term was promoted to Cadet Captain, a position greatly coveted by the boys, there being only twelve out of three hundred cadets.

We were not without religious instruction on this ship; we had prayers every morning and evening, and Saturday evening after the prayer a hymn was always sung which was:

*"Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm doth bind the restless wave" etc.*

Sunday was a day completely observed, Church services morning and evening, and no work or sport.

At the age of seventeen I left this good ship. A beautiful Bible was given to me, a picture of the ship embossed in gold on the front cover. Inside was a letter asking me to read it every day, which to my shame was not done.

Apprenticed to a shipping firm

Now the time had arrived that I was to go into the world with all its snares and temptations, which I found to be many. I would not pretend to be what I was not. The world, with all its so-called pleasures, attractions and vanity, was my life: theatres, entertainments, card-playing and novel reading, and I was a past-master in foolish jesting and, worse than all, to my awful shame, the taking of the name of my God in vain! Being of a cheerful and friendly disposition, others like-minded were my companions.

Yet amidst all this, strange to say, I was not altogether void of

prayer, and in “dangers oft” found my mind looking Godward for protection. Though not realised then, I was kept by a Divine power from being overwhelmed by the god of this world, and was “Upheld by His righteous omnipotent hand.”

I was now apprenticed to a shipping firm by the name of J.P. Corry, and in September 1906 joined their ship called the Star of Japan. She was a very fine vessel of 6,000 tons.

Star of Japan - her maiden voyage

One of the finest equipped cargo ships of her day, she was making her maiden voyage to Australia and New Zealand, with a valuable general cargo. New Zealand had a special attraction as my uncle, my mother's brother, lived there with a large family of eight. As a young man he ran away from home and “went before the mast” (a seafaring expression of an ordinary seaman) on a sailing ship. He thought, like many others, he was going to make his fortune in the gold mines of Australia, alas only to prove it was an empty bubble. Uncle never returned home again and eventually settled down in Auckland which was our first port of call in New Zealand. I can never forget that occasion as we entered into the beautiful harbour in that lovely land.

It was mid-summer and all nature was at its fairest. The wonderful smell that was wafted over the water I seem to inhale to this day. “The smell of a field the Lord had blest.” As we approached our berth I scanned the people on the wharf to see if I could recognize my uncle, and amongst that company I soon picked him out in his likeness to my dear mother. As soon as the gangway was down I ran towards him. He embraced me and fell upon my neck and kissed me, overcome that after about forty years he saw one of his own kith and kin. Dear Uncle Morton, I can never forget the sadness on your face mingled with joy.

Questioned by a relation - Do you believe?

Our next port of call was Wellington in the Cook Strait (no doubt named after Captain Cook who discovered this fair land). Here again I was to meet another relation, a cousin by marriage, a Dental Surgeon, who belonged to the sect called Plymouth Brethren. He seemed to be full of zeal and quite confident that he was a saved man. He was kind to me which I much appreciated. When free from duties I always spent the evenings at his home, and the time was occupied in reading the

Scriptures, which he would discourse upon, also in lectures upon the Tabernacle of which he had a model. I quite enjoyed these evenings and to a point was impressed. One evening when leaving to go down to my ship, he put a very pointed question to me, "Did I believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ?" My reply was, "Yes." Then to my great amazement he said, "You are saved and to-morrow night you must come and tell our Elders" - and made me promise so to do.

On my way down to the Docks that night I shall never forget my thoughts. "Saved, saved," kept coming to my mind. O! I thought I was; did not the Bishop of St. Albans tell me that years ago? But I had never given it a thought since. How can I believe this? I have no evidence! Then for the first time I realised my religion was a dead formality. How could I go and tell these people I was saved? There would be a lie in my mouth and I should be a hypocrite. I said to myself, "I cannot go - I will not go." And I did not go.

The next day passed, in which I had much exercise of mind but could not bring myself to keep my promise. Then the day following my cousin came down to the ship and enquired why I had not turned up to the meeting the previous evening. I told him my thoughts, and his whole countenance changed! He said, "You have refused salvation and will be lost and will probably have an untimely end, might suffer shipwreck and go down with your ship." After other threats, he said, "One more opportunity is offered you; repent, and come and tell us." I said I could not see what there was to repent of - I had only tried to be honest. My ship was sailing that evening and there would be no more time to come ashore. We parted.

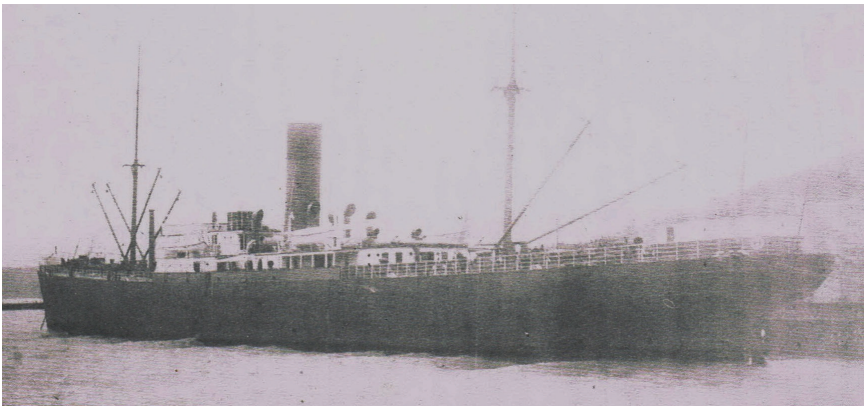
The next voyage we again visited Wellington but he had given up his practice and taken up another in Buenos Aires. Eight years after this I visited this wicked city and called upon my cousin who had a very prosperous practice among a large Catholic community. We spoke on generals, but not a word of religion. I must leave him and I bear no animosity towards him. I now made two more voyages to Australia and New Zealand.

Shipwrecked

On 26th March 1907 I left London for my fourth voyage which was never completed, as the good ship Star of Japan was shipwrecked on the West African coast. I kept a diary of this outstanding and God-

preserving event and will give some extracts therefrom.

2nd April. We were about 350 miles north of Cape Dakar on the West African coast. I was on watch from midnight to 4 a.m., “the graveyard watch” as it is called. At 3.45 the 2nd Officer had asked me to call the Chief Officer who was due to take over at 4 o'clock. I called this officer and then heard the officer on the Bridge giving a long blast on his whistle which meant I was wanted. I ran towards the Bridge and can never forget the sight as I looked towards the bow of the ship. There was a high, white tipped wave approaching the ship and then suddenly she (the ship) rose up in the air and then came down with an awful crash which threw me down. Then the engine was heard going full speed astern, and one realised we had struck a reef. Shortly after this the propellor shaft broke which put the engine out of action, and we were left dashing about the rocks and helpless! Six a.m. daylight at last - how one “Watched for the morning.” Now we see another wreck about two miles from us on the mainland. 8 a.m. Starboard life boat lowered and manned by eight seamen and 2nd Officer. Well stored. Proceeded to sea in search of any passing vessel. (We had no means of communication, as there was no wireless in those days.)



Star of Japan, the ship in which Mr. Bradford was shipwrecked

During the morning all hands employed getting stores and fresh water in the lifeboats, which were lowered into the water, not safe on board, ship pitching heavily, rocks grinding into her hull, fears as to how long she may last! As the day wore on fresh leaks were manifested.

“All hands to the pumps!” 2nd Officer’s boat out of sight, nightfall with all its fears. Send up rockets of distress. Fear that Arabs might try to board us, our charts warn us they are hostile.

My mind went back to my Wellington experience, was my cousin right? Was this to be the end? I was so young, and life was sweet. Then the old hymn we used to sing on the Worcester, sweetly came:

*“Eternal Father strong to save,
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave
O hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea.”*

Then perhaps for the first time I really prayed for the preservation of my life, it was “in peril.”

3rd April. Dawn at last. Holds still filling with water. It is decided to explore the wreck on the mainland. 1st and 4th officers with six seamen go in boat - their return is eagerly waited. 2nd Officer’s boat, seen several times during the morning, returns at 2.30 p.m. Spirits sink when hearing they saw nothing but sharks! Chief Officer’s boat seen returning, and arrive on board at 3.30 p.m. Alas our hopes sink. They have found out that the wreck is rotten and water in all parts, all hopes of boarding her must be put away. If she had been sound our intention was to board her if our vessel broke up.

4th April. Ship leaking all over, 15 feet of water in the engine room, afternoon 24 feet. Water in the holds also rising. Everyone getting very excited and many very nervous. Captain and officers hold consultation as to what is best to be done. Eventually two crews are picked, one under charge of the Chief Officer in the starboard lifeboat and the other under the 3rd Officer in the starboard cutter.

At 2 p.m. the fore-mast is seen to be listing heavily to starboard, and the ship’s back is breaking. No. 3 hold is unbattened and explosives taken aft in fear that if mast comes down it might cause explosion. Again I thought, Is this to be the end? But “Not a single shaft can hit, Till the God of love sees fit.”

By now the sea and wind had so increased that it was not possible for our two crews to leave and it was postponed until the morning. The object of this venture was to make for Cape Verde 350 miles away and,

perhaps, get picked up by a steamer. We passed a terrible night, the sea was breaking all over the poor old ship and she was groaning and creaking in all parts. Every man had his life belt at hand. I prayed, but at that time only for the preservation of my life.

5th April. The wind and sea have both gone down a lot, but still too strong for our little rescue party to set out. By noon the sea has moderated, and the Chief Officer thinks it quite fit to venture on his expedition, the previous arrangement that the 3rd Officer should go as well was dropped. We give them a cheer as they leave, they are risking much to try to save us. The little boat sails away riding gallantly over the sea till she is a mere speck on the horizon, and then vanishing altogether from our sight, leaving us in a suspense only known to ourselves (but God knew). All hands now turn to under the superintendency of the officers and make a stout raft and when finished it is of such a size that it will hold all the remaining hands on board, and ample room for all our stores, in case we had to abandon ship. She is launched amidst great laughter, cheers and excitement and is named the Star of Hope.

Our hopes are rising with the expectation of great things from our gallant sailors afloat. Class distinction is now no more. Our poor old captain sent word that none of us were strangers now and he would like any of us to come and have a talk with him, which was responded to. How danger brings all on the same level! We are sorry for our captain. The wind rose again tonight and dashed the poor old vessel about. How is it with all the little crew at sea is the question in the mind of all.

6th April. Another day has dawned and still finds us in the same position! How it could have been otherwise. Afternoon - What is the cry that goes round? "Ship ahoy!" Where? Far out on the horizon. She has seen us, and is closing in towards us. What excitement as the news spreads! She is close in towards us. What excitement as the news spreads! She is close to us now, about a mile or so. What nationality is she? Up goes her ensign, she is a Frenchman. Away we all go to the fore deck and send up signal after signal in spite of the sea breaking over us all the time, but what is that when we are, so to speak signalling for our lives. We learn she is bound for Daker, where she will get immediate help, and will keep a look out for our lifeboat. We should

have gone aboard but no open boat would live in the sea and surf now running. Away goes our good vessel to report us to civilisation. Night again sets in, but hope is mingled with our fears. A hope that God is going to spare my life!

7th April. Passed another sleepless night, the sea was terrible and the only place of safety was on the Bridge where we spent the night. During the morning we see on the horizon a mere speck, hull down she would never see us. After some while she appears to be closing in on us, eventually heaves to and hoists the German Ensign. She signals to us that our Chief Officer is on board with his crew, how thankful we are he is safe!

A very heavy sea still running, how could we be rescued, it seemed impossible an open boat could survive. But our case was desperate and we signalled that we did not think our vessel could survive another night. Now this captain did an operation I had never seen done before. He came as near to us as was safe, about a mile, and then pumped oil on the water. This quietened the sea down somewhat, and made it possible to man and lower our lifeboats, and get away. It took over an hour to reach the Hans Woreman as this ship was named. (*Diary ends here.*)

Now years after I think of that dangerous trip, half the men were sick, we were drenched to the skin and quite exhausted, but through the mercy of God we reached our rescue ship and just had strength enough to climb up the “Jacob’s Ladder” hanging down the side of the ship to safety. I cannot describe my feeling - God’s providence had passed before my eyes!

TO BE CONTINUED

A GOOD ANSWER

A Christian mother was asked by a lady if her daughter did not dance.

“No,” was the reply.

“But,” said the questioner, “how ever will she get on in the world?”

“I am not bringing her up for the world,” was the Christian mother’s quiet answer.

THE LARGER ROOM

In 1764 the Rev. John Newton became curate-in-charge of Olney in Buckinghamshire. At one time captain of a slave-ship, God called him by His grace, and eventually he was ordained by the Bishop of Lincoln.

At Olney he laboured tirelessly in the Lord's work. Each week he held regularly no less than four meetings for prayer, two on the Lord's Day at 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. and two on Tuesday at 5 a.m. and 8 p.m. This latter meeting on Tuesday evenings was the largest of all his weekly gatherings, and eventually, the numbers increasing, it outgrew the meeting place.

In April, 1769, Mr. Newton, writing to a friend, said: "We are going to remove our prayer meeting to the great room in the Great House. It is a noble place, with a parlour behind it, and holds one hundred and thirty people conveniently. Pray for us, that the Lord may be in the midst of us there, and that as He has now given us a Rehoboth (with reference to Gen 26.22), and has made room for us, so He may be pleased to add to our numbers, and make us fruitful in the land."

One of Newton's little devices for keeping up his people's interest in their prayer meeting was the provision of a new hymn every Tuesday evening, which he often used as a text for his address; these were sometimes written by himself, and sometimes by his friend, the poet Cowper, then a resident at Olney. For this momentous occasion of the removal to the larger room, two special hymns were written; one was by Newton himself beginning, "Dear Shepherd of Thy people, here." The other hymn, by Cowper, was the well-known "Jesus, where'er Thy people meet." When these circumstances are known, the words of several lines in both hymns are seen to have special reference to the occasion. In Newton's hymn we have the lines:

*"As Thou hast given a place for prayer,
So give us hearts to pray."*

and again :

*"Within these walls let holy peace,
And love, and concord dwell."*

Cowper's hymn has a clear reference to the change from the old place of gathering to the new in the lines :

*“Dear Shepherd of Thy chosen few,
Thy former mercies here renew.”*

One of his verses has two of its lines so applicable to the special circumstances as to cause its omission from the hymn as we know it:

*“Come Thou and fill this wider space,
And bless us with a large increase.”*

INSTANCES OF DIVINE JUDGMENT

A godly Minister, Mr. Fleming, as he was preaching one Lord's day, among the crowded congregation were three young men whose behaviour during the service attracted the notice of the people and of the Minister. The Minister reprov'd them publicly, desiring decent behaviour while in the house of God. Rather than improve their behaviour they continued to offer the greatest contempt to the preaching of the word, by peeling oranges, cracking nuts and making faces. The Minister admonished them a second time, but they persisted in their shameful behaviour.

The Minister was so shocked at their hardened behaviour that, in the midst of his sermon, he made a solemn pause. He turned and looked them full in the face for some time. At length he spoke to the three young men in the following manner: “My young friends, I am sorry to be the author of such a dreadfully alarming message to you and I have begged of the Lord to excuse me from it, but He will not. Therefore, I must not shrink from the painful duty of declaring my awful impression. I now tell you that you have not a week longer to live in this world.”

This dreadful sentence greatly disturbed the congregation, who thought it was an act of rashness and some were of the opinion that religion would suffer scoff and reproach for it, especially should it not prove true. The Minister said, “Let the event prove the truth of it, for I am persuaded I was moved by the Spirit of God to say what I do, as prophetic of their awful end.”

Monday passed and nothing happened.

On Tuesday, one of the young men went on board a vessel to go on an intended voyage, as arranged before the Lord's day. In consequence of a violent storm the ship was driven ashore, whereby the poor unhappy

wretch was launched into eternity.

On Wednesday, another of the three young men was in a quarrel. The issue of the quarrel was to be settled by a duel, in which the second young man fell a victim and was killed by his opponent's sword.

On Thursday, the surviving young man was taken suddenly ill, at which he became terrified, two of his sinful companions having been suddenly cut off already. He desired that the same Minister whom he had ridiculed might be sent for. When the Minister arrived, the young man begged he would pray with him. When asked what he should pray for, the young man said, "For my life." "That is not in my power to do," said the Minister, "for I am sure you will die." "Then please pray for the life of my soul," said the young man. The Minister knelt by his bedside and remained so for a considerable time and then he arose without speaking a word. He then told the young man that he found his lips were sealed and that he could not utter a syllable on his behalf, and so he took his leave of him. Soon after the wretched young man died in horror and despair, and so closed the sad and awful catastrophe.

This remarkable event occurred in Amsterdam in the 17th century. May it be a warning to any who may be inclined to trifle in God's house. "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God" Ecclesiastes 6.1.

Adapted from an 1898 Periodical

UPHELD

"Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe" Psalm 119.117.

When a friend is in trouble, or going through difficulties, we may well say to him or her, "I hope you will be upheld." Though we mean it well, sometimes these things rather trip off our tongues as the 'right' thing to say, and we may not think sufficiently what we are saying. However, when there are difficult or demanding circumstances in a person's life, we do sympathise with them, and we trust there is a genuine desire that they will feel supported by the Lord, that they may feel "underneath are the everlasting arms."

David's life was one of many trials and difficulties. Often his very life was in danger; he was forsaken by those he had considered his friends, and was hunted by the armies of King Saul. Where could he

look for help? Only upwards! His cry was, “Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe.” In fact, David felt that he *had* been upheld all his life, and was able to say with assurance, “By Thee have I been holden up from the womb” (Psalm 71.6). There can be no true safety out of Christ, either for time or eternity. Charles Wesley reminds of this when we sing: “Other refuge have I none, Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.” If we think of some of the great buildings we see around us, we can be sure that there must be something of great strength holding them up. For a start, the foundations must be good, as ultimately all the weight of the building rests on the foundations. But what of that massive roof we can see? There must be something of great strength to support the weight. Perhaps our picture will illustrate the point.



Massive Norman pillars support the roof of Malvern Priory Church

Interestingly, this church was destined for destruction by King Henry VIII at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539. The villagers petitioned the king that they might buy it to replace their rotting wooden church. The king agreed it should be sold to them for £20 - in instalments! Unusually for today, we understand this huge church is filled to capacity on Sundays, with a still-increasing congregation. Young people from a local college who wished to worship with them cannot be accommodated.

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

In the next few editions of *Perception* we hope to examine in a simple way each of the five points. First, a few facts concerning John Calvin.

<i>Born</i>	Saturday, 10 July 1509
<i>Where</i>	Noyon, a town in northern France
<i>Name</i>	Jean Cauvin (occasionally Jehan Cauvin)
<i>Mother</i>	Joan, died when he was still very young
<i>Father</i>	Gerard, worked for the RC bishop of Noyon as a lawyer
<i>Siblings</i>	Three (possibly four) brothers
<i>University</i>	1523-1531
<i>1531</i>	Calvin's father dies. Calvin returns to Paris.
<i>1536</i>	From Basel, Switzerland, publishes (in Latin) first edition of <i>Institutes of the Christian Religion</i> , six chapters. Edition we have today, 80 chapters, was published in 1561.
<i>1536</i>	Settles in Geneva, having intended to stay only one night.
<i>1538</i>	Expelled by the Geneva City Council. Soon after becomes Pastor in Strasbourg (during this time hit by the Plague).
<i>1540</i>	Marries Idelette de Bure, a widow with two children, "a gentle woman."
<i>Children</i>	At least one child named Jacques, born prematurely and died. "The Lord gave me a little son and then He took him away. In the kingdom of Christ I have ten thousand children."
<i>1541</i>	By invitation returns to Geneva. The city pays him a salary.
<i>Wife dies</i>	29 March 1549 after a long illness. "I have lost the best companion of my life." Decides never to marry again.
<i>1559</i>	Founds a college called the Geneva Academy (1872 established as a university).
<i>Health</i>	Many illnesses, including TB (Tuberculosis)
<i>1564</i>	Last sermon preached 6 February 1564 in St. Peter's Cathedral, Geneva (unable to finish it due to violent cough).
<i>Death</i>	Evening of Wednesday, 27 May 1564 at 54 years of age.
<i>Burial</i>	Next day in a cemetery outside the city. Wanted no stone, and no-one knows exactly the place where he is buried.

It may be helpful to remember that Martin Luther, whom Calvin never met (but whose works he read), lived from 1483-1546.

Calvin wrote little about himself or his family. Some account of his life can be found in the Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms.

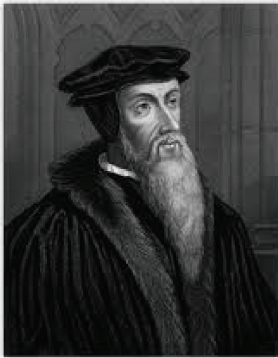
“God drew me from obscure and lowly beginnings and conferred on me that most honourable office of herald and minister of the gospel. My father had intended me for theology from my early childhood. But when he reflected that the career of the law proved everywhere very lucrative for its practitioners, the prospect suddenly made him change his mind. And so it happened that I was called away from the study of philosophy and set to learning law: although, out of obedience to my father’s wishes, I tried my best to work hard, yet God at last turned my course in another direction by the secret curb of his providence. What happened first was that by an unexpected conversion he tamed to teachableness stubborn mind - for I was so strongly devoted to the superstitions of the papacy that nothing less could draw me from such depths of mire. And so this mere taste of true godliness that I received set me on fire with such a desire to progress that I pursued the rest of my studies more coolly, although I did not give them up altogether. Before a year had slipped by anybody who longed for a purer doctrine kept on coming to learn from me, still a beginner, a raw recruit.”

The five points

So what exactly are these five points of Calvinism? The first thing to note is that Calvin nowhere used this terminology. The origin of the phrase ‘The five points’ is uncertain, and cannot be found in use until the beginning of the 1900's. (The *doctrines* were adopted by the Synod of Dordt in 1619.) The five points are often remembered by the acronym T-U-L-I-P, an acronym being an abbreviation formed from the initials of other words (e.g. NASA). Looking at the table on the next page you will see that the first initials of the five doctrines do indeed spell the word TULIP, and can be used as an aid to memory. Again, this acronym is of comparatively recent appearance, possibly the 1930's.

The table shows the alternative doctrines held by Jacobus Arminius, a Dutchman, who lived a little later than Calvin. From his name we derive the word ‘Arminianism’ which is a system of doctrine opposite to Calvinism.

CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM



John Calvin 1509-1564

Jacobus Arminius 1560-1609

The Five Points of Calvinism

The Five Points of Arminianism

Total Depravity

Men spiritually dead and blind, and unable to repent

Free Will

Men with the free will either to choose or reject God

Unconditional Election

Men chosen solely according to God's sovereign will

Conditional Election

Men chosen because God foresaw their future response

Limited Atonement

Christ died to save only those given to Him by the Father

Universal Atonement

Christ died for everyone

Irresistible Grace

When God calls the elect, they cannot resist the call

Resistible Grace

God's call can be resisted and salvation rejected

Perseverance of the Saints

Those saved can never be lost - they are eternally secure

Falling from Grace

Believers can freely turn from grace and lose their salvation

The Doctrine of Total Depravity

This quarter we will examine the first of the five points, ‘Total Depravity.’ The meaning of depravity is wide. It suggests moral corruption, behaviour that goes beyond mere bad behaviour, a very evil way of behaving, immorality, shamelessness, indecency, a total lack of values, and more. But what is its meaning relative to the fall of man?

God created “man in His own image” Gen. 1.27. True, only *some* of His image was put upon man; Jesus alone was the *express* image of God. But man was pure, knew no sin, was perfectly happy and content, and he loved and walked with God. But when Adam sinned, in Calvin’s own words ‘the heavenly image in man was effaced,’ that is, was blotted-out or dimmed. The soul of man, though fallen, now bears but some faint resemblance to its Maker.

Through the sin of one man, all were made sinners. “The scripture hath concluded all under sin” Galatians 3.22. Man, until regenerated by the Spirit of God, is now “dead in trespasses and sins” Ephesians 2.1. Notice the condition of man - dead. “And you, being dead in your sins etc.” Colossians 2.13. We can safely conclude that the fall of man left him spiritually dead.

Is there anything a man can do, any action he can take, to help himself out of his condition? No, nothing at all. He is dead. Think of Lazarus. Was there nothing he could do to bring himself forth out of the grave? Could he not take some step towards altering his state? No, this was impossible. It was not until the Lord Jesus cried, “Lazarus, come forth” that there was some movement, some stirring, towards life. And so it is spiritually. Until the Lord says, “Come forth,” there can be no movement from that state of deadness.

The Arminian position

The Arminian says that, though fallen and a sinner, man still has the ability to turn to God if he so desires. Man has not been left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. Each sinner possesses a free will, and his eternal destiny depends on how he uses it. It is his choice. The only thing that stands between the sinner and salvation is the sinner’s will. “Did not Jesus say,” says the Arminian, “‘Ye *will* not come to me?’” Why did He not say, Ye *can* not come to me?”

Which doctrine is right?

If there are *seemingly* contradictory Scriptures, we need to ask which system of doctrine would most appeal to our fallen human nature. Would it be, ‘I am completely helpless, and God must do it all?’ Or would it be, ‘I do not need an outside agency; I can do it myself?’ Obviously, the latter appeals most to our fallen nature, but the truth generally lies opposite to the feelings of fallen nature.

We ask again, which doctrine tends to the greater glory of God? Is it the regenerating work of the blessed Spirit in leading us to see the glories of Christ? Or is it to be found relying on our own sinful hearts to take that first step towards Christ, a heart that “is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked?” Could you trust *your* heart to take that step? Readers, I know where I would rather be trusting. The Bible says, “He that trusteth his own heart is a fool.” I would not trust *my* heart to do the right thing. My heart, left to itself, would want the ways of the world. It certainly would not want “this Man to reign over us.” I would not have a moment’s peace if I thought that *I* had to take the first step. No, the Apostle Paul rightly says, when writing to the Romans, “There is none that seeketh after God.”

How much better is it to come to God, as David did in Psalm 51, saying, “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” Notice, David did not ask that his heart might be improved a little, or that it might be made somewhat better and thus more acceptable to God. No, he asked God to create a new, clean heart. David knew his total depravity, even though he may not have used those words.

There is a need today to emphasise that it is *total* depravity. There are churches today which call themselves Calvinistic. They profess to believe the doctrines of grace. However, in the preaching, or in their writings, it seems that everything depends on us turning to Christ. “We must give Him our lives.” “We must submit to Him as Lord and Master.” “This will be the most momentous action we have ever taken.” “We must respond to the message of salvation.” “What would Jesus Christ do for us if we turned to Him?” Sadly, most error today springs from a failure fully to accept the doctrine of which we have been writing. The heart is depraved, people say, but there is still enough good left in it to turn to Christ if we will. This is untrue, and undermines the redeeming work of Christ and the regenerating work of

the Holy Ghost.

The Gospel Standard Articles of Faith express the true doctrine of Total Depravity in these words: “We believe that by the Fall all men were rendered both unable and unwilling spiritually to believe in, seek after, or love God until regenerated by the Holy Ghost.” May it be our blessed lot to know that regenerating work in our own hearts.

THE ANNUAL DENOMINATIONAL MEETINGS

We are grateful for this little report of the Annual Meetings which were held for the seventh year running at Clifton Chapel, Bedfordshire on Friday, 11 April 2014. The chapel is set in lovely grounds. It was a pleasant spring day, and the primroses and spring flowers were out, peeping around the gravestones of our people, which surround the chapel. Next door through a gate is the chapel house and the beautifully kept garden was a riot of tulips and other flowers.



The chapel is over 160 years old, having been built in 1853. It has a gallery round three sides and a large schoolroom at the back where coffee, tea and biscuits were given before and between each of the services, although everyone brought their own lunch and tea.

The first to arrive was a coach from Sussex at 9.30am. It was really nice to greet old and new friends. Most people parked their cars at the school a short walk from the chapel. This was where many people had refreshments also. People arrived from all over the country.

The first service was the prayer meeting at 11am, taken this year by Mr. Brian Mercer, Pastor of Eastbourne chapel. The chapel was comfortably filled and quite a lot of younger people sat in the gallery. The singing was hearty and sung without an organ. Mr. Mercer gave a short address from Hosea 14.12 “O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God,” and there were eight prayers. This service ended at 12.15 when

grace was sung together. Then everyone dispersed for lunch, some to the chapel schoolroom, some to the local school, and several to the chapel house garden.

The afternoon meeting was the business meeting when the Annual Meetings of the Gospel Standard Aid & Poor Relief Society and the Gospel Standard Bethesda Fund were held at 1.45pm. Mr. G. D. Buss chaired the meeting and Mr. D. J. Christian, the Secretary, gave a report. Mr. H. Mercer, Chairman of Bethesda then spoke, and Mr. A. Topping the General Manager gave an update on the work. Following this, Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom, Editor of the Gospel Standard Magazine, gave a most interesting talk on 200 years of the Gadsby's hymnbook. This meeting ended about 3.30pm with hymn 500 (May the grace of Christ, our Saviour).

The evening service began at 5.30pm. The chapel filled up early and by 5.15 there were very few seats left downstairs and the galleries were completely filled with families and young people which was wonderful to see. Mr. David Lawson, deacon of the chapel, said, "The chapel downstairs seats 220 and the galleries 180, making a total of 400 seats. I estimate there were 370 people present this year for the evening service." Mr. Ramsbottom preached from Isaiah 54.10: "For the mountains shall depart, etc." The service finished at 7pm.



The end of the day

People seemed loath to leave and a very happy atmosphere prevailed. We do hope that as many of our younger friends as possible will try to come to the meetings as this is a great encouragement to the Lord's servants of whom there were at least 25 present, and to our congregations who often feel isolated and few in numbers. The date in 2015 has been fixed, if the Lord will, for Friday, 10 April 2015.

THE PILLAR OF SALT

From *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan

Now I saw, that just on the other side of this plain, the pilgrims came to a place where stood an old monument, hard by the high-way-side, at the sight of which they were both concerned, because of the strangeness of the form thereof; for it seemed to them as if it had been a woman transformed into the shape of a pillar. Here therefore they stood looking and looking upon it, but could not for a time tell what they should make thereof. At last Hopeful espied written above upon the head thereof, a writing in an unusual hand; but he being no scholar, called to Christian (for he was learned) to see if he could pick out the meaning; so he came, and after a little laying of letters together, he found the same to be this, *Remember Lot's Wife*. So he read it to Hopeful; after which they both concluded that it was the Pillar of Salt into which Lot's wife was turned, for her looking back with a covetous heart, when she was going from Sodom for safety. Which sudden and amazing sight gave them occasion of this discourse.

CHRISTIAN. Ah my brother, this is a seasonable sight; it came opportunely to us after the invitation which Demas gave us to come over to view the hill Lucre; and had we gone over as he desired us, and as thou wast inclining to do, my brother, we had, for ought I know, been made ourselves like this woman, a spectacle for those that shall come after to behold.

HOPEFUL. I am sorry that I was so foolish, and am made to wonder that I am not now as Lot's wife; for wherein was the difference twixt her sin and mine? She only looked back, and I had a desire to go see: let grace be adored, and let me be ashamed that ever such a thing should be in mine heart.

CHRISTIAN. Let us take notice of what we see here, for our help for time to come: This woman escaped one judgment, for she fell not by the destruction of Sodom; yet she was destroyed by another, as we see she is turned into a pillar of salt.

HOPEFUL. True, and she may be to us both caution and example; caution that we should shun her sin, or a sign of what judgment will overtake such as shall not be prevented by this caution; so Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with the two hundred and fifty men that perished

in their sin, did also become a sign or example to others to beware. But above all, I muse at one thing, to wit, how Demas and his fellows can stand so confidently yonder to look for that treasure, which this woman,



The Dead Sea - A pillar of salt

but for looking behind her after (for we read not that she stept one foot out of the way) was turned into a pillar of salt; especially since the judgment which overtook her did make her an example, within sight of where they are: for they cannot chuse but see her, did they but lift up their eyes.

CHRISTIAN. It is a thing to be wondered at, and it argueth that their hearts are grown desperate in the case; and I cannot tell who to compare them to so fitly, as to them that pick pockets in the presence of the judge, or that will cut purses under the gallows. It is said of the men of Sodom, That they were sinners exceedingly, because they were sinners before the Lord; that is, in his eyesight, and notwithstanding the kindnesses that he had shewed them; for the land of Sodom was now, like the Garden of Eden heretofore. This

therefore provoked him the more to jealousy, and made their plague as hot as the fire of the Lord out of Heaven could make it. And it is most rationally to be concluded, that such, even such as these are, that shall sin in the sight, yea, and that too in despite of such examples that are set continually before them, to caution them to the contrary, must be partakers of severest judgments.

HOPEFUL. Doubtless thou hast said the truth; but what a mercy is it, that neither thou, but especially I, am not made myself this example: this ministreth occasion to us to thank God, to fear before him, and always to remember Lot's wife

THE HUNGARIAN MINERS

There are mines in Hungary so deep that in times past miners preferred to live in them. Many of them grew so accustomed to their surroundings that they seldom came up to see the light of day. Fathers, mothers, and children had their homes in an underground village. The story is told of a boy born in the mine. When he grew older he was told of the beautiful world above him, but no adequate impression could be given to him of the wonders of God's world. He had been told of the sun, and asked his father if it were as bright as a hundred candles.



One day, the boy was taken up out of the mine, and *saw for himself* the wondrous sun and its brilliance, far beyond anything he had ever imagined. He saw, too, the beautiful earth, with its richness of colour, stretched out beneath the light of day. He saw the birds, the animals, and a thousand wonders and beauties of creation. His eyes *saw*, and his ears *heard* things of which he had previously been able to form no right idea.

By nature, man loves darkness rather than light. He may hear of a wonderful life of grace, and is told that Christians walk in the light of the gospel, and enjoy communion with God. But while dead in sin, he form no true idea of this blessed life, nor can those who are favoured to enjoy it describe it to him. Thus we read in Holy Scripture, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

THE TRUE CHURCH

Bishop John Charles Ryle

"Upon this rock I will build my church" Matt. 16.18.

We live in a world in which all things are passing away. Kingdoms, empires, cities, ancient institutions, families, all are liable to change and corruption. One universal law seems to prevail everywhere. In all created things there is a tendency to decay.

There is something saddening and depressing in this. Is there nothing that shall stand? Is there nothing that shall last? Is there nothing that shall endure? Is there nothing of which we can say - This shall continue for evermore? You have the answer to these questions in the words of our text. Our Lord Jesus Christ speaks of something which shall continue, and not pass away. That thing is the building founded upon the rock - the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now what is this Church? The Church of our text is no material building. It is no temple made with hands, of wood, or brick, or stone, or marble. It is a company of men and women. It is no particular visible Church on earth. It is not the Eastern Church or the Western Church. It is not the Church of England, or the Church of Scotland; much less is it the Church of Rome. The Church of our text is one that makes far less show in the eyes of man, but is of far more importance in the eyes of God.

The Church of our text is made up of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It comprises all who have repented of sin, and fled to Christ by faith, and been made new creatures in Him. It comprises all God's elect, all who have received God's grace, all who have been washed in Christ's blood, all who have been clothed in Christ's righteousness, all who have been born again and sanctified by Christ's Spirit. All such, of every nation, and tongue, compose the Church of our text. This is the body of Christ. This is the Church on the rock.

The members of this Church do not all worship the same way, or use the same form of government. But they all worship with one heart. They are all led by one Spirit. Whether they are Episcopalian, Independent, or Presbyterian, they all serve the interests of the one true Church. But no visible Church has any right to say, 'We are the only true Church. We are the men, and wisdom shall die with us.'

This is that Church to which belong the Lord's promises of preservation, continuance, protection, and final glory. Small and despised as the true Church may be in this world, it is precious and honourable in the sight of God. The temple of Solomon in all its glory was mean and contemptible, in comparison with that Church which is built upon a rock. Men and brethren, see that you hold sound doctrine upon the subject of 'the Church.'

BAPTIZED ON A STRETCHER

Extracts from the writings of Miss Ruth Beesley, who died in the Tunbridge Wells Bethesda Home on Christmas Day, 1969. A full account of her life can be found in *The King's Daughters* (compiled by B.A.Ramsbottom) and published by Gospel Standard Trust Publications.

A dreadful “accident”

On 15 August 1932 I left London to spend a fortnight's holiday at Llandudno, North Wales, with a dear friend from Leicester, and we had many spiritual talks on the way.

On Tuesday, 23 August, my dear friend, Mrs. Anderson, and I went for a walk along the Marine Drive on the Great Orme, having a close spiritual conversation. It being near lunch time, we got on the tram at the halfway engine house to go down to the bottom of the Great Orme, and had only been on the tram two minutes when the draw bar, which controls the tram, snapped. The tram gathered speed and ran into a stone wall, killing the driver of the tram. My friend and I sat behind the driver; she was not injured but received shock. The coping stone of the wall came through the tram window onto my head, and I received a lacerated brain and fractured base of the skull. I was quite unconscious and was laid on a lady's lawn by the tramway.



The Great Orme Tramway

My friend was able to attend to my head until the doctor and ambulance arrived. The doctor plugged my head wound, and I was taken to Llandudno Cottage Hospital. Just at that time, the finest surgeon in Wales, Mr. Coleman, was at the hospital, and took

charge of me. He said if he operated I should die, and if he did not I must die. However, he operated and sewed the brain together. The surgeon thought I was dying on the table and administered injections to keep me alive, but no hope was given of my recovery. I was taken to a

private ward and all relations sent for, but the Lord's time to take me had not yet come.

I was unconscious for a month. On regaining consciousness, being blind for a time, I had to be told that I was in hospital. Then, suddenly, the dear Lord came and I simply felt to lie at His dear feet. O the mercy and love I felt lying there - the sweetest spot on earth! The more pain I had, the more strength and help the dear Lord gave me to bear it. Then Satan came with sore temptations and told me that I was not a child of God, so I asked my sister not to let any minister bury me in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection; but the dear Lord broke through the clouds and gave me a little hope in His mercy. I was having life injections in one arm and sleeping injections in the other, to keep me alive, but I again proved that "as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

The kind surgeon said if they wished to take me home, it must be done before the eighteenth week, but he could not say that I should reach home alive, and if they took the risk to move me, he must contact a Leicester surgeon to meet me. On 13 October 1932, I was taken by ambulance from Llandudno Hospital to my married sister's at Leicester. The ambulance men were afraid they could not get me home alive, but were assured by my friend that special prayer was being made for my safe arrival. I felt very ill, but the dear Lord gave me that sweet promise, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." O what a support and strength the words were to me! Eventually I went unconscious (which was a great mercy) and remained so until I reached home. The doctor was there to meet and attend to me, and so we had great cause to thank God for a safe journey.

Gradual improvement

God very graciously gave me a very good and kind surgeon who took a real interest in my case. I was completely paralysed down my left side. The surgeon at Llandudno had written to the Leicester surgeon and told him everything possible had been done for me, and he could only stand by and make me comfortable until I died. Many times did my surgeon say, while watching my brain knit together, "We are fearfully and wonderfully made: I have never known such a miracle."

Some months after, he took the risk of my life in moving my finger on my left hand, and also slowly moved my left side and got some use in it. I was brought very low spiritually, and could often only say,

“Lord, help me.”

I felt such a wretch, and undone, and begged of the Lord for a word from Himself. One evening, Mr. H. Haddow, a deacon at Zion, Leicester, came to see me and read a portion of God’s Word, and prayed that God would give me a word for myself, which the dear Lord graciously did. He sweetly said, “Fear not, I will help thee,” and I said, “Lord, a wretch like me?” He kindly said, “Thee.” It was such a help and blessing to my soul.

A year after the day of my accident, 23 August 1933, I received a notice that the Great Orme Tramway Company, Llandudno, had gone bankrupt. I wondered what I should do, as the old Health Service did not then provide for accidents, only for illness. I was paying privately for doctor and medicine, but the Lord gave me that sweet promise, “God all-sufficient,” and so I have found Him to be. My doctor was most considerate and kind, and also my late employer and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Hicks of blessed memory, who kindly helped me as long as they lived, and since then, their two daughters have done the same.

More trials and mercies

I felt full of earthly concerns and had to pray, “Unite my heart to fear Thy Name.” Then came the word with divine power into my soul: “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” Then I was enabled to thank the Lord for the home that He would provide. That evening my dear sister was at Zion and a friend, Miss L. Robinson, whom I did not know at that time, enquired how I was, and she told Miss Robinson I was needing another home. Miss Robinson went home and told her sister and they decided to come and see me, Miss Robinson having had the word applied to her, “Take this child and nurse it for Me.” They kindly offered to take me, but I should have to be upstairs for some time. I went to Miss Robinson and her sister in November 1934, and was with them a good number of years.

At that time my doctor was teaching me to pull myself up from a chair by the bed rail and then stand alone for a minute with his arms each side of me. This took me four months to do, and then I was taken ill with appendicitis and there was also an abscess. I was taken to hospital for an operation; I was also on the verge of peritonitis and very ill. The surgeons dare not operate because of the serious brain operation, but did their utmost and dispersed the abscess and sent me

home, as they could not do any more, but the dear Lord graciously helped me through.

On account of the Tramway Company going bankrupt, it was three years before my compensation case was settled, and then the compensation was so small, I wondered what I should do. I broke down thinking of the struggle ahead when, instantly, I felt surrounded with the Lord's presence and He spoke the words to me, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." I felt to be on holy ground and said, "Dear Lord, I never shall," and, bless His holy Name, I never have.

The fifth anniversary of the accident I had a special time. The Lord gave me those words: "Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps," and I was led back to the blessed waymarks the dear Lord had given me. The seventh anniversary, I woke up very early with the words: "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name together." I longed for someone to come so that we could exalt His Name together. I was put down for my usual afternoon's rest but I could not rest; I wanted to praise the Lord for His mercy and care. At that moment dear Mr. S. Champion came and so we tried to exalt His blessed Name together.

Chapel after nine years

I was not able to go to chapel for over nine years; my heart did thirst for the courts of the Lord. At length, through mercy, I was enabled to be taken by car to Zion Chapel. The friend I lived with wished me to ask my kind doctor's permission which, to satisfy her, I did. The doctor said, "You will go prepared to be very ill, won't you?" I replied, "No, doctor, I hope to enjoy the service. You took the risk of my life in moving my fingers and the Lord helped us." The doctor said, "Yes, He did; He always helps you. Your faith will bring you through. I'll give my consent." So I was carried to the car by my dear nephew and laid on a bed in the chapel and we had a real thanksgiving service. Early that Sabbath morning I felt very ill, yet I felt sure the Lord would take me to His house, and the Lord gave me that sweet promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness," and the Lord gave me a refreshing sleep. I did not even feel ill during that service and when I got back to bed, the words came with divine power: "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

My arms being very weak I hardly knew how to use them. The

worst head attack I ever had was one midnight. I could not move or speak and was alone, yet not alone, for the Lord came with the words, "His left hand is under my head." It was as though Jesus stood by me supporting my head. Then He spoke these sweet words to me, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Words fail to tell the inward peace He gave me.

I had longed to go to the prayer meeting at Zion and my dear sister took me. Mr. Champion spoke from the text: "And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." I did enjoy the prayer meeting and felt helped; I little knew what it was to prepare me for.

Another sore affliction

The next day I had a fall and fractured my thigh and the shaft of the femur was displaced. At this time I was learning to walk by the furniture. I was in the most severe pain, it being the leg which had been paralysed, and I had to pray more earnestly for strength to endure the pain. I was taken to hospital for an operation but the orthopaedic specialist refused to operate and said to give an anaesthetic would be immediate death after such a serious brain operation; but, far worse, I felt the Lord had forsaken me. I could only cry, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" and being in severe pain in soul and body, I knew not what to do. However, reading that portion one morning where the Lord Jesus cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" the Holy Spirit revealed to me that I was having a tiny little fellowship with my blessed Lord in His sufferings. I did weep at His dear feet and He did bless and help me.

I was in hospital over eight weeks and then was sent to a nursing home for six weeks, not to be moved off the bed until I went back to hospital for an X-ray. I was in such severe pain that my wicked, sinful heart felt rebellious at the pain and suffering. I felt helped by the prayer of one of our deacons and also by the first part of a sermon in the Gospel Standard by Mr. J. Delves where he related his like experience in a serious illness he had. I had a little hope that my sins might be forgiven. I was taken back to hospital for an X-ray and had to be re-admitted into hospital and go back on the fracture extension for a month.

At length I was discharged from hospital to lie in bed for life. I went home feeling sure my good Doctor Greer would be enabled to do

something for me, which he did. It meant a painful process of exercises; there was a leg shortage of four inches so the doctor ordered me a surgical boot. One evening being in such severe pain I hardly knew how to endure - it was midnight and I was alone - the dear Lord came at once with these words:

*“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.”*

The dear Lord gave me a sweet assurance that I was a member of His body, the church. I could but say, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.”



Zion Chapel, Leicester

After being in hospital and at home for fourteen months, I had such a desire to go to Zion Anniversary, and was taken there by ambulance. Mr. Champion took for his text in the morning “Thy God hath commanded thy strength” (Psa. 68. 28). It proved such a word of help and blessing to me then, and has been many times since. Then my doctor was anxious for me to be out as much as possible. The dear friend that was with me at the accident in 1932 was then very ill and had gone to be looked after by another friend and she kindly offered my sister and me the use of her house. I shrank from it but the Lord gave me the word, “He pleased not Himself,” and that made me willing to go. From there I was able to be taken in an invalid chair to

chapel and was carried up the steps by very kind friends, not being able to walk alone.

Baptized on a stretcher

At this time I was very exercised about being baptized, the words being given: “He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it

is that loveth Me.” I felt the first Person we should meet in heaven would be a baptized Lord Jesus Christ. I longed to follow Him. I knew there were many difficulties in the way bodily, it being very difficult to get down one step, but the dear Lord swept the difficulties away and gave me such sweet portions of His blessed Word, and assured me that “with Him I should be in safeguard,” so I was enabled to speak to Mr. Champion, and he came to see me. He asked if I had considered how it could be done. I said, “Yes.” Mr. C. then said, “Will you leave it to the deacons and myself?” and I replied, “Yes.” Mr. Champion arranged for me to see the deacons and I felt helped to tell them what I humbly believed the Lord had done for me, and they decided it would be best for me to be baptized on a stretcher. I went before the church, was helped to speak, and was unanimously received.

The baptism was arranged for the Thursday evening. A friend wished me to ask my kind doctor’s consent but this I felt I could not do, feeling the dear Lord had given me His divine consent. I said, “I will tell the doctor, if you wish,” which I did. I told him I wished to be baptized by immersion, and he replied, “Whatever next, Ruth? You realise it may be the death of you?” I replied, “I don’t feel it will; the Lord has promised to help me; and should it prove my death, it would be nice to die following the dear Lord who was baptized.” The doctor replied, “I’ll give my consent; I know the Lord will look after you. He always does. I believe you will be brought safely through. The Lord bless you.”

I went to the service ready dressed for my baptism and lay on the stretcher, which had a piece of rope at each corner. Just before hymn 427 was sung (“Jesus, and shall it ever be”), that verse came with power:

*“When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.”*

Then as the deacons and one male member carried me on the stretcher to the water, that verse came so sweetly:

*“We to this place are come to show
What we to boundless mercy owe;
The Saviour’s footsteps to explore,
And tread the path He trod before.”*

Then they gently let me down into the water and Mr. Champion baptized me. I saw Jesus only and, to His honour and glory I would say it, I never even felt ill. To God be all the praise.

I felt very tried about coming to the Lord’s table. Satan kept telling me that I was not a real character but I begged of the Lord to enable me to go to His table and He gave me that sweet verse:

*“Jesus is my great High Priest;
Bears my name upon His breast;
And that we may never part,
I am sealed upon His heart.”*

It was sweet indeed and such a help. On receiving me into the church, Mr. Champion gave me the text, “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” I was helped through the service and afterwards being put into my chair to go home, the dear Lord gave me that blessed portion: “And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” The dear Lord has favoured me much at His table.

BEING HELPFUL - A WORLDLY MAN’S OPINION

A kind friend has sent us the following: Whilst reading the Spring issue of *Perception* I was reminded of an incident in my own life, a comment made to me many years ago, which I feel aptly illustrates the point of Mr. Ramsbottom’s piece “Being helpful.”

Across the road from us lived an elderly couple. Sadly they made no profession of religion. When the lady became ill and bedridden, from time to time my wife would send one of the children over with a good hot dinner that she had prepared for them both. On one occasion, when old Roy was returning the plates, full of gratitude, he said, “That is what I call being a Christian. It is no good singing your head off in Church if you can’t be kind and helpful to people!”

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE: GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

Following a change in the legal definition of marriage, same-sex couples became free to marry from 29 March 2014. The Coalition for Marriage has produced an excellent booklet *Respecting beliefs about marriage* which is a guide for schools and teachers in England and Wales. The aim is to help schools to know what is, and what is not, required in terms of teaching. With the Coalitions's kind permission, we reproduce the booklet's summary on the current position.

At-a-glance summary

- There is no legal obligation on any primary school to teach sex education or to teach about same-sex marriage.
- Under guidance relating to Sex and Relationships Education, children in maintained secondary schools must learn the nature of marriage and its importance for family life.
- 'The nature of marriage' may include teaching children that same-sex marriage has been legalised in England and Wales.
- Teaching in this area should be sensitive to the backgrounds of the pupils and their parents, and also the beliefs of staff.
- Secondary schools are used to dealing with controversial issues in the curriculum, such as political opinions or moral issues like abortion. This is another example of a controversial issue.
- Church schools, or any school with a religious ethos, can continue to teach their beliefs about marriage in line with their legal foundation.
- Other schools in the state sector could be breaking the law if they go beyond factual information and advocate a particular belief about marriage.

- All teaching materials should be appropriate to the pupils' age and religious or cultural background.
- Schools should work in partnership with parents, giving parents the information they need for meaningful consultation.
- Schools have a duty to make sure pupils and members of staff are not bullied, or subjected to any other detriment, for their beliefs about marriage.
- In an appropriate context, a teacher may express a personal opinion about marriage, provided it is done in a reasonable manner.
- In the current climate, the courts have referred to views regarding same-sex marriage as political views. Schools are under a duty to secure balanced treatment of political issues.
- The code of conduct for teachers in England requires teachers to show "tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs."
- The courts have ruled that a belief in marriage as the union of a man and a woman is a belief "worthy of respect in a democratic society."
- It is unlawful to discriminate against a teacher on the basis of sexual orientation, or on the basis of belief for or against same-sex marriage.
- An Employment Tribunal claim could be brought against a school by a teacher who suffered discrimination because of his or her beliefs about marriage.

"... it is perfectly clear that there will be no requirement on any teacher to promote a view or doctrine with which they feel any discomfort ..."

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Education

A FEW CURRENT MATTERS

Big Bang echoes

Excited scientists from the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre claim they have heard echoes of the Big Bang - almost 14 billion years after it happened. This, they say, gives an insight into the first fraction of a second after the dawn of time. The discovery provides 'evidence' that the universe underwent a sudden, brief and violent expansion just a ten million, billion, billion, billionth of a second after its birth. Dr. Ed Daw of Sheffield University said: "Gravitational waves emitted at the time of the Big Bang can tell us how the universe came to exist." Bible-believing Christians, whose faith rests in a creating God, will realise the absurdity of all such statements, sadly from men whose scholarly and academic achievements are undoubted. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" (Job 38.4.)

Divorce rates down

Divorce rates have dropped to their lowest level in 40 years. Couples are marrying at an older age and the drop in divorce suggests they are more committed to staying together. Research carried out for law firm Slater and Gordon indicates that traditional views of marriage remain strongly entrenched despite decades of the erosion of the privileges and legal status that once went with it.

Church will embrace gay marriage

The Church of England will no longer resist gay marriage among churchgoers, the Archbishop of Canterbury has stated in a recent interview. Changing the law has caused bitter divisions within the church. In February bishops attempted to ban clergy from marrying same-sex partners, provoking a backlash among more liberal Christians who support the change. The Archbishop, speaking to a newspaper, said, "I think the Church has reacted by fully accepting it's the law, and should continue to demonstrate in word and action the love of Christ for every human being." In defiance of the bishops, at least seven clergy couples are already planning to marry their partners, and some are offering to bless gay marriages. However, some congregations are threatening to leave if the Church of England should change its present opposition to gay sex by blessing the unions.

We strongly believe that the Scriptural pattern for marriage is one man, and one woman, for life. Sadly, it seems that the Archbishop is willing to modify his view of the Scriptures to suit the fancies of an unbelieving world instead of showing leadership and giving moral guidance to the nation. “Tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” Ephesians 4.14.

Gambling evil

Unbelievably, a single bookmaker took £1 billion from gaming machines in just *one month*. Ladbrokes has revealed the vast profits that are made from roulette machines, often referred to as the ‘crack cocaine’ of gambling. Customers played the machines five million times in just four weeks. Punters can lose £100 per spin on the games. Player losses have risen to around £1.5 billion annually. These games are highly addictive - the gambling industry regulator has warned that the machines expose ‘even normal leisure gamblers to potentially harmful rates of loss.’ May all our young people be kept from such things. Joseph Hart warns us: “Satan the weakest saint will tempt, Nor is the strongest free; And seldom do we see the snares, Before we feel the smart.”

Our Political Leaders - Christians?

The Prime Minister, David Cameron, is the only one of the four main party leaders to say he believes in God. Nick Clegg, the leader of the Lib Dems, is an atheist. Ed Miliband, the leader of the Labour Party, says, “I describe myself as a Jewish atheist. I’m Jewish by birth origin. I don’t believe in God, but I think faith is a really, really important thing to a lot of people.” Nigel Farage, the leader of UKIP, claims he has never thought about whether he will go to heaven, or even if such a place exists. As for believing in God, he says, “I believe there is something there, but that’s as far as it goes.” On being asked if that meant he was an agnostic (i.e. a person who says there might, or might not, be a God) he replied, “Well, you’ll have to draw your own conclusion.” What a sad reflection all this is on our once-favoured land. May the Lord have mercy on us and raise up political leaders who truly fear God.

Deaf from birth

The preciousness of hearing has been brought home to us by reports of

a 40 year old woman who has heard for the first time. Miss Joanne Milne was born deaf and had never heard a sound until cochlear implants were fitted. She said, “It was just amazing to be able to hear music for the first time. I had always wanted to know what music was like. I am still getting used to all the little sounds that others take for granted. I can’t stop crying. I am so happy.” The implant converts sounds into digital code which is sent via the hearing nerve to the brain, where it is interpreted as sound.

How easy it is to take God’s gifts for granted! We remember hearing how blind Mr. Laver, Pastor of Rotherfield, taking a little walk on Letchworth Common before preaching at Hope Chapel, Stotfold, said how thankful he was that he was blind and not deaf, as he could hear the birds singing God’s praise. When the Lord Jesus Christ finished the parable of the sower and the seed, He cried, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” May the gospel seed sowed by the Lord’s servants fall into good ground and bare much fruit.

Exclusive Brethren church allowed charitable status

The Charity Commission has announced it will allow an Exclusive Brethren church to register for charitable status after first rejecting its application in 2012. The Commission argued that the church did not meet the ‘public benefit’ requirements of the Charities Act on the grounds that the church’s Holy Communion services were reserved for members only (just as in our Strict Baptist churches). The Commission now accepts that most churches apply some restriction on who can participate in Communion. We are very thankful for this ruling.

Church bombing survivors in Pakistan

Pakistan’s Christian community suffered a terrible blow on 22 September 2013 when a double suicide bomb ripped through All Saints Church in Peshawar. Over 100 men, women and children lost their lives. Eight months later the community remains grieving, traumatised and desperately in need of support. One little girl, Simran, lost her older sister, and she herself was injured. She has said that no person or bomb will stop her from going back to church because “Jesus is with me.” Simran is just eight years old.

JERUSALEM

*Jerusalem, my happy home!
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labours have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee?*



Jerusalem - signifies Habitation of peace, City of peace, or even Vision of peace. Today it is called El-Kuds - The Holy.

From this spot on the Mount of Olives the Lord Jesus wept over the city.

We can trace the city back to the time of Abraham, when it was called Salem.

In the days of Joshua and the Judges it was called Jebus, the city of the Jebusites.

Psalm 76.2 - "In Salem also is His tabernacle, and His dwelling place in Zion."

Isaiah 29.1 - it is called Ariel - "Woe to Ariel, the city where David dwelt."

Other names - the city of David, the city of Judah, the holy city, the city of God.

In the New Testament, the Lord Jesus called it the City of the great King.

*Jerusalem, my happy home!
My soul still pants for thee;
Then shall my labours have an end,
When I thy joys shall see.*

PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



"We all do fade as a leaf." Isaiah 64.6

AUTUMN 2014

IN THIS ISSUE	Page
Editorial.	1
The Two Wars.	3
Douglas Edward Bradford.	4
God's Word on The Sun, The Moon and The Stars - A. Rayner	15
The Temperance Movement.	18
The Five Points of Calvinism.	20
Spreading the Word of God in the Congo and Zambia - I. Sadler	23
Reflections on the Two World Wars - B. A. Ramsbottom.	29
Armed Forces Bibles.	35
Jacob Astley's Prayer.	36
A Brief Introduction to New Testament Greek - P. C. Wilkins	37
Abortion Statistics for England and Wales in 2013.	40

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PERCEPTION

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EDITORIAL

“Especially the parchments” 2 Timothy 4.13.

I expect at some time in our lives we have all found ourselves in the position that Paul appears to have been in when writing this epistle to Timothy - *he had left something behind*. On this occasion it seems that when visiting Troas he had left behind his cloke, some books, and some parchments. We do not know at all what these books were, nor what the parchments contained. All we know is that more than his cloke, more than his books, he especially wanted the parchments.

Thinking this over, we felt it might be profitable to consider what things we want *especially*. If we were to ask the world what they especially want in life I wonder what they would say. Probably their list would include a nice home, plenty of money, perhaps a loving wife or husband, healthy children, a luxury car, exciting holidays - and so the list would go on. Now most of these things are not wrong in themselves. It is perfectly natural to wish for a nice home, to be surrounded by a loving family, and to have sufficient (if not plenty of) money. We would naturally desire good health for ourselves and our family, and this is, of course, a very great blessing, although for wise reasons it may sometimes be denied.

But is there something more, something we *especially* desire for ourselves? By this I mean something lasting, something eternal. All the things included in the list above will one day come to an end. How true it is that “we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.” When we die, we shall leave behind all those things we have accumulated, all our possessions, all our money, all those things we have set our heart on.

Our mind goes back to a next-door neighbour, who died a few years ago. He was what we might call a Christian gentleman, a sidesman at the local parish church, good-living in every way, and his wife too, who died a little while before him. They had never been blessed with

children, having married rather late in life. He had two great loves in his life. The first was his garden, where he knew the Latin names of all his plants, and delighted to show visitors round. His other great love was photography. When eventually he took early retirement from his job with the water board, he took it up as a profession. His speciality was scenes rather than people, and many calendars carried his pictures. He had a collection of many thousands of slides taken all over the world. These slides were catalogued and kept in custom-made cabinets with little pull-out drawers. His big fear was - what was to happen to this wonderful collection when he died? He felt sure his relatives would have no interest in them. Or what if the boxes were dropped and they were scattered? Well, in the end he left them to the National Archives, where they now form a valuable part of our heritage.

But the point is, here was a life's work, thousands of hours' patient toil - *but one day it had all got to be left behind*. And so it will be with us. Hymn 259 in the Young People's Hymnal reminds us of this:

“There is an hour, when I must part
With all I hold most dear;
And life, with its best hopes, will then
As nothingness appear.”

So let us again ask the question: What are the things we want *especially*? Can we find in our hearts any good desires? If we have any desires after eternal, lasting things, those desires were not found in our hearts by nature. A good desire is the gift of God. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above” James 1.17. By grace, Asaph was able to say, “There is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.” What a good desire that was. Is the knowledge of Christ *our* desire? Is He to us “the altogether lovely”? Is our prayer: “Show us that loving Man”? Is this one of the things we want *especially*?

If we know our own hearts, we tremble to claim too much. But maybe there is just something in your heart, (and we are thinking particularly of our younger friends,) perhaps only a little something, that says, “O Lord, do make me right. I do want to be right for eternity. I do want to be found amongst Thine own dear children. Do make Thyself more precious to me.” Well, David's words in Psalm 37 might be a help: “Delight thyself also in the Lord: and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”

Some years ago, one of our ministers was sitting at his desk at work, when a bus went by. On the side of the bus were blazoned the words: “WIN £10,000.” The dear man said to himself, “I would rather win Christ.” This was his ‘*especially*’ desire. Going back to our teenage years we remember a popular hymn being sung:

“I’d rather have Jesus than silver or gold;
I’d rather be His than have riches untold;
I’d rather have Jesus than houses or lands;
I’d rather be led by His nail-pierced hands.”

We would not sing such things lightly, but does this express what we *especially* would like to be able to sing from the heart? Can we truly say, “I’d rather have Jesus”? If so then we shall enjoy Anne Steele’s hymn (1085):

“Be this my great, my only care,
My chief pursuit, my ardent prayer,
An interest in the Saviour’s blood,
My pardon sealed, and peace with God.”

May this be the ‘*especially*’ desire of each one of us.

With greetings and best wishes to you all.

The Editor.

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THE TWO WARS

In gratitude to God for all His mercies to this country we have felt it right to give space this quarter to remember some of those things relating to the First World War (The Great War 1914-1918) and the World War II (1939-1945). The First World War was a turning point in history, claiming the lives of over 16 million people world-wide and creating fundamental social change. We are pleased therefore to be able to publish the second instalment of the life of Mr. D. E. Bradford covering the commencement of the First World War, and then on page 29 an address by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom reflecting on the two wars, and how our people were affected. One or two shorter pieces of interest have also been included.

DOUGLAS EDWARD BRADFORD
(CONTINUED FROM SUMMER 2014 PAGE 12)

Joins four-masted barque in Rotterdam

Now, in these my young days, I had it in my mind that one day I would like to settle down at home and the only prospect was to become a Channel Pilot. The two qualifications necessary for this were at least two years on a sailing ship and to hold a Master Mariner's certificate. To this end in September 1908 as an apprentice I joined a ship called the Marlborough Hill in Rotterdam. She was a four-masted barque, one of the old Indian tea clippers, and a beautiful ship she was when under full sail and travelling at fifteen knots with sails unfurled for earth's remotest strands.



Marlborough Hill

We left Rotterdam with a cargo of coke for San Francisco on a voyage which took one hundred and forty four days. During this time we only saw three ships and so were completely cut off from the world. Life in this class of vessel was very hard and extremely dangerous. Food was of the plainest and rationed, water also. After four days our clothes were damp, there being no means of drying them (only the wind and sun). There were eight of us boys (apprentices) in one cabin which often had water swilling around, which we had to bale out. Our sea chests were our tables and seating accommodation. Still, we were happy together, and never do I remember any illness among us. Some evenings when circumstances permitted we had our sing songs. One boy played a flute, another a banjo, another an accordion. These instruments together with our young voices made up our choir.

Storm in the Bay of Biscay

Our captain was a Scotsman and sometimes, when under the influence of drink, would endanger his ship by carrying too much sail,

which was called “cracking on.” An instance of how dangerous this was we experienced in a sudden storm in the Bay of Biscay, sixteen days after we left Rotterdam. I had come off watch at 4 a.m. At about 5 a.m. I was awakened by a terrible crash and as I turned out of my bunk the ship gave a fearful lurch to port and was nearly on her beam ends. Our royal sails were carried away and the main royal yard came down. T’gallant and topsails we lowered and the flapping of these large sails added to the general din and confusion. High waves were breaking over the ship. I thought of home and my loved ones and feared a watery grave was now awaiting me. Suddenly there was a most vivid flash of lightning which lit up the ship, followed by a tremendous crash of thunder which seemed to make the ship shudder from stem to stern. Then, wonder of wonders, the Lord seemed to speak to me in the storm as the following verse came into my mind:

“Plagues and deaths around me fly;
Till He bids, I cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit.”

This stilled my fears and soon after the storm abated.

During the next four years, Mr. Bradford travelled to many parts of the world as an officer in the Merchant Navy, his last voyage being to South America. He then writes:

England at war

In August 1914 we were lying in the docks at Montevideo when the solemn news came through that England was at war with Germany. On hearing this the first thought that came into my mind was, “Oh! To get home and be able to do something for my country and loved ones!”

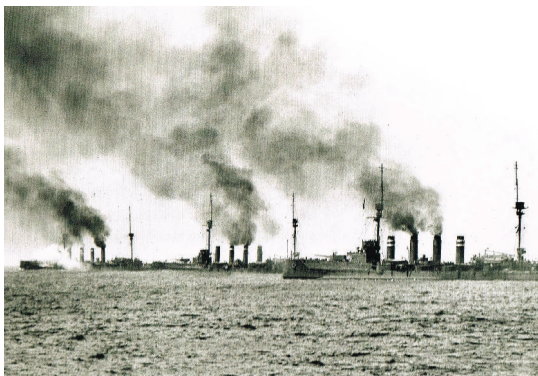
I had always in a secret way been ambitious to get into the Royal Navy. All the way home my captain tried hard to persuade me against leaving the ship, but my mind was made up. We were granted a safe passage up Channel and docked in London. Home again, but what a change since we left! Now it was all war excitement and the awful preparations, and the ultimate sacrifice of the flower of our young men as the price of man’s covetousness and wickedness.

I said farewell to my kind friend the Captain of the good ship

Highland Brae. As I walked over the gangway I wondered if it was right to leave this ship and almost I was tempted to go back, but why did I not do so? God had ordained it otherwise! The next voyage this vessel made was her last, as she was sunk without warning in the South Atlantic by the German cruiser Kron-Prinz Wilhelm, with the loss of all hands.

Appointed Lieutenant Royal Naval Reserve

After about a week at home (this was October 1914) I went up to the Admiralty and offered my services and was given a Lieutenant Commission in the Royal Naval Reserve. Within a few days I received orders to proceed to Portsmouth and join H.M.S. Excellent, the gunnery training ship. After a short course here I was posted to Scapa Flow (Orkney Islands). Here, in this land-locked harbour, lay all the might of the Navy, “The Grand Fleet.” What a sight this presented, these massive great battleships and battle cruisers, destroyers and many auxiliary vessels, all with steam up and ready at a moment’s notice to proceed to sea and engage the enemy.



The Grand Fleet in steam

As I viewed this great assembly of ships a rather awesome feeling stole over me. Was it fear and dread of what lay before me? Had I after all done wrong in leaving my old ship? Ah! No! God must have directed my steps and saved me from a watery grave. How true are the Divine Words: “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. 10.23).

My first night at Scapa Flow was spent in the Depot Ship, which was crowded with officers waiting appointments. I was told there was no cabin accommodation and that I should have to sleep in a hammock. This did not worry me much, having had two years of this as a cadet on the old Worcester.

Interview with the Commanding Officer

I was told to report at ten o'clock next morning to the Commanding Officer who would tell me of my future appointment. As soon as dinner was finished I slung my hammock. I was tired out after my long journey and soon fell asleep. How needful this was to calm my fears and strengthen me for the coming day's interview - "When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet" (Prov. 3.24).



*Mr. Bradford as a
Sub Lieutenant*

Well, the time arrived for me to be interviewed by my Commanding Officer and I was duly ushered into his presence. He was sitting at his desk and without looking up said, "Take a seat please." He was looking through some papers in a folio and on the cover was my name. To me he was a very imposing man, with four gold rings on each arm (a captain)!! Suddenly he looked up and, without saying a word, seemed to search me through and through, and then again reverted to his folio. I thought, 'Why does he not speak'? Then suddenly the silence was broken and looking up he said, "So you are a Navigating Officer," to which I meekly replied "Yes, Sir." "Well," he said, "you are just the man I want!" (which remark was accompanied with a smile that seemed to break down all the ice of officialdom).

In command of an armed trawler

"I want you to take command of one of our armed trawlers." He went on to explain the patrol would be rough, being north of the Shetland Islands. I should have the original crew, also a Naval signalman and gunner. I replied in the affirmative to his question of my willingness to take the job on. He wished me well and every success.

I served for about a year in this vessel. It certainly was a tough life as my Commanding Officer had said. Very little fair weather did we have in those high latitudes, and long dark nights in the winter.

Certainly one experienced the literal aspect of Psalm 107.25, “For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.”

My service in this little ship was abruptly brought to a close. I lead boarded a vessel and was coming down the side on a “Jacob's Ladder” as they were called. It was very rough and half way down I slipped, fell into my vessel alongside and broke my ankle. In looking back I can see there was much mercy in this for, had I fallen into the sea, how different the issue might have been.

Onboard a hospital ship

There was now nothing left but to bring my vessel back to the depot at Scapa Flow and report, which I did, and after a few days I was put on board a hospital ship. To leave this little vessel under these circumstances caused me a certain amount of sadness. I had got to know my men and they knew me and we were happy together. The skipper was an honest Scotsman with a very broad accent and sometimes, when he got a bit excited I could not understand a word he said. He always used to call me “Mr. Lieutenant.”

The hospital ship (a chartered Union Castle liner) was bound for Portsmouth. We sailed with all our lights fully on at night, and two large red crosses on either side fully illuminated. This, of course, was to let the German submarines know we were a ship of mercy, but, alas, they did not always respect this and did sink some of this class of ship without warning. On arrival at Portsmouth I was transferred to the Naval Hospital at Haslar. After about three weeks I was sent on convalescent leave for about two months.

Appointed to H.M.S. Fisgard at Portsmouth

At the expiration of this period I was appointed to H.M.S. Fisgard at Portsmouth, a boy Artificer's training ship. My duties were to instruct the boys in Physical Culture and to keep an eye on their health generally. I very much liked this work and found it most interesting and a healthy occupation. However, after a time I felt it was rather a dead end and not furthering my prospects of a permanency in the Navy, which was always uppermost in my thoughts for the future. Ah! How I was to prove the truth in Isaiah 55.8: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.”

After I had been about six months on this ship, it came to my knowledge that the Admiralty were short of Navigating Officers and invited Naval Reserve Officers to apply for this class of work, with a prospect of permanency in the Navy at the end of the war if they had given satisfaction. Now, I thought, was the door open for the fulfilment of my life's ambition, but again I was to prove: "He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." I was to learn in a remarkable way in the future the experimental truth of this text in my own experience.

Joins submarine service as a navigating lieutenant

Well, I applied and was accepted for "navigating duties in the Submarine Service," and was appointed to H.M.S. Dolphin, the Submarine Depot ship at Portsmouth.

I felt leaving my boys on the Fiscard, they were well-disciplined lads and no trouble at all, and I was very fond of them.

After a three weeks' course on the Gyroscopic Compass, a mariner's compass used particularly on submarines, I was appointed to the Submarine J2. There were six of these vessels and they were the latest and largest type of submarine in the service, and great things were expected of them, but they proved to be most unseaworthy and most sluggish in diving and coming to the surface.



The Grand Fleet submarines similar to Mr. Bradford's

I well remember the first time we proceeded into the Solent on trials. We had on board the Admiral of the Portsmouth Dockyard and not a few high officials. Our Commander was full of zeal and intended to show the virtues of his vessel. Proceeding along at a good speed in

our exercising area the order was given to “dive” but to the bewilderment of our Captain and the Dockyard Officials nothing happened, when suddenly, instead of going down at a graceful angle, she stood on her head! This could have been very dangerous but mercifully we were able to get her on even keel and back into the Dockyard.

I did not realise then, as I do now, that the Solent might have been my “watery grave.” Well, after a good deal of investigation and trials, we were pronounced seaworthy and were given orders to proceed to the submarine base at Blyth (Northumberland) for patrolling duties in the North Sea and Baltic.

We were usually at sea for about two weeks, and then in port for the same period tied up to our depotship, the *Titania*. It was during the summer months that we were on this patrol which meant spending many hours submerged, diving at periscope depth, as being in enemy waters it would not be safe to be on the surface during daylight. It can easily be realised that after spending eighteen hours below the surface, oxygen would become scarce resulting in much labour for breath. Our duty in the Baltic was to watch for the enemy coming out of Kiel and working her way through the Kattegat and Skagerrak and thence into the North Sea, the German Navy’s “back door” as we used to call it. Dangerous indeed were these waters, infested with U Boats (German submarines) and overhead those monstrous beasts the Zeppelins, to say nothing of hidden minefields.

Sunday prayers

I never spoke to my Commanding Officer about prayer, but somehow I cannot think he was altogether a stranger to this, for the following reason. When possible on a Sunday he would take his vessel to the bottom of the sea and then hold a brief service from the Prayer Book, and always this prayer:

“O Eternal Lord God, Who alone spreadest out the heavens, and rulest the raging of the sea, Who hast compassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end, be pleased to receive into Thy Almighty and most gracious protection the persons of us Thy servants and the Fleet in which we serve. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea and from the violence of the enemy, and that we may return in safety to enjoy the

blessings of our land, and with a thankful remembrance of Thy mercies to praise and glorify Thy holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.”

To me this was a help, although at that time only for the preservation of my life which was dear to me, but with no concern for the danger of my soul.

On one occasion we spotted an enemy destroyer coming out of Kiel. “Action stations” rang out the command, “stand by to fire Number One torpedo.” Then to our horror our vessel “broke surface” and we were spotted by our enemy who closed in towards us at great speed and the escorting Zeppelin proceeded to manoeuvre into position to bomb us.

“Take her down, flood all tanks, full speed on the engines” was the urgent command. All too long it seemed to us in our anxiety she trembled on the surface, and then suddenly like a stone she crashed to the bottom, as the destroyer roared over us, and there we lay with the bombs from our enemy on the sea and



First World War Zeppelin

sky falling all around us but not one hit. Why? Was it an answer to prayer? Surely it was, but we know now that our time had not yet come, God had to “Show us greater things than these.” Now the “breaking of the surface” and the sluggishness of our vessel in diving showed us there was a dangerous weakness which we had to report, and various alterations were made. From time to time on our trips other things developed which shook our confidence and we felt our submarine was a “white elephant” which was the experience of the officers in the other five J class submarines, and in the end they were all taken out of commission.

I was now appointed as a navigator to an E class submarine based at Harwich. This vessel was much smaller than the J class, but a beauty to handle and trustworthy. I remained in this vessel until the end of the War and experienced many wonderful deliverances. Our patrol was the North Sea and the coast of Germany. This particular area was a mass of minefields, our own and the enemy’s, and this made navigation very difficult especially in relation to submarines as by day we were

submerged and we could only plot our position by star sights. In bad weather the stars never appeared, as Paul speaks of in Acts 27 and we were left to “dead reckoning.”

Many dangers

Perhaps here it would not be out of place to relate a few experiences in “dangers off” and God’s wonderful deliverances. With six other submarines we were sent on an emergency patrol off the German coast; news had been received that there was a good deal of activity in the German Fleet. For six days we lay stretched along the coast, but no sight of the enemy. During the whole of this time the weather was very tempestuous and we were unable to obtain sights. In those days, of course, there were not the facilities of modern times such as directional wireless and radar. Thus our position was only on “dead reckoning,” always precarious. This, of course, would be the case of the other submarines.

Well, one afternoon we were at periscope depth when suddenly there was a heavy scraping noise all along the hull, causing us to heel over quite a bit. First of all we thought it might be a mine, but we soon dismissed this idea as the impact was too heavy. Finally we concluded we had struck a submerged wreck. We returned to our base, mooring alongside our depot ship, and then noticed another submarine with her conning tower badly damaged and the periscope buckled. We got in conversation with our fellow officers and then the mystery unfolded. They said on a certain day at a certain time something passed over them causing the observed damage. Day and time exactly corresponded with the experience already described—we had passed over this vessel! How different the issue might have been had we been a few feet lower in the water, surely by experience we learn:

“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform:
He plants His footsteps (and ours) in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.”

Stuck in the mud

When in port we were not idle and would proceed out of harbour for exercise. This chiefly consisted in making a dummy attack on one of our destroyers. During one of these attacks the destroyer approached

too close to us, altered his course to avoid us and crashed into our bows making a deep hole through which water rushed in flooding our fore compartment and taking us down to the bottom. We tried to surface by blowing all our ballast tanks but to no avail, our fore part was stuck in the mud. Was this the end? Surely in some respects our position was akin to Jonah's: "For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: All thy billows and thy waves passed over me" (Jonah 2.3).

We reversed our engines in the attempt to suck ourselves out of the mud, but she remained fast. If having one's mind up unto God is praying, then I prayed. The hours passed we could not use our engines much more as the battery would be exhausted and our lights would fail. Our only hope seemed to be that the changing tide would shift the mud in which our fore part was buried, and this, through the mercy of God is just what happened! Six long awful hours had passed and hope seemed to be at its lowest. Suddenly the vessel seemed to quiver from stem to stern, there was a sucking noise, and then we realised the tide (God's) was doing her work. Once more full speed astern on the engines, and then O! who can describe the experience as she released herself, rose to the surface and leapt out of the water! Surely God "vomited" us out of the water as in Jonah 2.10. I think I was as near to tears of joy as a man could be and deep gratitude.

At Harwich (our base) there was stationed a fleet of six light cruisers and destroyers and very efficient they were. Often as I used to see them steaming out of harbour they seemed the very epitome of Great Britain's Naval strength (in those days) - alas now no longer great or the "Mother of the Free," but in bondage to other nations.

Attacked by our own flotilla

One beautiful summer morning, it was the Sabbath, we were patrolling the German coast, and were proceeding at periscope depth. I was on watch and spotted six cruisers and reported same to my Captain. He came to the periscope and said, "Oh that's all right Pilot" (the nickname for Navigating Officers) "they are our Harwich flotilla." On occasions this officer could be humorous and as he looked through the periscope he said, "I can see you but you can't see me," but suddenly he realised his humour was being turned to awful reality, they had seen our periscope and were coming straight for us. Then once more we

heard the awful urgent command “Take her down, take her down” and down we went as the first destroyer roared over us dropping his deadly depth charges, followed by others. To describe one’s feelings is impossible. I can only remember standing motionless and feeling death was imminent but strange to say all fear was taken away and my thoughts were up unto God. This attack lasted about ten minutes as these vessels of death passed over us dropping their deadly cargo, but through the mercy of God there was not one direct hit.

Our Captain thinking the attack was over, kept us down at about 100 feet. However such was not so as they were returning to renew the onslaught and we heard the roar of their propellers as they closed in on us. Now our Captain did the only thing that (humanly speaking) could save our lives, and the order rang out “Blow all tanks and bring her up,”



Harwich Submarine Force

and then as we surfaced our friends opened fire on us. Our Commanding Officer grabbed a white ensign which he waved as he opened the conning tower hatch, and then these destroyers realised their awful mistake! Well, although we were not hit by the depth charges, the blast had caused considerable internal damage and

external by the gun fire, also the morale of some of the crew was badly shaken. In these conditions the only thing to do was to limp back to our base accompanied by a destroyer. What a demonstration this experience was that:

“All our times are in his hand,
All events at his command.”

Why were we spared? Why was *I* spared?

It was recognised that the Harwich submarines had a very dangerous patrol operating off the enemy’s coast and our losses were heavy; many submarines never returned to port again. Sad it was to see

the poor wives standing on the pier gazing out to sea in the hope that the missing vessel might return. Mostly it was never known how our missing comrades met their end and we were never allowed to speak about this outside our own base. We never knew who was going to be the next! Why were we spared? Why was I? Well:

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

I think we shall see the truth of these beautiful words as we try to unfold our little narrative.

TO BE CONTINUED

GOD’S WORD ON THE SUN, THE MOON AND THE STARS

By Mr. Andrew Rayner

We hear and read much of the wonderful works of men; but it is seldom that we hear and read much of the wonderful works of God. We are therefore grateful to Mr. Rayner for his very interesting comments and for drawing our attention to the multitude of Scriptural texts that tell us of His glorious works - although, of course, “these are (but) parts of His ways... His power who can understand?” Job 26.14.

God’s Word tells us:

1. He created the Sun, the Moon and the stars. There is an emphasis on this point.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Gen 1.1

Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host. Neh 9.6

By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens. Job 26.13

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. Psa 33.6

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. Heb 11.3

2. He made them to give light to the Earth and to divide day-time from night-time. Although Man in his wisdom may think that the Earth is an insignificant speck in space, actually, it was created before the Sun, Moon and stars and they were formed specifically to serve the Earth.

And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.

Gen 1.16-18

3. He bid Abraham to count the stars. With his naked eye it is estimated that Abraham would be able to see around 6,000 stars. Our galaxy, the Milky Way is estimated to contain 400,000,000,000 stars. It is thought that there are 170,000,000,000 galaxies which are currently observable.

Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. Gen 15.5 [What a big IF - Ed.]

4. The heavens speak to us in a universal, international language which speaks to us when we look at the sky at night.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Psa 19.1

5. Wherever we go, even in space, He is there. (How remarkable that the Psalmist appears to have considered rising, travelling into space.)

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. Psa 139.7-8

6. He not only made the Sun, Moon and stars but he made us, and made everything, and He upholds His creation.

Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself. Isa 44.24

I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens. Isa 45.12

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. John 1.3

7. His glory is above, higher than space. The Psalmist bids the Sun, Moon and stars praise Him. We think how vast the Universe is (with no known bounds) but He is above it, much greater still. They are merely part of Creation. He is their Creator.

His glory is above the earth and heaven. Psa 148.13

Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens. Psa 148.3-4

8. The heavens, the Sun, Moon and stars will one day perish and will be renewed.

And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest. Heb 1.10-11

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. Rev 21.1

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. Mat 24.29

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. Joel 2.31

9. Heaven has no need for the Sun or the Moon because it is illuminated by God's glory.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Rev 21.23

10. As well as God's Word giving us all these facts, it takes some of them up to illustrate various points for our consideration:

a. We do well to consider the heavens, to look at them on a clear night and to wonder. This gives us some little idea of our own size and significance.

Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God. Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine? Job 37.14-15

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Psa 8.3-4

b. When we pray we do well to remember that the God to whom we approach is the Creator of the heavens and of the Earth. What reverence we need, but if He can form creation so easily, ("the work of His fingertips") then what power He has to answer our poor prayers.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. Psa 121.1-2

c. Although the most permanent things, the Earth and the Universe, will pass away, God's words are eternal; they will stand for ever.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Mat 24.35

d. How high are the heavens above earth? Even with all the latest technology, we can see no bounds. So are God's ways higher than our ways. How dare we challenge Him or think we know better?

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. Isa 55.9

e. Again, how high are the heavens above earth? So great is His mercy to them that fear Him. How beautiful it is to consider this point, His mercy is boundless. Praise Him!

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. Psa 103.11

f. They that are "wise unto salvation" shall shine brightly and there are some who shall stand out as the stars.

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. Dan 12.3

Perhaps above all else we can take this word away with us:

Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion. Amos 5.8

THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT

The scourge of alcohol in the early 1800's, with its dire social consequences, brought about the 'Temperance Movement' urging moderation in the consumption of alcoholic drinks. In the 1830's a more extreme form of temperance emerged given the name of 'teetotalism.' An Irish priest, Theobald Mathew, established the Teetotal Abstinence Society in 1838 which promoted complete abstinence from any alcoholic drinks, even for use in the Lord's Supper. However, others considered total abstinence was not supported by Scripture and took a more moderate view. Famously, Presbyterian Church of Ireland Minister, the Rev. John Edgar, opened the window of his manse in Alfred Place, Belfast and poured out his stock of whisky into the street!

The following might hardly be called a hymn, but nevertheless

appeared in a number of old hymnbooks. We imagine it was sung at temperance meetings. It contains much good advice for our young people as they leave home for college, work or university. It is always easier to say NO from the start!

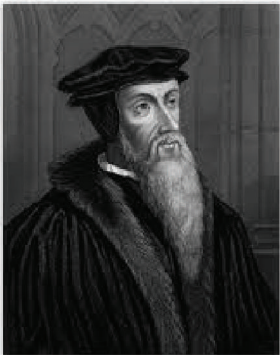

HAVE COURAGE, MY BOY, TO SAY NO!

“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” James 4.7.

- 1 You're starting, my boy, on life's journey,
Along the grand highway of life,
You'll meet with a thousand temptations -
Each city with evil is rife.
This world is a stage of excitement,
There's danger wherever you go:
But if you are tempted in weakness,
Have courage, my boy, to say No!
 - 2 In courage, my boy, lies your safety,
When you the long journey begin;
Your trust in a heavenly Father
Will save you from many a sin.
Temptations will go on increasing,
As streams from a rivulet flow;
But if you'd be true to your manhood,
Have courage, my boy to say No!
 - 3 Be careful in choosing companions:
Seek only the brave and the true;
And stand by your friends when in trial,
Ne'er changing the old for the new.
And when by false friends you are tempted
The taste of the winecup to know,
With firmness, with patience, and kindness,
Have courage, my boy, to say No!
-

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

The Second Point

CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM	
	
John Calvin 1509-1564	Jacobus Arminius 1560-1609
The Second of the Five Points of Calvinism	The Second of the Five Points of Arminianism
Unconditional Election <i>Men chosen solely according to God's sovereign will</i>	Conditional Election <i>Men chosen because God foresaw their future response</i>

As an eight year old boy, cycling alone through Letchworth Common, we found that a sizeable marquee had been erected. (We had more freedom to go out alone in those days.) Outside the marquee was a notice: "CHILDREN'S RALLY. ALL ARE WELCOME." Intrigued, we entered, to find a selection of local children assembled. After a few choruses were sung, a talk was given, at the end of which we were invited to give our hearts to the Lord Jesus. Those who did so were asked to stay behind, and, if we remember rightly, a small prize would be given. We were assured that anyone who gave their hearts to the Lord Jesus would be happy ever after.

Thinking over this episode in our childhood, we became aware as never before of the enormity of such dreadful deception, particularly as

we continue our consideration of the doctrines of grace which we call Calvinism. We do not expect our eight year olds to have much, if any, understanding of those deep and precious doctrines we hold dear, although having said that we do not mean to limit the teaching of the Holy Ghost to whom years are no restraint. But those who presume to teach children have a responsibility towards those children, which this well-meaning, but blind leader so obviously did not possess. Very sadly, such free-will teaching is still put forth in many churches today, even some which *say* they believe in the doctrines of grace. May none of us be left to thinking that doctrine is unimportant, even though a mere head knowledge of it will avail us nothing spiritually. (Joseph Hart makes this point in Hymn 806 - "Dry doctrine cannot save us.")

* * *

In the last edition we looked at the first point of Calvinism - the doctrine of Total Depravity. This time we move to the second point which is the doctrine of Unconditional Election.

We are all familiar with the concept that election has to do with choice. We hold an election in our country to *choose* our politicians or our local councillors. We are also familiar with the concept of something being conditional. For example, you might receive a conditional offer of a place at college or university. It means there is no certainty. It depends on other factors, usually something that depends on *you* - certain grades must be achieved in your exams.

When a Calvinist speaks of God's "Unconditional Election" he means God's choice of a people whom He will bring to glory, not based on any foreseen virtue or action of theirs, but rather through His mercy alone.

The Arminian, however, believes that God chooses His people because He knew in advance that they would respond to, and be obedient to, the call to faith and repentance. Everyone has it in his own power to receive the grace of God through his own free will.

There are many Scriptures we could consider, but we will have to limit ourselves to just a few. First, God's purposes of love and mercy towards sinners were made known to Moses in these words: "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." There are no conditions here - mercy is given solely

by the *will* of God. No wonder His people are called “vessels of mercy.” Toplady declared he was “A debtor to mercy *alone*.”

In Acts 13.48 we read, “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” The Arminian says he is elected and ordained to eternal life because God foreknew that one day he would choose to believe. However, the Scripture quoted proves the opposite to be true. God’s children believe *because* they are ordained to eternal life.

Perhaps the clearest of statements is found in Ephesians 1.4: “He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.” God’s people are chosen *in Him*, the Lord Jesus Christ, not through any virtue or goodness in themselves.

An objection is frequently made that it is unjust of God to choose to save some and not all, when all alike are sinful. John Calvin deals with the objection in this way: “If it is asked why God pities the one and leaves the other, there is no other answer but that it so pleased Him. He has chosen whom He thought good and has left the rest in their own confusion and fall.”

God might justly have left all to perish, as He has left the fallen angels. But there can be no unjustness with God, who has the perfect right to give His grace and glory as He pleases.

How does God’s calling of His people come about? Calvin answers, “God changes the one sort by His Holy Spirit, leaving the other sort in their natural corruption.” How true it is that we of ourselves do not come to Christ. “I am found of them that sought me not,” says the prophet Isaiah. Calvin wrote, “If God should tarry for us a hundred thousand years, if we could continue so long, yet it is certain that we would never come to Him.”

William Parks, a minister of the Church of England at Openshaw, Manchester in the 1850’s, said, “This doctrine is a terrible searcher of the heart. The loftiness of that man who kicks against it, has never been brought down. God’s sovereignty, goodness, mercy, and love are never so much displayed as in His everlasting purposes to deliver so many children of Adam from misery.”

May we one day be found in heaven to praise and bless God to all eternity for His sovereign choice of a people.



SPREADING THE WORD OF GOD IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO AND ZAMBIA

By Dr. Ian Sadler

The Free Grace Evangelistic Association was formed in 2010. Significant openings have arisen in Africa, India and Burma for the distribution of Bibles and literature. Orphanages in India and Eastern Congo are also supported. The Chairman, Dr. Sadler, has kindly sent us this report of his recent visit to the Congo and Zambia.

Leave for the Congo

Seeking the grace and help of God, I left Britain on 28 April 2014 for Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Lubumbashi is the capital of Katanga province, which is closely linked to Zambia. The so-called industrial ‘Copperbelt’ straddles both Katanga and Zambia. Whilst Katanga has not been badly affected by the Congolese civil war, it is not a place for the casual visitor!

Over the previous four months of preparations, both I and African brethren faced many unforeseen problems and challenges, such that I seriously wondered whether the visit could go ahead. However, in answer to prayer and submission to the will of God, the way was eventually opened. Indeed “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Yet our glorious hope is that Christ has risen “far above all principality and power” (Ephesians 6.12, 1.21).

We had problems obtaining the local official documentation for my visa and security threats in Congo near the border crossing into Zambia at Kasumbalesa, where there had been a series of fatal shootings of foreigners. We thus had to venture in faith, knowing we must pass through Kasumbalesa ourselves.

Arrival at Lubumbashi

I arrived at Lubumbashi airport carrying over 300 French booklets, 10 French Martin New Testaments and a small number of English KJV Bibles and booklets. This airport is definitely not for the faint hearted traveller! I silently prayed that the Lord would preserve me. After

passing through immigration, I was then in a small but very chaotic baggage hall, with a lot of noise and shouting. Many of those present did not appear to be passengers.

I was immediately approached by a man with some form of identification, who asked to see my baggage receipts and asked me what I was doing in Congo. I said that I was a minister visiting for preaching and distributing books/scriptures. He led me to the baggage carousel, where my first case was just appearing. I saw that there was almost a fight over other baggage as it was being loaded onto the carousel. Then my second case arrived, he took charge of it, then led me to Customs, telling them who I was. They let me straight through without any question, despite the high customs value of the books I was carrying. Then I was led through several more checks, and out into the open. This man was evidently a porter who expected some payment, but he had been provided by God to spare me from potentially serious difficulties in an unknown place. At that moment my Zambian friend (and regional Director for FGEEA), Duwen Musaka, came up with Congolese brethren to receive me. The porter was paid appropriately and also given a copy of the book *Love of God* in French. They said to me that this porter was “a good man.”

The Zambian friends had travelled the previous day through Kasumbalesa to Lubumbashi with 1200 French books (*Love of God* and *Authority of God* specially printed in Zambia), 75 Kiluba Bibles and 100 French TBS booklets *Lord Gave the Word*. 80 Swahili Bibles were also purchased in Lubumbashi. Given the quantity of literature, carrying this from Zambia on buses was quite a feat.

I was lodged in the Hotel Belle Vue in central Lubumbashi. This was a comfortable and functional hotel, but more importantly a secure place where I could stay. Outside the door was a very tall and strong man in military style combat uniform, wearing dark glasses, a grim face and carrying a large truncheon. No loiterers troubled us outside this hotel!

Conference at ‘Rose de Saron’ church

The church that invited us was a branch of an African denomination, named in English ‘Rose of Sharon’, or in French ‘Rose de Saron.’ They were holding a 3-4 day conference, at which I and Duwen Musaka were to speak on behalf of Free Grace Evangelistic

Association (FGEA) for two days on the subject “The Word of God, a good foundation”, speaking of Christ the eternal Word in union with the written Word (Bible), then warning about unfaithfulness and the error brought in through corrupt Bible versions. I also emphasised the union of Father, Word and Holy Ghost (1 John 5.7), so that the Holy Ghost can never teach contrary to God’s Word.



Conference venue at "La Rose de Saron" Church in Lubumbashi, Dem Rep Congo

Each adult present received detailed notes in French, of which 200 copies had been printed in the UK; these gave a summary of the teaching from the Bible and detail about the principles of translating and copying God's Word. I especially

covered French Bible versions, giving a warning about the commonly used versions (e.g. Segond or its variants), and providing advice on how to proceed given the near unavailability of sound versions (e.g. David Martin). The notes allowed everyone to see detailed comparisons of key texts between the David Martin, Segond and ‘Bible en Francais Courant’ (‘Good News’ version in French), that show how Segond and others have systematically attacked the messianic prophecies in the Old Testament, and the doctrines of the virgin birth, the deity of Christ and the Trinity in the New Testament.

The ministers were particularly struck when I showed that the name of the hosting church ‘La Rose de Saron’ (Song of Solomon 2.1 - the rose of Sharon is Christ) was faithfully present in the French Martin version. However, in Segond this has been removed and replaced with “un narcisse de Saron” (a narcissus of Sharon). In ‘Bible en Francais Courant’ it is indicated that this is the church speaking, not Christ, and Segond 21 (a modern edition) indicates that the Song of Solomon is simply a conversation between “le jeune homme” (the young man) and

“la jeune fille” (the young woman); the sense of the holy conversation between Christ and the Church being totally suppressed.

The church ‘building’ was only made out of plastic sheeting with some metal sheets for the roof. It was located in the Bongonga quarter of the city, which is a very poor densely crowded area with no sanitation. Despite this and the sweltering heat, it was a privilege before God to be there and to distribute literature and Bibles to the poor of Christ’s flock. There were a number of ministers present, along with many men, women and children. A number of ministers spoke with especial warmth about our work, being very concerned about the issues we raised about Bible versions and the call for faithfulness. I exhorted everyone to take away and prayerfully study the literature, searching the scriptures whether these things be so. Much of the literature was left in the hands of our host in Lubumbashi for distribution to other churches.

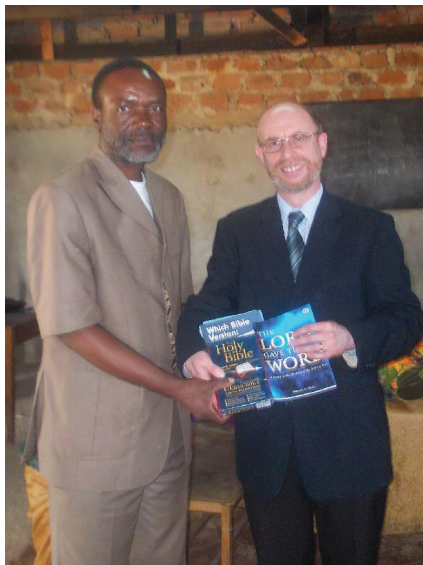
Leave Lubumbashi for Zambia

On Friday 2 May, Duwen Musaka and I left Lubumbashi early in the morning in a taxi on the 60 mile journey to the Kasumbalesa border crossing, praying for the Lord’s safe conduct. We arrived safely at the border, to be met by a noisy crowd of would-be porters, two of whom secured carriage of our cases. After various people closely examined my passport and visa, we went to an office at the actual border where about 6 uniformed men were sitting, one of whom had a large wad of bank notes in his hand on open display, indicating that he wanted a payment. We took no notice, apart from handing him a copy of “Authority of God” in French. The man then started looking at the book (rather than ruffling his wad of bank notes), and the officers let us go to the Zambian border post.

However, on the Zambian side I was told that my visa was invalid, and that I must buy a new entry visa. I politely challenged the feeble reason given for it being invalid; after which the man took away my passport to show it to a more senior officer. A few minutes later he returned, stamped my passport and we were free to go.

We were met by our hosts from Ndola, who had driven up to meet us. We reached Ndola just in time for a quick meal before the FGEA(Zambia) conference at Ndola began at 2 pm. This was similar

to the meeting in Lubumbashi, but conducted in English with a Bemba interpreter. Here we had KJV Bibles to distribute at the end of the conference on Saturday afternoon. It was a great God-given privilege that we were able to read and give to others so faithful and spiritual a translation as that of the KJV: but such versions are not easily obtained in many other languages. Duwen Musaka explained the weakness and errors in many African language Bibles. Apart from being in places a poor translation of an English corrupted version, the African versions have their own peculiar errors. In John 3.16, instead of “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...”, many native African language versions read “... he gave his only begotten child ...”



Distributing KJV Bibles and TBS literature in Ndola, Zambia

‘Prophets’ and ‘Ministers’

During the visit, I became aware that Africa is being greatly troubled by an explosion of ‘prophets’ and other terrible errors being practised by supposed ‘ministers’ of the Gospel. We were told first-hand of a woman who could not have children. Instead of going to her pastor for scriptural counsel, she consulted a ‘prophet’ who told her to leave her husband and try for a child from another man! Then from another city we were told of a man with HIV under medical control, who went to a ‘prophet’ for healing. The ‘prophet’ told him to fast for 30 days and take no food or medicine. After 20 days the man’s pastor realised something was seriously wrong and visited him, but the poor man would not listen to his pastor’s plea to take food and medicine. On day 27 of his fast the man died. Then there was a ‘minister’ in Ndola who has been offering brooms for £7 that he had blessed, so that for a period of 7 days they could be used to sweep away evil spirits!

Otherwise, there were churches administering ‘holy water’, various types of soils etc. etc... It was remarkable that the Lord had led us to speak on subjects that were very suited as a warning against such satanic practices being performed in supposedly ‘spirit-filled churches’ (indeed this is the work of a spirit, but not the Holy Spirit). Duwen Musaka read out to all Deuteronomy 13 about the Lord’s warning not to follow those who, even if they perform wonders or signs, teach contrary to God’s Word.

Conference at Kabwe

After preaching and resting on the Lord’s Day, we held a two-day FGEA(Zambia) conference in Kabwe entitled ‘Teaching the Word of God.’ This included the instruction of the young in God’s Word. We were joined by an FGEA representative from Zimbabwe, Norman Kalilombe, who preached twice at the Kabwe conference. Norman’s message about leaders in the church was particularly searching and challenging. He said that there are only three types of leader: those who appoint themselves (e.g. Dathan, Abiram and Korah who God destroyed - Numbers 16); those who are appointed by men or at the behest of men (e.g. King Saul who feared the people who had called for his appointment - 1 Samuel 8.5, 15.6); and those appointed by God (e.g. King David). Self-appointed men and women are a particular problem in African churches.

The final day of ministering was a visit to a rural church 20 miles from Kabwe, but the road was so bad that the journey took well over 2 hours. At various points our car was overtaken by cyclists who could avoid the massive pot holes and ruts in the dirt road. Nevertheless, it was a joy to be asked to speak at a village church of simple mud and thatch construction. Despite being founded only four years ago, there were 50-60 people present and the building was packed.

Back to the UK

On Thursday 8 May we set off early for Lusaka airport. I was carrying back to the UK over 600 copies of *Authority of God* in French that had been printed in Kabwe, for later distribution in other parts of Congo, Burundi and Tanzania (God willing). However, my calculations of my baggage weight were not accurate, so I had the embarrassment of repacking my bags and hand-luggage at the check-in desk. However,

through God's providence all the books were carried without extra charge and were brought safely back to the UK awaiting later despatch. After the 27-hour journey home, I can record God's grace and faithfulness.

**Address given at Bethel Chapel, Luton,
by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom,
on Lord's day afternoon, 8th June, 2014,
on the occasion of the Sunday School Anniversary**

Usually on these occasions I try to speak of something that is topical, but something that will be profitable and for the honour and glory of God. For a long time, my thoughts for this afternoon have been on 1914 and 2014 - a hundred years since the beginning of that war, perhaps the most terrible of all wars in which millions were killed. Especially today we ought to remember with holy gratitude to God that we were brought through and victorious, or wherever would England have been today? And also in gratitude to the Lord that at the moment, even in this sad day, we are spared from such horrors. When you think of the fighting in France and Belgium, and the warfare, the trenches, sinking in the thick mud, sleeping in it, infested by rats, little to eat, cold, shivering, unwell, shells bursting about them, comrades being killed, one being shot on the right hand, one on the other, wondering who would be next! Then thinking of our eighteen year old boys here this afternoon who would have been called up from home to go to France, and most likely never to return home again. So we thank the Lord that we are spared from those horrors today, but we thank the Lord for that wonderful deliverance. And of course, we do not forget the deliverance in the last war.

Interestingly, we had one person present at chapel this morning who was born just before the end of the first great war. Now of course, I do not remember it, but I very much grew up under the shadow of the first war. Most families had had a bereavement. My own family – one of my father's brothers had been killed in France, and the little town where I lived, there were the war widows; when they were only in their twenties or thirties their husbands had never returned. There were also

old ladies, unmarried ladies, some of them not very happy, some of them not very nice, but people whispered, “She was a lovely girl, but her boyfriend never came back and she has never been the same since.” I remember one old lady in my native town used to sit outside her front door all day, and whenever anyone passed, she said, “Could you please spare a minute for a poor old lady? I wonder if you have seen a young man anywhere in your travels?” And she would give a careful description of him, and they would shake their heads and say, “No.” She would say, “Sorry to trouble you. Thank you very much.” One of her sons had been reported missing and it had turned her brain, and she lived her life in expectancy that one day he would return. Now it was a hard time.

I picked up the old *Gospel Standards* following 1914, and there are things like this in the obituaries:

“Hugh Smith was wounded in Gallipoli, a ball passing through his body, from which he finally recovered, and was sent to France, where he was killed in action on February 15th.”

“David Peerless died on March 22nd, 1916, aged 21 years. Some months after the dreadful war broke out, he felt it his duty to enlist. Myself and others” – this was written by his godly pastor – “Myself and others were very sorry; one thing was, he was very delicate.” Then it went on: “He was enabled to maintain his profession of the truths he had received.... The last Lord’s day that he attended at the chapel [before going to France], after the service he said that he had had such a good day, that he felt that whether he died on the battlefield or anywhere else, he should go to heaven.”

But this was one which I thought was very touching: “Joseph Obbard of Tunbridge Wells was killed in action in France, September 19th, aged 34. My dear husband was a very quiet, unassuming, God-fearing man. . . . His last letters were chiefly upon better things. He seemed to fully realise his solemn position, and he spoke of that verse being so sweet to him only two days before his death:

‘ His love in time past forbids me to think
He’ll leave me at last in trouble to sink;
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review
Confirms His good pleasure to help me quite through.’

He hoped he should be spared to come home to his loved ones and his little business, but the Lord willed it otherwise. He was killed instantaneously by a shell bursting over his dug-out. I have lost a most kind and affectionate husband, and the children a tender, loving father. May we have strength given to bear this heavy stroke feeling,

‘He never takes away our All -
Himself He gives us still.’”

I am almost certain that that man was the father of Mr. Lionel Obbard who died in the Harpenden Bethesda Home some years ago. You also remember there was an old man over a hundred in Bethesda who had had one of his legs shot off fighting in the first war, and it seemed unbelievable he had been without one of his legs for either seventy or eighty years.

I requested this afternoon that Psalm 91 should be read. What a blessing it was made to many during the war and what a blessing to some of the wives here at home! “Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day.... A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.” I remember when I was a little boy, some of those old ministers sometimes would speak of their experience in the trenches with the bullets passing near them, over their head, and a comrade falling to the ground, and perhaps the Lord spoke: “Not a single shaft can hit.” The tears used to run down their faces. We felt there was something real there, the reality of vital godliness. And they used to quote that: “A thousand shall fall at thy side” – so many of their friends killed, but they were brought back. “A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.”

And just one final quotation from our magazines. This was from someone who returned and died peacefully many years afterwards. Apparently he was one of the deacons at Blackboys (Thomas Benjamin Burfoot). But in his obituary it says, “When in the trenches on the front line, Psalm 91. 1-7 was made very appropriate when many of his fellow-soldiers around were mown down by gun-fire while he was spared. He was also favoured at times under these circumstances to feel peace in his soul and communion with the Lord.”

I believe many of those godly young soldiers from our chapels had a wonderful tale to tell, the peace they felt and the blessing. I rather think my old friend, the minister Mr. Wolstenholme had. He was a sergeant major. I do not know the full story, because those old people would not talk much about their experiences in the first War, it was so terrible. I rather think he was so blessed in his soul and so favoured with peace that he was not afraid of anything. He did some deed of daring – in great difficulties I think he captured a number of German soldiers and was awarded the Military Cross or some other medal.

For our young men, it was not always easy. There was a lot of ungodliness in the army and some of them were terribly persecuted because of the profession they made. Some of them would kneel down by the bedside in the barrack room with other soldiers round about, or they would sit on their bed in the barrack room and watched by others in scorn and contempt, would read the Bible. Even there the Lord watched over them and answered their prayers.

You older ones remember our dear old friend and deacon Mr. Fred Gurney. He was called up in 1914 to serve in the army, and he was already a church member here at Bethel, and he felt he had to maintain his profession. He used to kneel down by his bedside and he endured great persecution. One person was so vicious and evil, he felt he could not bear it any longer, but he could not see any way of deliverance. He cried to the Lord for help and mercy and deliverance in this trial, and one night, one of the wildest, most evil men in the regiment came into the barrack room. Apparently he was so fierce and strong and so dreadful in a rage that the soldiers were terrified of him, and everyone wondered what his business was. He came up to Mr. Gurney and said, “Fred, you are never going to be persecuted again.” He pointed to this man and said, “This one who persecuted you, I am going to kill him,” and he meant it. Mr. Gurney pleaded with him, and he said, “Well, I will knock him black and blue,” and he knocked him black and blue, and turned round and said, “Anyone else who persecutes that soldier for reading his Bible and kneeling down, you will get the same.” It was a strange deliverance, but there is that word, “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly.”

During the 1914-18 war, there was more of the fear of God and honouring God, even if it was only outward, than there was in the more

recent war, the second great war. In 1914 my own mother had come into service as a girl from a Shropshire village to a town in Lancashire called Rawtenstall where she attended the Church of England. She said when the time came for some of the young men, the boys, to be going away to France, people would come down to the station to say, “Goodbye,” realising that many of them would never come back home again. My mother said it was a very emotional time, and as the train came in sight on which they were going to be taken away, people began singing, “God be with you till we meet again.” Now you would not get that today.

She also said when the war ended at 11 o’clock on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, the church bells rang and everything stopped. The trams stopped where they were; everything stopped; work stopped; and everyone went along to the church to return thanks to the Lord, the mill workers in their clogs and shawls. She never forgot the vicar solemnly and graciously standing up and announcing the hymn, “Now thank we all our God.” Sadly, you would not get things like that today. There was more of an acknowledgement of the Lord and His mercy and our accountability before Him.

It was so with the Prime Minister, because just as we had Winston Churchill in the last war, in the first war it was David Lloyd George. It has been said that he more than anyone else under God was responsible for our victory. The godly old people used to thank God for Lloyd George and they thanked God for Churchill. They felt it was the Lord’s provision. Now Lloyd George knew the truth. There were many things with Lloyd George which were not commendable, but he knew the truth and he honoured God. He was a Welsh Baptist, and I think he was a deacon.

Now how Lloyd George appeared in the public eye: there was a case in Wales. A little girl who attended a Baptist chapel had died and the vicar said because she was a Baptist, she was not permitted to be buried in the churchyard. Now there was a young solicitor in his twenties called David Lloyd George and he fought it. He took it to the highest authorities; he fought it all the way, and he won the victory. The vicar could not forbid that Baptist girl to be buried in the churchyard. From that moment, David Lloyd George was a hero in Wales. The next General Election, he was elected Member of Parliament for Caernarfon

and he held the seat for fifty to sixty years. There is a statue of him outside the castle in Caernarfon.

But Lloyd George knew there was a God, and with all his badness outwardly, Lloyd George honoured God. I think most of you know the story of how at a dark hour in the 1914-18 war, it was a Sunday evening, and there was drenching rain, and there was a little Strict Baptist chapel at the end of a common and after the service started, two people came in. One was the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, and they had walked over a mile in the drenching rain across this windswept common. The other one was his Secretary. Lloyd George stopped after the service and had a talk with the minister, and apologised for being late. It is said “he seemed loath to go.” I do not know if this is true or not, but it is said that as they left the little Strict Baptist chapel, Lloyd George looked back and said to his companion, “That is the reason why we are going to win the war.” Now Lloyd George was not a good man, but he did acknowledge God and he was honoured for it.

When the great war ended, he was “the greatest man on earth.” Four years later, he was voted out of office. He was never in office again as long as he lived. That is human greatness, and how easily it can be extinguished.

Just a sad word. After the end of the war many soldiers never returned to church or chapel. There was a reason for it. In the years before the war, the churches had been weakened and weakened again. One of the saddest things was this. There were people who seemed to be gracious ministers – well, they certainly preached the truth – but they began to take this stand: that it was not necessary to believe everything in the Bible; you have no need to believe in Adam; you have no need to believe in the Flood; some of these Old Testament accounts, well they were just stories. Yet they still preached the truth, but they were carried away by human learning. There was a weakening, and religion in England had become so weak generally by the war years that there were many and their religion did not stand the test. It could not stand the test of all the terrible things that had happened.

Before closing, I suppose I ought to mention seventy years ago this week: the D-day landings. There has been so much in the papers about it. Strangely, I cannot remember anything about it at all, but people have said to me, probably everything was kept so quiet and hushed over,

that we did not know much about it till after the war. That, of course, was the second war, against Hitler and Nazism. If that had triumphed, whatever would have happened? And some of us wondered at one time if it would. But God heard and answered prayer. God raised up Churchill, and of course what happened seventy years ago this week, D-day, the invasion of France and thousands perishing, thousands killed, but the fighting and pressing forward into France, and in the end victorious, re-conquering Europe and delivering us, under God, from Nazi Germany.

Some of my own family yesterday were at a one hundredth birthday party and the old man who was a hundred said that it is a lot nicer today than seventy years ago. He said, "I was one of the thousands who invaded France." He said, "Seventy years ago yesterday I was driving a tank on the beaches."

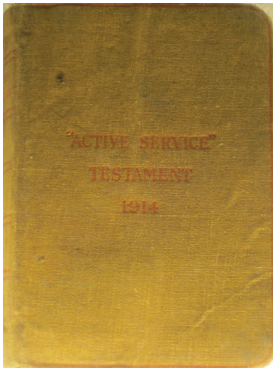
But what is it all about? Thanksgiving to God, never forgetting all the suffering there was with our fathers and grandfathers. May they not be forgotten, but especially may the Lord not be forgotten for His wonderful mercy and His wonderful grace in delivering our country and delivering us, and O that even now in this sad day, in wrath He might still remember us in mercy.

ARMED FORCES BIBLES

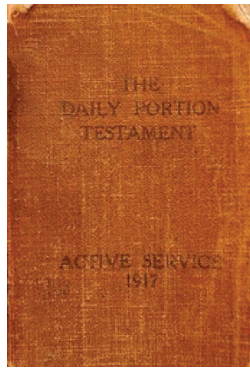
A *Soldier's Pocket Bible* was first issued in 1643 to Cromwell's army. This Bible had just 16 pages that contained some 150 verses from the Geneva Bible, all related to war. All the verses except four were from the Old Testament. The verses were organized into sixteen sections with headings such as "A Soldier must not do wickedly" or "A Soldier must be valiant for God's cause." This Pocket Bible was usually buttoned on the inside waistcoat, placed near the heart. A story is related that the life of one of Cromwell's soldiers was saved by his carrying a copy of the *Soldier's Pocket Bible*. A bullet fired at him became lodged in the Bible instead of his heart.

Bibles and New Testaments have continued to be issued to the armed forces up to the present day. Usually on the inside front cover is found "A Soldier's Prayer." Three from World War I on display in the

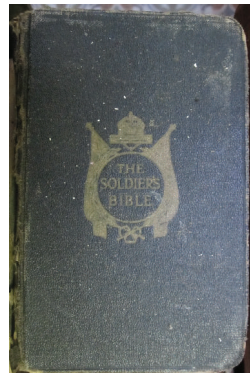
small higgledy-piggledy museum at Hill 62 Sanctuary Wood Museum, Ypres, Belgium are shown below.



Active Soldier's Bible



Daily Portion Testament



The Soldier's Bible

A story has recently emerged of an Armed Services Testament that has been to war five times. Only last year Private Curtis Welsby, 20, took to Camp Bastion a 98-year-old Testament which was issued in 1916 to his great-great-grandfather when he fought in the First World War. It has since been handed down from father to son.

JACOB ASTLEY'S PRAYER

Jacob Astley was a Royalist commander in the English Civil War. His battle-prayer at the Battle of Edgehill (1642) has become famous:

*"O Lord, Thou knowest how busy I must be this day.
If I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me."*

With 1,500 men he fought valiantly at the Battle of Stow-on-the-Wold, the last pitched battle of the First Civil War (Edgehill was the first battle). He surrendered to the Parliamentarians with the words, "Well, boys, you have done your work, now you may go and play - if you don't fall out among yourselves!"

A VERY BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT GREEK

by Dr. Peter C. Wilkins

Background

The Greek language is thousands of years old, with its earliest form appearing in the 13th century BC. It became widespread during the reign of Alexander the Great, and as the language spread, it developed, resulting in what today is called Koine (Common) Greek. The widespread use of Koine Greek paved the way for the rapid spread of the Gospel. Koine Greek was the language in which the New Testament was originally written.

Why learn Greek?

The King James (Authorised) Version of the Bible is a faithful translation, based on the most accurate manuscripts and translated by able men with a high regard for scripture. So why would anyone want to learn Greek today?

First, no matter how faithful the translation, it is still a translation and not the original. No translation can ever fully capture and express the complete meaning of the original, because there is not a one-to-one correlation between most Greek and English words. That is why if you have a reference Bible you will see many alternative readings in the margin.

We should be thankful for and make use of good translations; but the Westminster Confession rightly states that “in all controversies of religion the Church is finally to appeal” to the original text in the original languages; that alone being “immediately inspired by God...kept pure...[and] therefore authentical.” We can only do this if we are able to understand the original languages.

But learning Greek purely for intellectual interest is not sufficient. There is a story - perhaps a myth - of a sailor who fell in love with a woman from another country. He wanted to marry her, and so tried to become familiar with her native country. But eventually he realised that to really understand and communicate with her, he would have to learn her language. If we truly want to know God and His message, we will want to read what He actually said, or inspired others to say (or write). Any translation, however good, is one step removed from that.

Is it essential for every Christian to know Greek? Well, no; there have been millions of Christians who have never learnt Greek (and many people who have learnt Biblical Greek but have never become Christians). But surely we could say the same of many other things. It is not essential (in that sense) for every Christian to be baptised, or to read the Scriptures regularly; but few would argue that these things are worthless. Someone once observed that the only people who had ever told him that learning Greek was a waste of time were people who had never learnt Greek themselves.

Martin Luther said, “Insofar as we love the gospel, to that same extent, let us study the ancient tongues. And let us notice that without the knowledge of the languages we can scarcely preserve the gospel. Languages are the sheath which hides the sword of the Spirit, they are the chest in which this jewel is enclosed, the goblet holding this draught.” Luther did not think that every Christian should learn Greek - but he maintained that it was good for a Church for some of her members to be able to read the language.

So perhaps the question should not be, “Why learn Greek?” - but, “Why not learn Greek?”

Of course, the arguments above also apply to learning Hebrew; and some people say that Hebrew is the easier of the two to learn. But most people will find Greek less intimidating; most of the letters look more familiar, for a start.

Is learning Greek difficult?

Learning any language is difficult, but Biblical Greek is amongst the easier languages to learn; easier than French or German, although not as easy as Spanish. Certainly it is easier than English!

Remember that:

1. If we are interested in learning Biblical Greek, we are really only interested in being able to read it. We do not need to be able to speak it, or write it. (Having said that, if you learnt to speak Koine Greek and then visited Greece, you would probably find it useful and be able to make yourself understood, but might appear rather eccentric. (A bit like someone in England asking, “Canst thou tell me the way to the post office?”))

2. Koine Greek was the language of the common people, and the Greek New Testament was written for common people. The style is

simple and straightforward.

3. As we are really only interested in reading the Greek New Testament, there are a limited number of words that we need to know. There are only about 300 words that appear 50 times or more in the Greek New Testament. If we learn these 300 words, we will be able to read about 80% of the words we encounter as we read the Greek New Testament - enough to make sense of what we are reading. Most introductory textbooks for other languages have about 2,000 words to learn.

4. Many English words have their root in Greek words. Theology (or any other -ology), philosophy, ego, autograph, telephone, acoustic...etc. You already know many Greek words.

5. If you have studied maths or physics, you probably already know much of the Greek alphabet, and how the letters are pronounced.

What do I need to learn Greek?

The only essential (other than time) is a Greek New Testament. The Trinitarian Bible Society's edition is recommended and inexpensive. When learning Greek, it is essential (and satisfying) to be able to read the Greek New Testament and compare it with the English translation.

Many other resources are available to help. The *Basics of Biblical Greek* range by William Mounce, published by Zondervan, is recommended. This is a large range and you may not need every product in it. There are also numerous software packages for laptops, tablets, and phones, which can all help, especially when memorizing vocabulary. Lastly there are many free resources online. Contact me (p.c.wilkins@btinternet.com) if you want further information.

But be warned: many of these other resources (including those by Mounce) sometimes use other, corrupt, versions of the Greek NT. If you buy a Greek textbook to follow, you may find that some of the examples and exercises do not exactly match your Greek New Testament. You may also find that many Greek teachers are theologically liberal and unsafe to follow in matters of doctrine (Mounce seems relatively theologically conservative). Before you start, make sure you are convinced of the reasons for keeping to the *Textus Receptus* and the KJV translation of the Bible. TBS resources are helpful.

How long will it take to learn Greek?

It will probably take a lifetime. You are still learning and re-learning the English language! But you will probably be surprised at how much you can pick up in a short time. Learn a single Greek word - the word for “and” - and you will be able to recognise more than 6% of the words you encounter as you read the Greek New Testament. Learn just 26 Greek words, and you will be able to recognise more than 11%. If we remember why we are learning the language, it will encourage and motivate us. We are learning to read what God himself has written.

TO BE CONTINUED

ABORTION STATISTICS FOR WOMEN RESIDENT IN ENGLAND AND WALES IN 2013

In 2013, the total number of abortions was 185,331.

98% of abortions were funded by the NHS. Over half (64%) took place in the independent sector under NHS contract.

91% of abortions were carried out at under 13 weeks gestation. 79% were at under 10 weeks.

Medical abortions accounted for 49% of the total.

2,732 abortions (1%) were carried out under ground E (risk that the child would be born handicapped).

Worldwide there are an estimated 40-50 million abortions every year. This corresponds to 125,000 abortions *every day*.

The sixth commandment states: “Thou shalt not kill.” Or, as Jesus expressed it Matt 19.18: “Thou shalt do no murder.” We take this to mean men, women, children, babies born and unborn.

May the Lord have mercy on our sinful land, and in particular on our political leaders who have allowed the situation to develop into what now amounts virtually to “abortion on demand.”

AUTUMN LEAVES



*The leaves of autumn pass away;
The summer's brightest flowers decay;
The fairest things beneath the sky
But bloom awhile, then fade and die:
For all of beauty, all of bloom
On earth, is passing to the tomb.*

Autumn leaves are one of nature's most spectacular displays.

Many of you will have studied 'Photosynthesis' as part of your GCSE science course. Green plants absorb light energy using chlorophyll in their leaves, producing a reaction with carbon dioxide and water to make glucose. The glucose is converted into starch and stored.

This process was designed by a creating God as the first step towards making food – not just for plants but for every creature on the earth.

"The profit of the earth is for all: the king himself is served by the field"
Ecclesiastes 5.9

During winter there is not enough light for photosynthesis. The trees will rest, and the green chlorophyll disappears from the leaves.

"For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth" *Isaiah 1.30*

As the bright green fades away, we begin to see yellow and orange colours. These colours have been in the leaves all along – but we just cannot see them in the summer because they are covered by the green chlorophyll.

*The leaves in autumn fade and fall,
The trees look dead and dry;
But spring returns, reviving all,
Fresh verdure meets the eye.*



PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



"For He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth."
Job 37. 6.

WINTER 2014

IN THIS ISSUE

Page

Editorial.	1
God's Unspeakable Gift - Mr. Jesse Delves.	3
Douglas Edward Bradford.	6
Enthusiasm Justified.	15
The Five Points of Calvinism - The Third Point.	16
The Geneva Psalter.	21
Calvin's Labours in Geneva.	22
John Warburton on the Doctrines of Grace.	23
Canon Richard Hobson's First Sermon.	24
The Swearing Coachman.	25
Mottos.	25
A Blessed Sabbath.	26
A Brief Introduction to New Testament Greek - P. C. Wilkins	26
Bible Words.	30
The Smithfield Martyrs.	31
Annual General Meeting of the Trinitarian Bible Society.	36
World War I.	38
A Few Current Matters.	39

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Cover picture: Enjoying the Snow, Rothamsted Park, Hertfordshire

PERCEPTION

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EDITORIAL

“And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda” Matthew 2. 6.

It is only natural for people to be interested in what are usually called ‘world records.’ *The Guinness Book of Records* has been published for 60 years and is currently the best-selling annual book. We are curious to know what is the biggest, what is the smallest, what is the fastest, what is the highest, what is the most expensive and so on. This might relate to humans, or animals, places, buildings, machines, transport, or anything else. For example, we were interested recently to read of the largest school in the world. This is the City Montessori School in the city of Lucknow, India. It has a staggering 47,000 pupils, a thousand classrooms, 3,700 computers and requires 1,000 buses to bring all the pupils to school!

Although this type of information is interesting, it sometimes leads to disputes. It is generally recognised that the largest city in the world is Tokyo, Japan with an estimated population of 34,000,000. Other large cities include Cairo, Egypt with 15,000,000. But what about London, where does it come in the list? It is often disputed as estimates vary from 8,000,000 to 11,000,000 according to methodology.

However, at this time of the year there is something much more important for us to think about - a little town, far away, with a population, even today, of just 75,000 and in the time of Jesus perhaps less than a thousand people. That little town is, of course, Bethlehem. The prophet Micah says, “Though thou be little . . .” but he adds a yet, and a very important yet it is. “Though thou be little, *yet* out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel.” In case anyone in Old Testament times might think this should be just an earthly ruler the prophet adds these words: “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” This cannot be understood of any earthly ruler. There is only One from everlasting - the Lord Jesus Christ.

Although Bethlehem is little, in Matthew's Gospel we are told it was not 'the least.' How could it be the least when the Saviour was to be born there? Many of the Lord's people have felt to be the least. Perhaps we think of Gideon, who declared "I am the least in my father's house." But how useful he was to the children of Israel! Then the Apostle Paul who wrote that he was "less than the least of all saints." But what a blessing he was to the New Testament church!

The traveller from Jerusalem, as Bethlehem comes into sight, rising out of the valley of Gihon, cannot fail to be moved, as he reflects that here was born the glorious Redeemer of the world. In the neighbouring fields were "the shepherds abiding in the field." Here was announced the most astonishing event that ever occurred in the world - and it took place at Bethlehem.

Today, Bethlehem, with its grotesque and ugly concrete wall of separation, is far removed from the sentiments of the popular hymns. "O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie," is hardly true today! No longer can the visitor glimpse Rachel's tomb from the road, now hidden behind a very high wall.

The first mention of Bethlehem is a sad one. It occurs in the 35th chapter of Genesis, where Rachel, as her soul was departing in death, named her new-born son Ben-oni, son of sorrow. Jacob tells us in chapter 48, "As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem." What a loss it was to poor Jacob! Although security is very tight, it is perfectly possible to visit the tomb today. It is generally accepted that this is the authentic burial place of Rachel. The Jews visit regularly to pray.

Here, too, at Bethlehem, Ruth gleaned in the fields belonging to Boaz. Later the city obtained fame as the birth-place of David, and became known as the City of David. It never became large, we are told, for there was a severe lack of water. That there *was* a supply of excellent water we have no doubt, as we read that David "longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" It was, however, insufficient to sustain a large city.

We have time to mention just one more episode, again a very sad one in deed. “Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem . . . from two years old and under.” What bitter weeping there must have been! Visitors are shown a site just outside Bethlehem known even today as Ramah, see Jeremiah 31. 15.

How proud Nebuchadnezzar was of *his* great city, Babylon. “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty.” But while the word was yet in his mouth, “there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from thee.”

So although we may admire and wonder at the biggest and the greatest, what city can there be upon the earth to compare with little Bethlehem at the time of the coming of the Saviour? As the year draws to a close, may our desire be as the shepherds when they said, “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem.” Like them, may we be favoured to “see this thing which is come to pass.” And may that blessed Saviour be *your* Saviour, and *my* Saviour, so that we can truly sing:

“Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him; but in heaven,
Set at God’s right hand on high.”

O that one day we may be favoured to see HIM.

With greetings and best wishes to you all,
now and throughout the New Year.

The Editor.

* * * *

GOD’S UNSPEAKABLE GIFT

Extracts from a sermon preached by Mr. Jesse Delves
on 25 December 1952

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift” (2 Corinthians 9. 15).

The great work of redemption by the Lord Jesus was marked by some remarkable days.

It was a wonderful day when He was born at Bethlehem, when the promise concerning Him was fulfilled. “When the fulness of the time”

came, the great Redeemer of guilty man, appeared upon earth at Bethlehem. It was a great day, too, when He offered Himself a supreme Sacrifice by giving Himself for our sins and dying on Calvary's tree. It was a great day, too, when He rose triumphant from the grave, when He burst the bands of death and emerged from the silent tomb, a mighty Conqueror over death and hell. It was a great day when He ascended up into heaven, and took His seat at the right hand of God, where now He is ever living.

There will be another great day, which will be a wonderful day to His people but a day of awful terror to the wicked - that day when He will come again with great power, majesty and glory, with His angels, to receive all His dear, redeemed people into those eternal heavenly habitations.

Everything that we receive from God in His mercy is received as a gift, and as a free gift. Here then is a gift. It is pleasant to receive a gift from a friend when that gift is given in affection and love. Often such gifts have touched a tender chord in our hearts, have they not? But all earthly gifts, acceptable as they are, all - *all* fall beneath *this* gift. There was never such a gift as the gift of the Saviour. There may indeed be some very valuable gifts of a material nature. One might give all that was in his power to give, for the help and benefit of another, but that would be a gift which could be expressed or comprehended: this gift is a gift that is ineffable [unutterable]! It is an unspeakable Gift! No thought can convey what is involved in it; no word can express, no tongue can describe, no "pen of a ready writer" explain fully, what is involved in this gift. We can, I believe, feel that the gift is like His love; it "passeth knowledge."

"Thanks be unto God." Have you ever felt like that? Have you had a moment when you felt as though your heart would burst and all you could say was, 'Thanks be unto God. Bless His holy Name for manifesting such mercy to a wretch like me'? Here then is ground for real praise and thanksgiving from the heart.

O, if some of us could say 'Thanks be unto God for this day!' By this I do not mean 25 December or what is usually termed Christmas Day, but if we could say 'Thanks be unto God for a day when the Saviour was born at Bethlehem' and especially if we could say 'He was born to redeem me from all iniquity!'

Let us not overlook the giver of the gift. You never receive a gift, do you, without thinking of the giver? No, it is the giver as much as the gift. Then not only is the giver to be considered, but the gift. O what a gift! The gift was Himself. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent

forth His Son.” To contemplate this great gift we may go to Bethlehem for a few moments and consider this amazing grace, this inexpressible gift.

Consider the conditions under which He was born, the place where He was laid; not in a palace, in a grand room with beautiful furniture and everything that the heart could wish. No. He was laid in a manger. All this was to give expression to His humility. “Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor.” He is Emmanuel - God with us, a Babe born at Bethlehem.

Think again, too, of the people to whom the news was announced. It was not to the royal family, or an assembly of dukes and nobles, but to the humble shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night. Is there not an amazing depth of truth underlying all this? They were the first to whom the news was broken by the angels from heaven, this host of angels giving glory to God, saying, “Fear not: for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” O, what an assembly! Angels from heaven appearing to the meanest, humblest subjects on earth! What a moment when shepherds heard the angelic hosts!

Think of the Name that was given to Him. Why did they give Him such a Name as Jesus? Because He came “to save His people from their sins.” O if what is involved in that Name were brought into our hearts today! A Name so familiar, I agree, in the Christian world. But can you say for yourself, “How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds”?

Just a moment, and then I must close. The last point is the receiving of the gift. Have you ever received Him? Have you received Him? Perhaps you think that sounds like free will. No, not at all. Have you received Him? The apostle Paul speaks of it, “As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord.” And John, “As many as received Him.” And when the Lord Jesus returned from the country of the Gadarenes “the people gladly received Him for they were all waiting for Him.”

Have you received Him? Perhaps you say, What does that mean? I cannot explain it, but I can tell you this, when the Holy Ghost begins the work in your heart, the first thing He will do is to plough up, until in His own time He brings the Redeemer into your heart and you receive Him. It is a choice moment when you can feel He is your Saviour. It is a receiving of His love, for the Holy Ghost sheds it abroad in the heart. May the Lord grant us some little experience of this and then we shall be able to say, “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.”

DOUGLAS EDWARD BRADFORD
(*CONTINUED FROM AUTUMN 2014 PAGE 15*)

Engagement with merchant steamer

Another very remarkable thing happened when we were off the Dutch Coast. We sighted a German merchant steamer and closed towards her. We surfaced and fired six rounds at her, all of which hit. Then we observed the crew abandoning ship so our Captain put a boarding party on her under my charge. You will remember that in September, 1908 I joined the four masted barque, Marlborough Hill in Rotterdam. I crossed from Tilbury in a Dutch vessel called Batavia II. Imagine my surprise that the ship I boarded was none other than the one in which I had crossed to Rotterdam nine years ago, and she was now under German charter.

I had orders to get Batavia II under way and proceed to sea. Progress was slow as our gun fire had caused a leak and the steering was defective. A little later I observed two Dutch destroyers steaming towards me which signalled me to stop. An officer boarded me and said I was to consider myself a prisoner and await orders. This of course was not very pleasant news to me and as this officer spoke fairly good English I asked for some further explanation. He said we were carrying on warfare in territorial waters, to which I replied that I had boarded her outside territorial waters, but that she had drifted in while I was trying to get her under way, and my Captain would verify this, which he did.

Batavia II was now sinking, which no doubt was due to our gun fire. I informed my Captain (by hand semaphore) of this, and he replied, "Open all sea connections and scuttle her, and abandon ship in Batavia's life boat." This turned out to be no easy operation owing to the heavy list the ship had taken. I was concerned about my crew, whether they could swim! However, after an anxious time we managed to get our life boat into the water and pulled away to safety. We returned to our submarine, and the last we saw of Batavia II was just her masts sticking up out of the sea.

The Dover patrol

At times we were sent on the Dover patrol and this was very dangerous and exacting. The Germans had defeated Belgium and taken over all their Channel ports and made them bases for their submarines.

We used to leave Dover at dusk and take up our position as near as possible to one of these ports. We then submerged with just the top of our conning tower above water, and there we stood and kept our watch until dawn, waiting to make an attack on any submarines we spotted coming out. We were so near to the coast that we could see the flashes of guns, those of both our army and the Germans, in the bitter conflict on land. Twice we intercepted the enemy and scored a hit but never really knew if the submarine went to the bottom as, for safety, we also went to the bottom and lay there. O! how bitter and cruel is warfare! I shudder now when I think of these things, and the terrible sacrifice of millions of young lives on this altar of blood!



We would return from these “stunts” (as we used to call them) to arrive off Dover at dawn and await for a destroyer to flash his searchlights at intervals to guide us into harbour, for while the war was on all our coastwise lights were extinguished. During the day we would try and get a little rest which was not easy owing to continual air raids. Three weeks was the limit for this patrol after which we returned to our Harwich base and were given a few days’ leave.

Well, the war dragged on and the awful price was still being exacted among our flotilla - “Submarine E is overdue,” and then the sad verdict - she must be considered lost with all hands, and yet my unworthy life was spared, whilst better and more efficient men were cut off. But why? I had to learn by experience the two-fold dealings of God in Psalm 107 - providence and grace, the former in my life I was not a stranger to: “They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep” (Psalm 107. 23, 24). The latter I was being preserved also to experience - grace, God dealing with my soul in “deep waters.”

Over three years of submarine life in war conditions was now beginning to tell upon my physical and nervous constitution and I wondered how much longer I should be able to continue in this service.

Some of my brother officers had been given a little “rest” in lighter and less exacting duties. I kept this to myself. What of the future if I gave up, the door into the Navy would be shut and all my ambitions also. Ah! I did not realise then that God was going to shut the door and to open another. I had to learn what I then did not know, but what I now know by experience: “Oh Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. 10. 23).

Well, I was enabled to continue until hostilities came to an end in November, 1918. With others I was now employed in bringing in some of the surrendered German submarines. What a sight was this, the Harwich harbour was packed with these vessels as we moored them one alongside the other. Their crews were put on our destroyers and taken back to Hamburg. The German “Grand Fleet,” as they called them, were surrendered to our Fleet in the Orkney Islands and sunk, those massive battle ships and battle cruisers, like the Spanish Armada were sunk beneath the waves. Oh! what a deliverance God had wrought for us. Would it be wrong if we quoted the words of King David? “How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!” (2 Sam. 1. 27).

A rather pathetic incident took place when I was bringing in one of these U boats. The Captain had his binoculars slung over his shoulder and then taking them off and putting them over my shoulder he said, “Here you are you English Lieutenant, take these, I shall never want them again.” I still have them.

I have already mentioned that as a result of my war service my health was failing and I reported this to my M.O. He passed me over to a Medical Board, and I was ultimately invalided out of the Navy with 75% Disability and granted a temporary pension of £3 per week.

Invalided out of the Navy

Surely I shall never forget that time when all my life seemed shattered. Here I was a young man in my early thirties with all my earthly prospects gone, married [Mr. Bradford had married Miss Mabel Winifred Addiscott at Holy Trinity Church, West Norwood, London on 15 June 1917 during a few days leave from submarine service] with my first child and, being a sailor, lacking qualifications for any other calling. Those were dark days and a heavy cloud hung over me, but God was behind the cloud and working out His predestinating purpose, and time (His) unfolded this, as I was to prove.

“Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
 Ever gracious, ever wise;
 All my times are in thy hand,
 All events at thy command.”



Mr. Bradford's marriage

After some months of rest my health improved and my pension was reduced so I had to draw on a little capital I had managed to save when in the Navy. My spirits now revived and I seemed able to face up to life again. As I have already said, being a sailor, there was no opening in any other calling and things were in a bad way in the country, with much unemployment. However, I was qualified to sit for my Master Mariner's certificate and so decided to take up studies with this end in view, and joined a Nautical Academy in London to be “coached up” for this examination under the Board of Trade.

Deep soul exercise and deliverance

During this period it pleased the Lord to bring me into deep exercise of soul, although first of all I did not realise that He was about “To change the (my) heart, renew the will, And turn the (my) feet to Zion's hill.”

I could not now give my mind to study but walked about London in great distress of mind. No one knew of what I was passing through and I would come home exhausted in mind and body and wondered if my health was breaking up. One night I came home and sat on the side of my bed exhausted. My dear wife said to me, “What is the matter, you are in some trouble?” I agreed such was the case but could not say any more. Then the question was put, “Is it financial trouble?” I said, “Oh no.” “Is it your work?” Again the answer, “No.” “Then what is it?” I seemed for a moment to be utterly separated from all things here below and brought before God, and I said, “It's my soul,” and burst into tears and for the first time in my life I knew experimentally that I was a lost man.

In this condition I tried to resume my studies but all concentration of mind failed, all I could think about was my soul, my soul. I'm lost and condemned. I tried to pray but it was only "chattering." If ever the prayer of Hezekiah was my experience it was then: "Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me."

I tried to shake this oppression off. In my former days I often visited the London theatres and one afternoon I left my studies with this intention, thinking in my folly this would do me good. But something seemed to say, "You will never find relief there, you will never obtain balm for your wounded soul," and I said, "Lord, where am I to find it?" I turned away from these haunts of the Devil, and O! what a relief I felt. I walked about the streets of London like one in a dream. I felt the Lord was hedging my way to lead me into a way I had not known, and then these words came to confirm this: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them" (Isaiah 42. 16).

Time of darkness

It was the word "darkness" that seemed to define my case, darkness of soul. Feeling weary in mind and body I turned into a Lyons tea shop, little thinking such a place was to be a Bethel to my soul, a sacred spot for there I was to find my God and my Saviour. I seemed to lose sight of all my surroundings and like Jacob of old I wrestled with God. Still the cry, "Lord, it's my soul, my condemnation, my sins, where is the cure?" Then, the words came - "Search the Scriptures." I said, "What now, here in this place?" Ah! The Lord knew I had a little pocket Bible on me. Yes, now, here was to be the "accepted time," now to me this was to be the "day of salvation."

I took this little book out of my pocket, opened it and my eyes fell on this, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," and as I read on in this wonderful chapter (Romans 8) I felt the Lord was leading me into paths I had not known as He opened up those glorious truths therein, His foreknowledge and predestinating purposes, and His calling of poor sinners. O! how wonderful the Lord Christ seemed in His precious death and the condemnation of my sins laid upon Him. And then the wonderful application of those last two

verses: “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us (me) from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8. 38, 39).

“A new creature”

It is now over fifty years ago that these words and this experience was passed through, and they have been an anchor to my soul. The effect of this was remarkable, all the burden of my sins seemed to be lifted off my mind and I felt a new creature, a new man. I seemed to realise the dear Redeemer had taken possession of my life and things were never going to be the same and I was to experience the language of the Apostle: “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5. 17).

The depression I had been under which so incapacitated my mind passed away. Indeed, as time proved, I was to walk a new pathway of God-given faith. I look back now over 53 years and hope I can say: “The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2. 20).

With this love of Christ in the soul, one’s thinking, feeling and will are all affected, and one’s outlook upon time and eternity is radically changed. Those wonderful words, that had been so graciously applied to my soul, seemed to cover my whole life because Paul says, “I am persuaded that neither DEATH ... can separate.” If the last enemy, which is death, cannot separate, then it follows all others will not.

Resumes studies for Master Mariner’s Certificate

I now felt renewed in mind and body and resumed my studies. Being now in the “first flush of my love” I would talk a little when opportunity arose to my fellow students about the Scriptures. However I soon found there was no response, indeed quite the contrary! This made me sad as I felt such a desire to “tell to sinners round, what a dear Saviour I had found.”

There was one young man (we had been cadets on the Worcester together) who seemed to take more interest in my remarks than the others. This encouraged me and we would have lunch together. I had been led very blessedly into the doctrine of God’s eternal election of His people, and this formed our conversation on one occasion. The change

in this young man I shall never forget, and he said, "If that's your God you are welcome to Him." I tried to remonstrate with him but I could see by his face it was useless. He never spoke to me again. The words then came into my mind: "The election have obtained it, and the rest were blinded." I now found I was a marked man and had to walk alone.

After the Lord had so wonderfully delivered me from bondage and sin, I had occasional thoughts of a fleeting character about preaching. At first I did not heed them, not considering I had anything to do with such a solemn office, especially being an unbaptized person, and dismissed them from my mind.

Events leading to being baptized

Some little time after this I had occasion to call on my Pastor (of a Strict Baptist cause in London where I attended) but had no thoughts of telling him of what I had been passing through. Having quickly concluded the purpose of my call I rose to go, when he said, "I want to have a little talk with you, come into my study." He seemed, to my surprise, very interested in me and spoke most kindly and before long I was unfolding a little of my experiences. He said, "Will you come before my Deacons (there were seven) and tell them what God has done for your soul?" For a few moments I felt like drawing the interview to an end, but the words of the Apostle came into my mind - "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." He said, "They will understand your feelings and not reject them like your worldly fellow officers; you will come, won't you?" I felt I could not draw back and said, "Yes, but does this mean you want me to go before the Church?" "That depends" said he, "on the Lord's will. "We must wait and watch His hand in this."

My mind was profoundly exercised as I went home that night, and I felt some great change was going to take place in my life which was soon to be made manifest, and I said, "Lord, help me to be still, and know no will but Thine," and I believe in after events, the Lord graciously heard that petition. Realising now that if my testimony was received by the Deacons they would expect me to go before the Church, I tried to tell the Lord about my unworthiness and felt ignorance. Nevertheless, I was still under the sweet influence of my first love and felt a willingness to tell what the Lord had done for my soul.

I knew that Baptism was a God-honouring ordinance, but was it

right for me to do this? I knew it meant walking in “newness of life” and “putting on” the Lord Jesus Christ. If only He would give a word of direction I would do anything to show my love to my new found Friend, the blest Redeemer. Then very clearly the word came, “Why tarriest thou?” My heart seemed to palpitate, enlarged with emotion, with love, and it seemed a very little concern whether I was accepted or otherwise.

It was not long before a Deacons’ Meeting was arranged. I was helped to give in my little experience and all fear of man was taken away. It was unanimously agreed I should go before the Church at their next Quarterly Meeting, which would be in three months’ time, the last meeting having just been held.

After this meeting I told my Pastor that in three months’ time I should probably be abroad. I was now about to take my final exam, after which I should resume my sea calling. Ah! how I was to learn - “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. 10. 23). “Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that” (James 4. 14,15).

In view of the uncertainty of my future movements a Special Church Meeting was called. To the praise of God alone, for the third time I was able to testify to my call by grace, and I felt indeed it was:

“Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.”

There were nearly one hundred members at this Church Meeting and they gave me an unanimous call. On the following Lord’s Day, 30th January, 1920, I was baptized before a large congregation. And now, as I write over fifty three years after, I have no regrets, save only my sad shortcomings. It all seems as yesterday. I seem to hear that large congregation of well over two hundred singing hymn 427 as I stood by the water, especially verse 5:

“Ashamed of Jesus! yes, I may,
When I've no guilt to wash away;
No tears to wipe; no good to crave;
No fears to quell; no soul to save.”

My secret prayer was that I might never be ashamed, but be made willing to take up my cross, and defend “His noble cause.” Little did I know the way in which I was to be called upon to do this.

Shortly after my baptism, to my great surprise, I again had occasional thoughts of a fleeting character about preaching! I did not at first give heed to them, for I did not think such an important office had anything to do with myself, especially in view of my calling and I dismissed the matter from my mind.

Master Mariner's Certificate and eye test

The time had now come for me to sit for my Master Mariner's examination and I took my papers (previous certificates and testimonials) to the examination hall.

Before taking this exam we had to pass an eye test (colour and vision), and to my great surprise and bewilderment I failed on the latter. The examiner in looking up my records said, “Why, you passed the higher form of vision test when we last examined you. Have you experienced any trouble with your eyes or health? I see you were in the submarine service during the war. Did this affect your health?”

I said, “Yes.” He said, “And your eyes also, you must see an eye specialist.” Most kind he was to me, knowing what this meant, probably the end of my sea life.

I came out of that examination room more like a man in a dream, and stood still, perfectly unconscious of the passing people and noise of the London traffic. Like the examiner, I was under no illusion what this meant, the loss of all my earthly prospects! Now strange as this may seem, it disturbed me very little, because I felt the Lord was in the matter. I thought of the words of Naomi to Ruth - “Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall.”

Ah! I had to “sit still” for many long years to see the gradual unfolding of the Lord's will. The trials, fears and unbelief that assaulted my soul, but I had to learn that the bud had to have “a bitter taste” before the “unfolding of the flower.” I did not consider the above Scripture to mean that one was literally to do nothing, but by prayer to

seek the Lord's guidance, which I tried to do.

After a little while it seemed to be suggested to my mind, if this disability was due to my war service, I had like others to seek some lawful compensation, such as a grant or even a small pension. I tried to follow the instruction given by the inspired Psalmist: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and He shall bring it to pass" (Psalm 37. 5).

For a moment I must just go back and mention the fleeting thoughts I had had about the ministry which again, at this great upheaval in my life, returned once more. I knew this was a secret between God and my soul, and I vowed as helped no one should know this - I would not be like Samson in discovering unto others my secret, but watch the Lord's hand for signs that it was His will for me to enter into this awful, yet blessed office, and not for me to put my hand to it.

I had to wait twenty four years until the church of God sent me out into His vineyard.

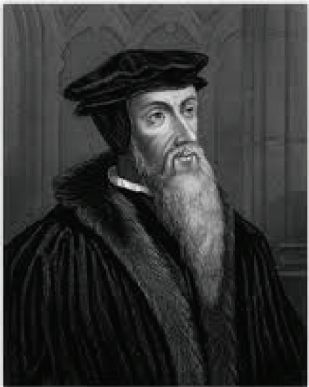

TO BE CONTINUED

ENTHUSIASM JUSTIFIED

The Rev. Rowland Hill, while addressing his congregation, and seeking to press home upon them the solemn truths he was delivering, became thoroughly aroused, to the alarm of some of his listeners. He then exclaimed: "Because I am in earnest, men call me an enthusiast. Listen. When I first came into this part of the country I was walking on yonder hill. There I saw a gravel pit fall in and bury three human beings alive. I lifted up my voice for help so loud that I was heard in the town below, at a distance of nearly a mile. Help came, and two of the sufferers were rescued. No one called me an enthusiast *then*; and when I see eternal destruction ready to fall on poor sinners, and about to entomb them irrecoverably in an eternal mass of woe, and call aloud to them to escape, shall I be called an enthusiast *now*? No, sinner, I am no enthusiast in so doing; and I call on you aloud to flee for refuge to the hope set before you in the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

The Third Point - Limited Atonement

CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM	
	
John Calvin 1509-1564	Jacobus Arminius 1560-1609
The Third of the Five Points of Calvinism	The Third of the Five Points of Arminianism
Limited Atonement <i>Christ died to save only those given to Him by the Father</i>	Universal Atonement <i>Christ died for everyone</i>

‘Limited atonement’ is the Calvinistic doctrine that Christ died only for the elect. Another name is ‘Particular redemption’ from whence the denomination gets its name - Strict and *Particular* Baptists.

The Arminian believes that the atonement was ‘unlimited’ (or ‘universal’) and that when Christ died on the cross, He shed His blood for everyone. He perhaps sings this hymn:

The whole wide world for Jesus,
Inspires us with the thought
That every son of Adam
Has by His blood been bought.

But is this right? *Has* every son of Adam been bought by the precious

blood of Christ? Is this the truth as it is in Jesus?

We believe, first, that the Bible teaches us that Jesus did not spill a drop of blood in vain (Galatians 2. 21). If Christ died for all mankind, then either all men are saved, or Christ suffered in vain for those that are not saved.

Second, we believe Christ died for a special and distinct people. Frequently they are called “My people.” “For the transgressions of My people,” the Lord said, “was He (the Lord Jesus) stricken.”

There are many Scriptures that refer to ‘the sheep,’ ‘the church,’ ‘the people,’ ‘a peculiar people,’ ‘a chosen people,’ and even ‘My jewels.’ If Christ redeemed all, why the use of these restrictive terms? Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, Himself declared that He laid down His life for the sheep. Would he have so spoken if He died for all mankind? Would the sentence pronounced upon them by the Redeemer Himself: “Depart ye cursed,” be consistent with His having made atonement for their sins?

If Christ has redeemed all men, and all men are not saved, it must be either from a lack of will in God to save them, or from a lack of power. Such thoughts cannot be entertained for a moment. “The Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save.” Rather, He saves “according to His mercy” Titus 3. 5.

The angel that appeared to Joseph told him to call the Son that would be born of Mary by the name of Jesus, giving this reason: “For He shall save His people from their sins.”

We read in Jude 4 that there are some who are “foreordained to condemnation.” If there are any appointed to condemnation, it cannot be God’s will that the same individuals should be saved.

The sufferings of the Son of God were for His people alone.

The Synod of Dort

In 1618 a conference was held in Dordrecht to settle the controversy in the Dutch churches initiated by the rise of Arminianism. The conference became known as The Synod of Dort. The purpose of the conference was to set out the reformed doctrine now popularly called “The Five Points of Calvinism.” When the conference was over, a statement known as the Canons of Dort was issued. One of these canons stated that the death of Christ was “abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world.”

Seeing that this was a Calvinistic statement, we find it extremely confusing, to say the least. The Articles of the Church of England (Article 31), which are essentially Calvinistic, say much the same thing. "That the offering of Christ was for the sins of the whole world."



The Synod of Dort. We are told the followers of Arminius are seated at the table in the centre

When we read such statements we need to remember that these good men were emerging from a period of great darkness. The Roman Catholic mass dominated the thinking of the people. The statements issued were intended to be a fatal blow to the awful error of the sacrifice of the mass, which restricted the benefits of Christ's death to those present at the mass - thus the expressions "world," and "whole world," and "all mankind," came to be used. The belief of these men in the doctrine of the Trinity, in election and predestination, in the depravity and ruin of man, put it beyond controversy that, even if they did not express themselves as clearly as might have been wished, such men could never have held universal redemption.

Scriptures often quoted to prove Universal Atonement

There are several passages of Scripture which are brought forward to support the scheme of universal redemption. These frequently contain the words "all" and "everyone" or similar.

One of the texts frequently quoted by the Arminians is the following: "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" 1 John 2. 2. Therefore, they say, Christ's redeeming work made it possible for everyone to be saved. However, we need to remember that those who are redeemed by Christ are redeemed "out of" every people. So they cannot be every man, nor can they be all people (Rev. 5. 9).

Another passage often quoted is that in which Christ is said to give Himself "a ransom for all." But this cannot be understood of all and every individual man, for then all would be redeemed. Rather it should be understood "of many," as it is expressed by Christ in Mat. 20. 28, "to give His life a ransom for many." By "all men" we are to understand "all sorts," both Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, young and old.

The Arminians also refer to the declaration of the angel: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." To all people? Was it good tidings to Herod the king? Was it good tidings to the scribes and Pharisees? When he heard the report of the wise men, "Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him."

When the Gospel is preached, it has pleased God to hide the truths of it from many (Mat. 11. 26). It could not be His will that those should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

Who, then, has Christ saved?

We believe that those people who are saved through the blood of Jesus are the same people whom God had chosen and predestinated before the foundation of the world. Christ died for His church. “Even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it” Eph. 5. 25.

This chapter in Ephesians sets out Christ’s love to the church as a pattern for an earthly husband. An earthly husband’s love is to his wife only. If Christ loved any other than His spouse the church, it would be no pattern for a husband’s love to his wife.

The Trinity

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one. They are of one purpose. So it follows that whom the Father chose, the Son redeemed; and whom the Son redeemed, the Holy Ghost undertook to regenerate.

One day, to many people Christ will utter those awful words: “Depart from Me, I never knew you.” We cannot, we dare not, believe Christ redeemed these.

What about children and babies?

We are acutely aware that this is a very difficult and often controversial matter. However, when dealing with the subject of the extent of the atonement at least a brief mention must be made.

In many Sunday Schools it has been common to sing choruses such as this:

Jesus died for all the children,
All the children in the world;
Red and yellow, black and white,
All are precious in His sight;
Jesus died for all the children in the world.

The children may even have been taught the little ditty:

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven,
All good children go to heaven.

In this way, fastened on the children’s minds was the false doctrine of universal redemption. We believe that *all* who are saved, young or old, babies and children, are saved only by the precious shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We feel persuaded that around the throne of God in heaven, will be found many whose little life was quickly snuffed out, perhaps even before they were born. Does not the Word of God tell us

that an “untimely birth” is one of those “better things”?

So although we do not like the chorus quoted above, we firmly believe that in the case of babies and children dying in infancy, the God of mercy will do what is for His honour and glory. “Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?”

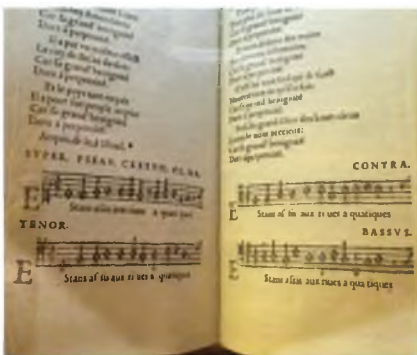
We would rather the language of our Sunday Schools be:

Jesus, the gentle Shepherd, stands,
And calls His sheep by name;
He leads them with His mighty hands,
And feeds each tender lamb.
He loved them in the ages past,
And died that they might be
His portion while the ages last -
To all eternity.

May it be our chief concern to be found amongst those for whom Christ died.

“But can I bear the piercing thought:
What if my name should be left out,
When Thou for them shalt call?”

THE GENEVA PSALTER



Calvin's Geneva Psalter

Theodore de Beze took on the task of translating the Psalms into French verse, a project completed in 1562. Outstanding musicians, such as Claude Goudimel, set these to music, and they soon became famous, spreading to all the French-speaking Protestant communities. Calvin wanted the congregations to sing in unison so that everyone could join in, but in the home he encouraged part-singing. This page

shows the separate staves for SVPER (Soprano), CONTRA (Contralto), TENOR, and BASSVS. Old Hundredth is a well-known tune from the Geneva Psalter. The tune Toulon is also by Goudimel.

CALVIN'S LABOURS IN GENEVA



Our pictures show St. Pierre's Cathedral as it was in Calvin's day and as it is now. The columns and portico were added after a restoration that began in the mid 1700's. The first walls were constructed around 1160 and work continued for almost a century. In 1535, at the time of the Reformation, the Cathedral became a place of Protestant worship.

The building in the background to the right of the Cathedral is known as Auditoire de Calvin, or Calvin's Auditorium. It was used as a gathering point for the Huguenots, refugees, and exiles. Calvin preached and lectured here daily. John Knox, who went into exile in Geneva after the accession of Queen Mary in 1553, also



Calvin's chair

preached in the building during his years in the city. Today, the Church of Scotland hold a service there each Lord's Day at 11.00 a.m. There is also a Dutch service held on the second Lord's Day of the month at 9.30 a.m. Occasionally the Auditorium is referred to as John Knox Chapel.

John Calvin sat to preach his last sermon in the Cathedral on 6 February 1564, but was unable to finish it due to a violent cough and breathing difficulties. His subject was "The Harmony of the Gospels."

JOHN Warburton ON THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE

As our Calvinism article this month is the doctrine of 'Limited Atonement,' we reproduce Mr. Warburton's answer to those who attacked him as being uncharitable for holding this doctrine (the third paragraph below).



IF by charity these people mean that I ought to unite with Arians and Socinians, who deny the Deity of my God and Saviour, whom I have proved again and again in my very soul that He is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace;

IF by charity they mean that I ought to meet and unite occasionally with people that can testify and say without a blush that election is a damnable doctrine, and they hate it in their hearts; that imputed righteousness is "imputed nonsense," and a doctrine that ought to be abhorred and spurned by all, which is the very garment and covering that hides all my shame, the very robe that adorns my naked soul, and so very many times has been the joy and rejoicing of my heart, and which I have found to be so many times the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;

IF they mean by charity that I ought to unite with people that can say and testify that we may be a child of God one day and a child of the devil another; that Christ died and atoned for the sins of Esau, as well as of Jacob, for Cain as well as for Abel, for Judas as well as for Peter, and that there are thousands in hell for whom Christ died;

IF they mean by charity that I ought to unite and call those brethren who profess to believe in the doctrines of grace, and call themselves Calvinists, but can declare at times that those blessed doctrines which are so precious and glorious to my soul are non-essential things; that is, if I understand their meaning right, they view them as useless things, and that it is of no consequence whatever whether we receive or believe these doctrines or not, provided we do but unite with all sorts, and pray for all, and be candid, and mild, and esteem all as partakers of grace;

THEN I confess from my heart, if all this be charity, I am destitute of it, and instead of being grieved for my want of it, I glory in it.

I do not indeed feel the least ill-will against any of their persons as the creatures of God, nor do I desire to do them the least injury, but those principles that debase free and sovereign grace, and exalt the

creature, I hate and abhor. For how can two walk together except they be agreed?

My soul has bought truth too dearly to part with it for such empty baubles as the praises and smiles of men; and those professors that like the smiles of men more than the truth of God, they are heartily welcome to them. I do not begrudge them.

CANON RICHARD HOBSON'S FIRST SERMON

Richard Hobson was appointed Curate of Christ Church, Birkenhead in 1865. Later, for 33 years, he served as Vicar of St. Nathaniel's, Liverpool, which he described as 'sixteen acres of sin.' Here he tells of his nervousness before preaching his first sermon.

On the day of my ordination, Dr. Blakeney announced in church that, God Willing, I would preach on the following Wednesday evening.



Dr. R. P. Blakeney

Wednesday evening came, when, in the vestry before service, my heart began to palpitate, and I said: "Doctor, I cannot preach tonight, I feel too nervous." Looking at me, he merely remarked: "Let us kneel, and ask God to give you composure."

On rising from our knees, I said: "Doctor, the answer has not come; do take my place this evening." Again he prayed, and again I pleaded to be excused. He then proposed that he should take all the prayers, and that I should sit in the inner chancel; assuring me that he was certain the answer would come, and that as I went into the pulpit he would be praying for me.

During the service his holy fervour set me all aglow, and there came an answer to the prayers which had been specially offered up for me, in that I felt calm and composed. Whilst I was ascending the pulpit stairs it seemed as if the good man's prayers were like arms underneath me, lifting me up. The text was John 4. 49, "Sir, come down ere my child die," and the Lord gave me great liberty in preaching.

THE SWEARING COACHMAN

A profane coachman, pointing to one of his horses, said to a Christian traveller, "That horse, sir, knows when I swear at him."

"Yes," replied the traveller, "and so does your Maker."

The coachman felt the rebuke, and immediately became silent.

MOTTOS

It has generally been the custom of the aristocracy to adopt a family motto. This motto usually appears on the family shield, or official letterheads. Sometimes it is engraved, for example, above the entrance door or on a mantelpiece above the fireplace.

Many schools also have a school motto expressing the aims and objectives which they hope their pupils may achieve. At our own school the motto was "Per Ardua Ad Alta" which, variously translated, can be "Through difficulties to heights" or "Through efforts to high things."

This is similar to the motto of the RAF which is "Per Ardua Ad Astra" - "Through difficulties to the stars."

One motto that struck us recently was that of the Romanian Royal Family, which existed until King Michael I was forced to abdicate in 1947: "NOTHING WITHOUT GOD." We thought there could hardly be a better motto than that!

If we were to weigh our actions against such a motto, how carefully we would walk! That place - can I go there? Weigh it up against NOTHING WITHOUT GOD. That possible move in providence - would it be right? Remember - NOTHING WITHOUT GOD. That rather extravagant possession I do not really need? Before buying, think NOTHING WITHOUT GOD.



Bran Castle, summer residence of Queen Marie of Romania, granddaughter of our Queen Victoria

Some time ago, walking on a seaside pier, to get to the end of the pier the easiest way was through the amusement arcade. We were instantly surrounded by flashing lights, the noise of machines paying out, those little cranes that pick up objects people hope to win, and altogether a place of Satan. We instantly thought of the line of a hymn: “Can ever God dwell here?” No, we had not thought before we entered: NOTHING WITHOUT GOD.

In some ways, to adopt a motto for our lives is a little like those New Year Resolutions people make, but so often fail to keep for more than a very short time. But what an excellent thing it would be if we were able to adopt this motto for *our* lives: NOTHING WITHOUT GOD. True, we cannot keep such a motto in our own strength, but, like David, we can pray, “Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe.”

A BLESSED SABBATH

Sabbath, Nov 19th, 1843 - A most precious time to my own soul, and at the close the people were so still that it was like the Holy Place. Surely God was in the place. I feel more hope that he is coming to bless us than I have had for a long time.

Andrew Bonar, Minister, Collace, Perthshire

A VERY BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT GREEK

by Dr. Peter Wilkins

(Continued from Autumn, Page 40)

The Greek alphabet

Assuming you are convinced, and want to try and learn Biblical Greek, the first step is the Greek alphabet. You cannot read the Greek New Testament unless you can pronounce the words, and you cannot pronounce the words if you do not know what sounds the letters make. Therefore it is essential to learn and memorize the Greek alphabet. It has 24 letters, and in some ways is similar to the English alphabet, as can be seen from the following table:

Letter name	Small symbol	Capital symbol	English equivalent	Pronunciation
Alpha	α	A	a	a as in father
Beta	β	B	b	b as in bed
Gamma	γ	Γ	g	g as in gone
Delta	δ	Δ	d	d as in dog
Epsilon	ϵ	E	e	e as in met
Zeta	ζ	Z	z	z as in zoo
Eta	η	H	long e	ey as in obey
Theta	θ	Θ	th	th as in thing
Iota	ι	I	i	i as in it
Kappa	κ	K	k	k as in king
Lambda	λ	Λ	l	l as in lamp
Mu	μ	M	m	m as in man
Nu	ν	N	n	n as in nose
Xi	ξ	Ξ	x	x as in axe
Omicron	\omicron	O	o	o as in pot
Pi	π	Π	p	p as in pan
Rho	ρ	P	r	r as in rod
Sigma	σ, ς	Σ	s	s as in saw
Tau	τ	T	t	t as in talk
Upsilon	υ	Y	u or y	u as in universe
Phi	ϕ	Φ	ph	ph as in phone
Chi	χ	X	ch	ch as in loch
Psi	ψ	Ψ	ps	ps as in lips
Omega	ω	Ω	long o	o as in bone

You will notice that a few English letter sounds are missing: f, h (although see later), j, q, v, w, and y.

This table may look daunting, but many of the letters are very similar to English ones. Here are the ones to watch out for:

Letter	Symbol	Notes
Gamma	γ	Pronounced like the first “g” in “garage” and not as the second. (When it comes before another γ, or before a λ, ϰ, or Ϸ, it is pronounced as an “n”, and is called a “gamma nasal”).
Eta	η	Pronounced long, like the “ai” in “pain” (it is a “pain” to have to remember this). It looks like the English “n”.
Theta	θ	There are four Greek letters that sound like two English letters put together. This is the first. It sounds like the “th” in “thunder”.
Iota	ι	Can be pronounced like either “i” in “intrigue”, but never as in “pine”.
Nu	ν	This looks like an English “v”, but is pronounced like the English “n”.
Xi	ξ	This is probably the hardest Greek letter to learn to write! The letter is pronounced “ksi”.
Omicron	ο	Pronounced as in “pot”, not in “nose”.
Pi	π	Your maths teachers probably pronounced it like “pie”. It should actually be pronounced like “pea” (see the pronunciation of ι).
Rho	ρ	Looks like the English “p”, but is pronounced like the English “r”.
Sigma	σ, Ϸ	This one has two forms. Ϸ is only used at the end of a word. σ is used everywhere else.
Upsilon	υ	Looks like the English “u” but is always pronounced like the “oo” in “book”, not as the “u” in “but”.
Phi	φ	This is the second Greek letter that sounds like it’s made up of two English letters; in this case, the “ph” in “phone”. φ looks a bit like ψ – you can remember the difference by noting that φ has a “phull” (full) circle.
Chi	χ	This is the third Greek letter that sounds like it’s made up of two English letters; in this case, the “ch” in “loch”, (pronounced like a Scot would!)
Psi	ψ	This is the fourth Greek letter that sounds like it’s made up of two English letters; in this case, the “ps” in “lips”.
Omega	ω	Looks a bit like the English “w” but is pronounced as a long “o”

Learn the small forms of the letters initially. You will pick up the capitals in time. The tricky capitals are Γ (English “G”), Δ (“D”), Η (long “E”), Λ (“L”), Ξ (“X”), Σ (“S”), Υ (“U”), and Ω (long “O”). The rest are similar to either the Greek small letters or the English capitals.

Once you have learnt to recognise the letters and have remembered their sounds, you will be able to figure out what the following “words” say. They are not real Greek words; just English words written using Greek letters.

βατ	κατ	μαν	βεδ	δογ
φινγ	ποτς	στοπ	λwgω	στανδ
τελεφων	τιψ	φησβυκ	βυλλδwζα	δριγκ

It’s also helpful to practise writing English words using Greek letters. Try the following few examples:

computer	phonetic	gardening	tax disc	Philpot
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There are just three other details to notice about the Greek alphabet:

- 1 Sometimes, when two vowels appear next to each other, they form a single sound (just as in English). These combinations are called diphthongs, and pronunciation of the diphthongs usually comes naturally for English speakers: αι (as in “aisle”), ει (“eight”), οι (“oil”), αυ (like the “ow” in “now”), ου (“soup”), υι (“suite”), and ευ or ηυ (“feud”). If you see a diphthong with two dots over the second vowel, that means that the two vowels are to be pronounced individually (just like in “naïve”)¹.
- 2 It was pointed out earlier that there is no Greek equivalent to the English letter “H”. While this is true, the sound does still occur in many Greek words. Every Greek word that starts with a vowel (α, ε, η, ι, ο, υ, ω) – or with a ρ – will have a “breathing mark” over the

¹ Sometimes an iota (ι) appears below another letter. This doesn’t affect how the word is pronounced, so it can be ignored for now, but it has a big impact on the word’s meaning.

initial letter² (it looks like an inverted comma). If this inverted comma opens to the left (e.g. ἄτ), no “h” sound is pronounced (so this word would be “at”) – this is called “smooth breathing”. If the inverted comma opens to the right (e.g. ᾗτ), the word is started with an “h” sound (so in this case, “hat”) – this is called “rough breathing”. It’s important to get used to noticing and following these marks; sometimes the only difference between two words is that one starts with smooth breathing and the other with rough.

- 3 Biblical Greek has three types of accent (acute, circumflex and grave) but really they can all be thought of as meaning the same thing. Almost all words have an accent above them somewhere, and it basically shows which syllable should be stressed when saying the word. So, ἐλεφαντ would be pronounced “**EL**ephant”, whereas ἐλεφάντ would be pronounced “ele**PHANT**”. There are some pairs of words that only differ because one has an accent and the other doesn’t.

You should now recognise all of the letters and other marks that you see in your Greek New Testament, and you should be able to pronounce the words. This should give you a real sense of achievement!

TO BE CONTINUED

BIBLE WORDS

“Noisome”

This adjective is from medieval English. It is found four times in the AV e.g. Psalm 91. 3 “*the noisome pestilence*” and Ezekiel 14.15 “*noisome beasts.*” The meaning is harmful, offensive, destructive or annoying. The word was originally ‘annoy-some’ and this came to be shortened to ‘noysome’ or ‘noisome.’ Apart from the AV, the word was employed more than once by William Shakespeare.

² If the word begins with a diphthong, the breathing mark will appear over the second letter. If the word starts with a capital letter, the breathing mark will appear just to the left of it (because it doesn’t fit above it).

THE SMITHFIELD MARTYRS

Mention Smithfield, and most people today think immediately of the meat market. Originally ‘Smooth Field’, and outside the city walls, Charles Dickens refers to it in *Oliver Twist* as a place “covered nearly ankle-deep with filth and mire, a thick steam perpetually arising from the reeking bodies of the cattle.” Muggers and pickpockets were rife and the place had the reputation as one of the roughest in London. The ‘wife sale’ became popular in the early nineteenth century; divorce was exceedingly difficult and men brought their unwanted wives along with their normal goods to the meat market to sell them.



Plaque on wall of Bart's Hospital

But long before the meat market was officially sanctioned, in this place numerous martyrs met their death during the reign of “Bloody” Mary in the 1550s. The names of three of them are commemorated on a plaque erected by the Protestant Alliance in 1870 built into the walls of the adjacent St.

Bartholomew’s Hospital (affectionately known as Bart’s), one of the world’s great hospitals.

The hospital began as an Augustian priory and hospice in 1123. It was founded by one Rahere, who is thought to have been a clerk employed in the household of Henry I, or he may even have been the court jester. Bart’s is, therefore, one of the oldest hospitals in London. Rahere named the hospital after the Apostle. The priory was closed by Henry VIII in 1539, but in 1546, just two weeks before he died, the king agreed to re-found the hospital. It was endowed with possessions giving it an annual income of 500 marks (£333).

The first patient whose name we know was one Adwyne. He had a ‘grievous sickness.’ His legs, we are told, ‘were cleaving to the hinder part of his thighs that he might not go, and his hands turned backwards; nothing with them could he do.’ There is a 1577 record of the amputation of a patient’s leg ‘which other waies would have Rotted of.’

The medieval hospital not only cared for the elderly, but homeless children and babies born in the nearby Newgate prison. The nursing staff consisted of a matron and twelve sisters. Today's nursing title 'sister' dates from this time. There were many rules. Any patients who swore, blasphemed, were disobedient or refused to go to bed were punished in the stocks after one warning. Every discharged patient was required to learn by heart, and recite aloud, a long prayer of thanksgiving for his or her recovery.



St. Bartholomew-the -great



The Tudor Gateway

The Martyrs met their deaths on a spot just a few paces away from the walls of the hospital, within sight of what is now the meat market. They were forced to face the Church of St. Bartholomew-the-great, which can be seen through the half-timbered Tudor gatehouse.

John Foxe, the martyrologist, has supplied us with details of some of these martyrs. We give the account of John Rogers in this edition, and next quarter that of John Bradford, both of them exceedingly brave and godly men, of whom the world was not worthy. John Rogers left a wife and eleven children as he went to the flames.



*The spot where the fires were kindled with
Smithfield meat market beyond*



An old woodcut of the scene

An account of John Rogers (*as related by Foxe, the martyrologist*)

John Rogers was educated at Cambridge. Afterwards he was for many years chaplain to the merchant adventurers at Antwerp. Here he met with William Tyndale (himself a martyr) and Miles Coverdale. They were the instruments of his conversion. He united with them in that translation of the Bible into English, entitled *The Translation of Thomas Matthew*.

He married, and removed to Wittenberg in Saxony, and there he learned the Dutch language. He was given the charge of a congregation, which he faithfully executed for many years.

On King Edward's accession to the throne of England, he left Saxony to promote the work of reformation in England. After some time, Nicholas Ridley, then bishop of London, gave him a prebend in St. Paul's Cathedral, and the dean and chapter appointed him reader of the divinity lesson there. Here he continued until Queen Mary's succession to the throne, when the Gospel and true religion were banished, and the Antichrist of Rome, with his superstition and idolatry, introduced.

At this time, Mr. Rogers preached at Paul's Cross. He confirmed in his sermon the true doctrine taught in King Edward's time, and exhorted the people to beware of the pestilence of popery, idolatry, and superstition. For this he was called to account, but so ably defended himself that, for that time, he was dismissed. The proclamation of the

queen, however, to prohibit true preaching, gave his enemies a new handle against him. Hence he was again summoned before the council, and commanded to keep to his house.

He did so, though he might have escaped. He had a wife and eleven children to support, but this was insufficient to induce him to depart. When once called to answer in Christ's cause, he stoutly defended it, and hazarded his life for that purpose.

After a long imprisonment in his own house, the restless bishop Bonner of London, caused him to be committed to Newgate Prison, there to be lodged among thieves and murderers.

Mr. Rogers imprisonment was long, and he was very uncharitably treated.

At length he was unjustly and most cruelly condemned by Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester. On the fourth day of February, in the year of our Lord 1555, being Monday in the morning, he was suddenly woken from a sound sleep and warned by the prison keeper's wife to prepare himself for the fire, and bid to make haste. Then said he, "If it be so, I need not tie my points." He was then taken before Bishop Bonner to be degraded: which being done, he craved of Bonner but one petition; and Bonner asked what that should be. Mr. Rogers replied that he might speak a few words with his wife before his burning. *The cruel and heartless bishop refused even this.*

When the time came that he should be brought out of Newgate to Smithfield, the place of his execution, Mr. Woodroofe, one of the sheriffs, first came to Mr. Rogers, and asked him if he would revoke his abominable doctrine, and his evil opinion of the sacrament of the altar. Mr. Rogers answered, "That which I have preached I will seal with my blood."

Then Mr. Woodroofe said, "Thou art an heretic." "That shall be known," quoth Mr. Rogers, "at the Day of Judgment."

"Well," said Mr. Woodroofe, "I will never pray for thee." "But I will pray for you," said Mr. Rogers.

And so he was brought the same day, the fourth of February, by

the sheriffs, towards Smithfield, saying the Psalm Miserere (i.e. Psalm 51 - Have mercy upon me, O God), all the people wonderfully rejoicing at his constancy, and with great praises and thanks to God for the same.

A little before his burning, his pardon was brought, if he would have recanted; but he utterly refused it.

There in the presence of Mr. Rochester, comptroller of the queen's household, Sir Richard Southwell, both the sheriffs, and a great number of people, he was burnt to ashes, washing his hands in the flame as he was burning.



John Rogers, Martyr

He was the first martyr of all the blessed company that suffered the fire in Queen Mary's time. His wife and children, being eleven in number, ten able to go, and one sucking at her breast, met him by the way, as he went towards Smithfield. This sorrowful sight of his own flesh and blood could nothing move him, but he constantly and cheerfully took his death with wonderful patience, in the defence of the Gospel of Christ.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE TRINITARIAN BIBLE SOCIETY

The Annual General Meeting of the Trinitarian Bible Society was held by kind permission at the Metropolitan Tabernacle on Saturday, 20 September 2014, a day which was much enjoyed. Many of us caught a train to London. Some had travelled from a long distance, including Holland, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Wiltshire, Suffolk and other parts of England. Those attending were from different denominations, but all were there because they were supporters of the wonderful work that the Society does and wanted to be present at this annual meeting. Before the meeting, some met for coffee on the station, others visited the bookshop above the chapel.

It was nice to see a good number of young people there and more children than usual. The morning meeting lasted almost two hours. The Rev. Malcolm Watts, Chairman of the Society, opened the meeting with reading the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15. 50-58) and commented on them. The General Secretary, Mr. Paul Rowland, then gave his report. This was followed by departmental reports from the Editorial Director, Mr. Philip Hopkins, and the Resources Director, Mr. David Broome.

After this, Dr. David Allen (who speaks regularly for the Society) gave a historical presentation on *John Wycliffe: The Morning Star of the Reformation*. This was fascinating and quite rivetting. We ourselves had visited Lutterworth earlier this year and visited Wycliffe's church and the river into which his burnt bones and ashes had been scattered. Dr. Allen said if there had been no Wycliffe, there would have been no Tyndale, no Martin Luther, no reformation, no Bible in the English tongue - and no TBS.

To conclude the morning Dr. W. Patterson (an Editorial Consultant for the Society) then gave a most interesting talk on a new translation of the Mongolian Bible. All of the New Testament is now translated and much of it has completed its final revision. If the Lord will, publication is expected in 2015. He gave a vivid account of life in that far flung, remote place with its massive landmass.

By this time the children especially were ready for their lunch. A buffet was provided for us in a large room under the chapel. It was a delicious spread! Some sat at tables but the majority roamed around talking to new and old friends. The Chairman, Mr. Watts, tried to speak to most people.

Then at 2pm we re-assembled. It was difficult to estimate how many people were there but we guessed there were about 150 at least. It seemed a good number and downstairs was comfortably filled. The singing was unaccompanied and we stood both to sing and during the prayer. The hymns included nine verses of “O God, our help in ages past.” The Rev. D. Silversides (minister of Loughbrickland Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland) read Psalm 29. The Rev. J. P. Thackway (minister of Holywell Chapel in Wales) took the prayer. The Chairman then introduced Mr. J. M. Saunders, minister of Providence Chapel, Chichester, who preached from Psalm 29 when his theme was “the voice of the Lord.”

The service ended about 3.30pm. On the way out we were all given a present of a carrier bag and in it were calendars, diaries and various pieces of literature. The carrier bags were a good advertisement in themselves. Altogether, we felt it had been a really good day and were glad to have been part of it. We met someone on the station (a busy mother) who said she had found it thrilling and couldn't understand why more people didn't come. She felt what better way to spend a Saturday - and we quite agreed!

Contributed



Tyndale House, London

Over the years, quite a number of you may have visited the TBS Headquarters, Tyndale House, London. In October, the premises were sold and the Society has now moved into temporary accommodation.

WORLD WAR I

As the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War I draws to a close at the end of this year, we have included two further brief articles.

Saved by a mouse

Mr. J. C. Burgess, Pastor at Mount Zion Chapel, Bournemouth, used to tell how he was saved in the trenches by *a mouse*.



Trench warfare

While under German attack, he was disturbed by something at his feet - a mouse. As he bent down to deal with it, a shell whistled over his head. Had God not sent the mouse at that very moment, he would undoubtedly have been killed by the shell.

How God can use the smallest things to preserve His servants. His late widow, Mrs. Elsie Burgess, who died in the Bethesda Home at Harpenden, loved to relate this story.

Saved by his Bible



The damaged Bible



Private Bush with his daughter

Fighting on the battlefield in Ypres, Belgium in 1917, Private Wilfrid Bush was saved by the Bible he kept in his breast pocket. One bullet was found lodged in the brown Bible. Another ricocheted off the Bible and passed through his collarbone. Private Bush died in 1960 aged 76.

A FEW CURRENT MATTERS

Travelodge removes Bibles

The Travelodge chain has removed Bibles from the rooms of its 500 hotels. The policy has been implemented “in order not to discriminate against any religion.” They had received no complaints from guests. The Bibles were provided free by the Gideon Society. A Travelodge spokesman said: “The reason is because of diversity. With the country being increasingly multicultural, we didn’t feel it was appropriate to just have the Bible because there are people of other religions.” We are pleased to learn that other hotel chains such as Premier Inn are planning to retain their Bibles.

Britain - a Christian country?

An open letter, signed by more than 50 atheist celebrities, scientists and academics, have said the Prime Minister was wrong to declare Britain a ‘Christian country.’ They accused Mr. Cameron of sowing ‘alienation and division’ and fuelling ‘sectarian divides.’ The claims have been dismissed by leaders from the Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities. Lord Carey, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, said to claim Britain was not a Christian country was to ‘ignore historical and constitutional reality.’

Alcohol

Last year more than a million patients were admitted to hospital for alcohol related diseases or injuries, double the number in 2003. The NHS now spends £3.5billion a year treating patients for the effects of alcohol.

Death of Rev. Ian Paisley

Ian Paisley, Ulster politician and minister at the Martyrs' Memorial Free Presbyterian Church in Belfast, died on September 12 at the age of 88. Many Ulster Protestants loved and revered him. Others held him in suspicion as nothing but a rabble-rouser. He was a life-long teetotaler,



Rev. Ian Paisley at TBS Annual Meeting 2001 - holding the Editor's granddaughter!

calling alcohol 'the devil's buttermilk.' A staunch supporter of the Trinitarian Bible Society, he spoke at many of their meetings, and preached the sermon at the Annual Meeting of the Society in 2001 when his text was, "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." He once visited the bookroom of Gospel Standard Publications at Harpenden, accompanied by his entourage of bodyguards, and went away with a number of books. In personal conversation he was a gentle, kindly and sympathetic man. On being told that our mother had just died, he said, 'Ah! I used to phone my mother every day.'

Persecution of Sri Lankan schoolboy

A Buddhist monk viciously attacked a schoolboy, Kapila, the only non-Buddhist in the class. The Buddhist monk, who teaches Buddhism at the school, ordered Kapila to sit on the front row. He then asked him to recite the names of Buddha's parents. When Kapila replied he was a Christian, the monk beat him severely. Kapila was bleeding from his left ear, but the teachers forced him to sit through the classes. He was threatened with more violence if he told anyone about the assault. That night Kapila started to vomit and he was taken to hospital. There is concern that he might never regain his hearing. Although the incident was reported, the police have not started an investigation. (*Information from Barnabas Fund.*)

SNOWFLAKES

Snow is God's wondrous work. "Great things doeth He, which we cannot comprehend. For He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth" Job 37. 5.

Is it true that every snowflake is unique?

The answer is a qualified "yes." We cannot know for certain that every snowflake is unique, simply because we cannot observe them all. However, Hans Verlinde, professor of meteorology at Penn State University, has concluded that "every snowflake is unique at a molecular level." Snowflakes come in a variety of sizes and shapes. Complex shapes emerge as the snowflake falls through the cloud, and tiny changes in temperature and humidity affect the way the water molecules attach to the snowflakes.

Why does snow appear white when it is made of clear ice?

Snow falls from the clouds in the form of flakes of crystalline water ice. Snow appears white due to the fact that light passing through snow is scattered by the multitude of ice surfaces found in each snow crystal. Various wavelengths from the whole spectrum of light are scattered more or less equally, giving snow its white colour.

Is it true that all snowflakes have six points?

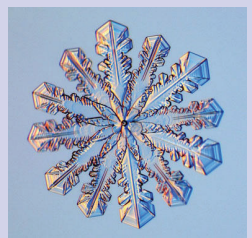
No, although most do. One typical snowflake is known as a "Stellar dendrite snowflake" with branches and side branches. Another is the "Stellar plate snowflake" with six broad arms that form a star-like shape. A rare snowflake is the "Twelve-sided snowflake." This is actually two snowflakes joined together, one rotated at 30 degrees relative to the other. The intricate, amazingly elaborate and symmetrical markings are truly the work of a Creator.



Stellar Dendrite



Stellar Plate



Twelve-sided

"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." David's prayer, Psalm 51. 7.