

# PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth.” (Solomon’s Song 2. 11-12.)

**SPRING 2018**

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**Cover picture:** Primroses, garden of Osborne House, Isle of Wight

# PERCEPTION

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## EDITORIAL

*“Ponder the path of thy feet” (Proverbs 4. 26).*

The Bible contains many references to our feet. As always, the evolutionist tells us many ways our feet have ‘evolved’ over thousands or millions of years. However, we believe that God *designed* our feet to carry out the tremendous tasks that they will need to perform during the lifetime of their owner.

It is said that the average moderately active person takes around 7,500 steps each day. If someone lives to 80 years of age they will have walked 216,262,500 steps in their lifetime. This means that the a person with the average stride would walk a distance of about 110,000 miles, which is more than four times round the world. During an average day of walking the forces on your feet can total hundreds of tonnes, equivalent to the average of a fully-loaded cement truck. (Standing is more tiring than walking because demands are being made on the same few muscles for a longer length of time.) The human foot is an incredibly strong mechanical structure that contains one quarter of the body’s bones, with 26 bones, 33 joints, 19 muscles, 107 ligaments, and nearly 8,000 nerves! Could man ever design and build such a machine? During the first year of a child’s life their feet grow rapidly, reaching almost half their adult size. By the age of twelve, a child’s foot is about 90% of its adult length. What will that baby’s feet have experienced by the end of his or her lifetime?

The Bible has much to say about our feet. The reason for this is that life is often likened to a pathway. Hymn 250 in the YPH begins, “The pathway of life is surrounded with snares.” One story I like to tell in Sunday School is of a family who set off for their holiday at the seaside. When they arrived the sea was right out. The first thing the children wanted to do was to run down to the water. As they began to run, they noticed a very large pipe running down the beach and disappearing into the water. The children thought it would be fun to walk along the top of the pipe all the way to the sea. So they climbed on, and at first it was

easy. The limpets and barnacles, and the dried seaweed, gave them a good grip for their feet. As they got closer to the sea, the pipe began to get wet. It had not had time to dry out in the sun. But still they kept going, and then it became really slippery - dangerously slippery. All of a sudden there was a splash, and the youngest one had fallen in, a little boy, and he could not swim. They were all so frightened. How they wished they had never climbed onto the pipe. Just as they thought the little boy must drown, one of them saw an old piece of wood sticking out of the water. It was part of an old breakwater. The older boy managed to climb onto it, and all of a sudden a little hand appeared out of the water near where he was. Quickly he reached down and pulled him to safety.

The lesson here is that there are activities that look so inviting. We forget that sometimes these activities can lead us into danger. There are two Psalms in the Bible (Psalm 17 and Psalm 73), both of which mention *slip* or *slipped*. The Psalms were not written by the same person - the first was written by David, the second by Asaph. But both of them knew how they needed the Lord to save their feet from slipping. David's prayer was: "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." Asaph realised his feet had almost slipped: "As for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped." Asaph gave us a reason - he had been envious at the wicked.

I heard only a few days ago of a young man's experience at university, where he had daily been subjected to many temptations to join his colleagues in activities which he felt unhappy to participate in. In our daily lives, whether we are younger or older, there are many things which suddenly, almost before we realise it, have enticed us into polluted waters.

During the Napoleonic Wars, a battalion of our soldiers was lodged in an old fortress. A surveyor was appointed to examine the fortress as it was likely to be attacked by the enemy. The surveyor reported his findings to the commander. Pointing to a particular section of the defences, he said, "This, sir, is a weak point. This is where the enemy will attack us." The commander could see at a glance the danger. He gave an order: "It must be strengthened tonight. In the meantime, double the guard." By the time the enemy attacked, it had been made the strongest point along the line, and defied all the efforts of the



attackers. Had the defences not been strengthened, the fortress would have been overrun. Every military engineering skill had been rightly engaged to defend it.

We find we have our ‘weak points’ everywhere - and Satan knows where they are. Unlike the battalion of soldiers, we have no skill or ability to defend ourselves. Our best and only defence is to use the prayer we find in that longest Psalm in the Bible: “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe” (Psalm 119. 117). Only then will our feet be safe from slipping and sliding into wrong paths. May the Lord be our keeper in these temptation-filled days.

With greetings and best wishes to you all.

The Editor.

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### **AN UNTRUTH DETECTED**

A skilled joiner received an order from a gentleman to make a small locking box for him. When it was ready, the joiner’s son, a fine-looking boy, was sent to take it round to the gentleman’s home and, if asked, to give the price, which was three shillings. The gentleman examined the box, and appeared pleased with it. “And what is the price, my boy?” enquired the gentleman. “Four shillings, sir,” was the reply. The gentleman looked in his purse but had not the right money. “I’ll call and pay your father, my boy,” he said. The boy instantly reddened, which was noticed by the gentleman, and awakened a suspicion in him. Sadly, the gentleman found his suspicion to be true, and that the boy had made a failed attempt to acquire a shilling of his own. Attempts such as this are almost sure in one way or another to be discovered.

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### **A REMARKABLE PRESERVATION**

A group of travellers, including a rich West Indian merchant, were returning to England when their ship sprung a leak. In spite of pumping day and night the ship continued to take on water. The people on board expected that any moment the ship would sink. Suddenly, the leak stopped. On examination it was found that a dolphin had providentially wedged itself into the hole, and thus saved them from certain destruction. “All creatures obey His commands!” wrote John Newton.

### PHILIP DODDRIDGE (1702-1751)

Northampton - perhaps we think of it as the town that made 4,600 pairs of shoes and boots for Oliver Cromwell's army! Even today, there is a shoe industry.

Having cause to visit the town recently, we came across a car park:



Doddridge Street? Then it dawned on us. Of course, this was Philip Doddridge the hymnwriter's town - we had not thought of it until then!

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At the top of the street stands the old Castle Hill Chapel built in 1695, where Doddridge preached for 22 years. Outside the chapel we met a workman who said, "Would you like to look round?" We quickly



availed ourselves of his kind invitation. Once inside we were met by about twenty-five very friendly young people, both boys and girls, from The Prince's Trust who were busy doing repairs and rubbing down the walls of a corridor for re-painting. A lot of them wanted to shake hands and seemed truly delighted we were interested in what they were doing.



The interior was fascinating. There were wide galleries round three sides, not unlike Clifton chapel for those who know it. The door of every pew was numbered in gold lettering. At the front, on both sides of the galleries were banks of gold-painted organ pipes. (There was no organ in Doddridge's day. Though a hymnwriter, Doddridge could not sing in tune, so 'the clerk' had to lead the singing.) At a guess the chapel seated 600 or 700.

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What do we know about Philip Doddridge?

After a long and difficult labour (thirty-six hours), Philip was born in a terraced house in London on 26 June 1702, the twentieth (and last) child of his mother Monica. He was the only son born into the family

that survived, and at birth he also was thought to be too feeble to live. All his life his health was poor. He and his sister Elizabeth were the only survivors of the twenty children. His father, Daniel, was a prosperous tradesman dealing in oil (probably olive oil or whale oil).

From an early age his mother taught him Bible stories from the Dutch tiles surrounding their fireplace. At the age of ten, his father placed him at Kingston Grammar School, where he received an excellent education which all his life he acknowledged had greatly influenced him.

Although Philip's home was godly and happy, the chain was soon broken: his mother died when he was eight years old, and his father four years later. At thirteen he was an orphan. His father's business partner, a Mr. Downes, assumed the guardianship of Philip, and moved him to a school at St Albans. It appears that Downes squandered the majority of Philip's inheritance, leaving the orphan boy almost destitute.

Through the providence of God, he came into contact with the Rev. Samuel Clark of St. Albans, a non-conformist minister and pastor of the church meeting at Dagnall Lane (now Lower Dagnall Street), who informally adopted him as his own child.



*Dagnell Lane Chapel, St. Albans, built 1697. Amazingly, after 320 years the building still stands, easily identified by the roof, and the position of the windows and main door. The door on the left elevation is now a window. The house on the right also remains. As well as Doddridge, William Cowper was a member of the church, probably as a result of time spent at Nathaniel Cotton's Lunatic Asylum in the town during one of his periods of insanity. The famous commentator, Matthew Henry, preached at the induction of one of its ministers, most probably Samuel Clark referred to above.*

**Church membership**

We know little of his spiritual experience apart from what can be gleaned from his hymns. We do know that at the age of 15 he became a member of Samuel Clark's church at St. Albans. Early he began to have thoughts of the ministry, but he had no money for any course of training, which was thought to be necessary. A generous offer of help was received from the Duchess of Bedford. To complete a university course he would have to abandon his non-conformity and become a member of the Church of England. Neither Oxford nor Cambridge would receive anyone who was not a member of the Church. His mind was made up. He was forced to turn down the kind offer (as did Isaac Watts in similar circumstances).

**Enters a non-conformist academy**

He began to wonder whether he should consider some other calling, and settled his mind on the legal profession. He got as far as securing an offer of a position with a well-known lawyer, but before accepting the offer he spent a day in prayer seeking the Lord's will in the matter. The same day, a letter arrived from Samuel Clark, telling him a place was available at John Jennings' non-conformist academy in Leicestershire (later known as Daventry Academy). He entered the Academy at the age of seventeen. After completing his course he was ordained as a minister, and preached his first sermon at Hinckley. Sadly, John Jennings died soon after from Smallpox.

**Marriage**

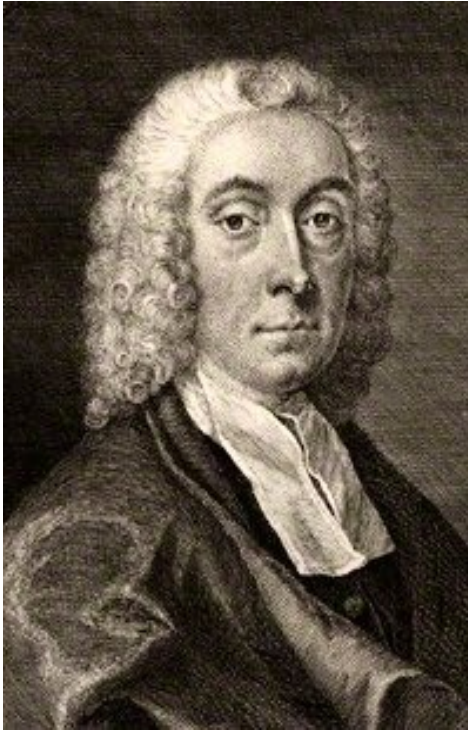
Although busily employed as a country pastor, Doddridge was intensely lonely. "I am like Adam in paradise; but I want an Eve," he wrote. His desire was answered when, at the age of twenty-seven, he met a woman of twenty-two. Her name was Mercy Maris, from Upton in Worcestershire. Somehow, the couple met at Coventry. This "dearest of creatures" (as he called her) was tall and dark-haired. They were married at Upton on 22 December 1730, and she proved to be his life-long help and support.

**A call to the pastorate**

A year before his marriage he received a call to the pastorate of the



Castle Hill Chapel, Northampton. The church was prepared to support him as their pastor and also the academy which he had taken over on the



*Philip Doddridge*

death of John Jennings. But how could he accept these additional responsibilities? He felt he must decline. Preaching there, he took for a text Acts 21. 14: "And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done." But returning to the house where he was staying, while passing through a room, he heard a child reading to his mother, "And as thy days so shall thy strength be." These words fixed themselves on him. He finally accepted the invitation, and remained there for the rest of his life, a period of twenty-two years. In 1729 Doddridge, and the academy, moved to Northampton. A wide range of subjects was taught, including Hebrew, Greek, Algebra and Trigonometry.

### **His family**

Their first child, Elizabeth, was of a very loving nature. One day, her father asked her, "Tetsy, why does everyone love you?" She thought for a moment and said, "I do not know, papa, unless it is because I love everyone."

But the scourge of the times was soon to devastate the little family. The tuberculosis bacteria was never far away, and little Elizabeth succumbed and died. She was just five years old. Her parents' grief was great. On her coffin her father was able to write: "It is well with the child." Unusually for a non-conformist chapel, she lies buried under the floor towards the front of the Northampton chapel.

Of their large family (nine children were born altogether) only four reached adulthood, a not-uncommon situation in those days.



## **A hospital for Northampton**

It is interesting to note Doddridge's desire that Northampton should have its own hospital. He ran a successful campaign to raise funds, and in 1743 an infirmary was opened. Forty years after his death, the infirmary moved to a larger site, and became what is now Northampton General Hospital. Doddridge is listed as one of the hospital's founders.

## **Final illness**

As age advanced, symptoms of TB began to appear. Never robust, (his friends frequently referred to him as 'a bag of bones') his health deteriorated rapidly. He and his wife journeyed to Bristol to try the Hot Wells, but there was no relief. He then travelled to St Albans to take the funeral of Samuel Clark, falling ill on the journey home.

Money was raised for a trip to Lisbon to see if a warmer climate could help. The boat was to leave from Falmouth. They broke their journey in Bath to visit the Countess of Huntingdon, and stayed a few days. The Countess coming into his room on the last morning, found him in tears. He had been greatly blessed from the words, "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved." On enquiring why he was in tears, he answered: "They are tears of comfort and joy. I can give up my country, my relations and friends into the hand of God. As to myself, I can as well go to heaven from Lisbon as from Northampton."

The journey to Lisbon was accomplished, but the weather was the same as England - wet, windy and cold. Soon after his arrival he was much worse. On Saturday, 26 October 1751 he fell asleep in Jesus. He was 50 years of age. As he breathed his last, perhaps his wife thought of his hymn:

"I'll speak the honours of Thy name  
With my last labouring breath;  
And, dying, clasp Thee in my arms,  
The Antidote of death!"

His beloved Mercy was deeply grieved at her loss - "exquisite distress" she wrote. In a letter to her children she said: "I mourn the best of husbands and of friends." The Lord graciously upheld her and granted her comfort.

## Burial

After his death, there seemed no option other than to bury him at Lisbon. Arrangements were made for interment in the graveyard attached to the British Factory, Lisbon, and there he lies to this day.



*Philip Doddridge,  
British Cemetery,  
Lisbon, Portugal*



Hymns of Philip Doddridge in *Gadsby's Hymnbook*:

- 84 'Tis mine, the covenant of his grace
- 138 Jesus, I love thy charming name
- 201 Grace! 'tis a charming sound
- 331 Beset with snares on every hand
- 332 Now let the feeble all be strong
- 345 My soul, with joy attend
- 368 O Lord, descend and fill this place
- 1066 Do not I love thee, dearest Lord?

In the *Young People's Hymnal*, the best known is:

- 290 O God of Bethel, by whose hand

## BRICK

Brick is one of the world's most versatile and popular building materials - and also one of the oldest, being found in the book of Genesis.

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Although the ability to make bricks from natural materials of the earth was undoubtedly a gift of God to mankind, the earliest mention of bricks in the Bible is not a good one, as it is related to the shameful episode of the building of the tower of Babel in Genesis chapter 11. How easily we can put even God's gifts to a bad use. "Go to, let us make brick," said the people one to another, "and let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven." Their desire was to make a name for *themselves*. They had little thought of the name of the great God of heaven, who came down to see the "city and the tower, which the children of men builded."

\* \* \* \* \*

When engaged in the house-building industry (many years ago now) every year the directors and other senior staff made a visit to the building exhibition held at the National Exhibition Centre at Birmingham. I usually made straight for the upper floor where the apprenticeship competitions were held. Here young tradesmen exhibited their skills in their particular trade. My favourite was the bricklaying section where the skills displayed were quite amazing.

One of the saddest things we notice as we go around our towns and cities is the poor design of so many buildings from the 1950's to the end of the century. Many were constructed of bland materials leading often to the term 'a concrete monstrosity.' How much more attractive, at very little extra cost, would many of these buildings have been if only they had been built with traditional materials such as brick. We wonder what the planners were thinking of in permitting them ever to be built. Thankfully, of recent years much more care has been taken at the design stage to ensure that materials used are sympathetic to the area and surrounding buildings.

## What is brick?

Traditionally, the term brick refers to a rectangular building block composed of clay and laid in mortar - just like those tower-building men so long ago: “And slime had they for mortar” Genesis 11. 3. We are often told that the oldest bricks were air-dried, but this does not seem to be the case as the Babel tower-builders said, “Let us burn them thoroughly.” Their bricks seem to have been fired bricks.

The bricks used by the children of Israel in Egypt to build Pharaoh’s treasure cities were made of clay-bearing mud, using straw as a mechanical binder. Many of these types of bricks have been found during excavations in the Middle East, most notably at Tell Aswad in the upper Tigris region. We read of the distress of the children of Israel when Pharaoh decreed they were to find their own straw, yet still deliver the same daily quota.

There are references to brick-kilns in Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Nahum. Obviously, by that time fired bricks were usual.

A manual published in China in the year 1103 known as *Yingzao Fashi* (The Carpenter’s Manual) described the brick-making process:

“The kilnmaster makes sure that the temperature inside the kiln stays at a level that causes the clay to shimmer with the colour of molten gold or silver. He must know when to quench the kiln with water so as to produce the surface glaze. The labourers must mix the clay and water, driving oxen over the mixture to trample it into a thick paste, scoop the paste into the wooden frames. smooth the surfaces with the wire-strung bow, remove them from the frames, print the fronts and backs with stamps that indicate where the bricks came from and who made them, load the kilns with fuel, stack the bricks in the kiln, remove them to cool while the kilns are still hot, and place onto pallets for transportation.”



## England

The Romans used a limited amount of bricks in their walls and buildings. The Roman lighthouse at Dover provides a good example of the occasional course of brickwork amongst otherwise stone and flint construction.

Similarly, the few remaining parts of the wall surrounding the old Roman city of Verulamium at St. Albans show the same method of construction.



*Verulamium Roman Wall, St Albans*

There was a revival of brick-making in the late 13th century, mainly due to a lack of local stone. By the Tudor period, bricklaying had emerged as a separate craft, well able to match the skills of the stonemason. The seal of approval to brick buildings was finally given when Hampton Court Palace was built in 1515 for Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, a favourite of King Henry VIII. When Wolsey fell from favour, the king seized the palace for himself.



*Hampton Court Palace*





*Exquisite brick chimneys  
at Hampton Court*

We wonder how many bricklayers today would be able to match the skill of those that built the chimneys at the palace. Did they have a pattern? Or did they make it up as they went along? The 241 decorative brick chimneys form the largest collection in England. The chimney stacks consist of ornate cut brickwork with differing geometric patterns. Cardinal Wolsey spared no expense. The purpose was to draw the eye upward to highlight the wealth and power of its owner! On

taking over the palace, King Henry VIII would have been just as pleased with the concept as the Cardinal.



*'King Henry' visits*

Recently on a visit to Hampton Court Palace with our grandchildren, we were thrilled to find a very realistic King Henry and his courtiers dressed up for the visitors!

It is estimated that the building of Hampton Court Palace required in excess of 26 million bricks. A bricklayer can lay 300 - 500 bricks per day, depending on the complexity of his work.

The average new house uses 5,180 bricks, a low number because much of the construction is of concrete blocks. We are told the UK needs 264,000 new homes. That is 1.4 billion bricks! Having lived through periods of brick shortages, it is very doubtful whether the country has the capacity to produce so many bricks.

Of even earlier date than Hampton Court is Someries Castle, near Luton, which was built round about 1430. Originally the residence of



William de Someries, the interesting ruins can be visited today, which include a gatehouse and chapel. The title ‘Castle’ is misleading. It never was a castle as we understand it, but rather a fortified manor house. This is thought to be the oldest brick-built dwelling in the country.



*Somerries Castle*

This reminds me of an American couple who were buying a house in England. As they walked round the half-built house the man kept exclaiming to his wife, “Real brick walls. Real brick walls.” The part of the USA he came from was predominately timber-framed housing and to be offered ‘real brick walls’ pleased him greatly!



*Bricks from the Mary Rose*

Perhaps we do not think of bricks being used on board ship. When King Henry VIII’s flagship *Mary Rose* was raised from the seabed in October 1982 a large number of bricks was found in the kitchen area. They had been used to contain the fire which burnt continually underneath the giant water heating cauldron. In spite of being submerged for 437 years they were perfectly preserved. An inventory of 1514 states that the king’s ship had ‘*Grete coper kettiles on Furnous sett in lyme and breke (brick) closed above with lead.*’

The lead cauldron is on display set in the original bricks.

The skeleton of the cook was also found in his kitchen! From his skull experts have reconstructed his features. We hope it is a fair representation.



*Medieval Winchester Stables*

The picture on the left is another example of medieval brickwork, found in what were originally stables at Winchester.

In more modern times, you may have noticed some of the excellent brickwork used in the reconstruction of St. Pancras International station. Originally built in 1868, this masterpiece of Victorian

engineering underwent a major renovation in 2001-2007 at a cost of £800m. It is now a Grade 1 listed building. And to think that in the 1960's it was threatened with demolition!

Bricks are often given local names according to the origin of the clay. Arlesey Greys are made from the local gault clay, and buildings in this brick are found throughout Bedfordshire (including Clifton chapel).

Chesham Multis are a quality handmade brick made from the clay found in parts of Buckinghamshire. The use of local bricks can define the character of whole areas.



*St. Pancras Station*

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Unlike the Old Testament, there are no references to brick in the New Testament, but several references to buildings of stone. When the Lord Jesus spoke of the forthcoming destruction of Jerusalem, He said, "Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be one stone left upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

This leads to our closing thought - the Lord's conversation with Peter: "Thou art Peter (*the stone*)," said the Lord Jesus. Stones, like Peter, can fall. But the Lord Jesus went on to speak of Himself: "Upon this Rock (*Christ*) will I build my church." Other buildings, including the best of brick and stone buildings, will one day fall. But the *Rock* is eternal, and can never be shaken. That is our only place of safety and refuge, the Rock of Ages. What a mercy if we can say, "Cleft for ME."

## **PRIMOZ TRUBAR (1508-1586)**

Mention Primož Trubar, and immediately it is asked, “Whoever is this man? We have never heard of him.” His history is not well-known in our own country, although it deserves to be.

The story of Primož Trubar is not only interesting in itself, but most importantly, it proves that God’s work is found in “all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues” (Rev. 7. 9).

Trubar was a Protestant reformer, although he did not suffer martyrdom, as his life was preserved. Frequently he was in much danger, and suffered banishment from his native land.

### **His birth and family**

Primož Trubar was born in 1508 (twenty-five years after the birth of Martin Luther) in a village known as Rasica in the part of Slovenia called Carniola, about five miles north of the capital city, Ljubljana. His father, Michael Trubar, was a miller and woodworker. The family lived at the mill. Primož means “first man,” and frequently the oldest son bore the name (and still does today). In 1510 the plague took many lives. The Trubar family was spared.



*Birthplace of Primož Trubar - The Mill, Rasica, Slovenia*



## Slovenia

Slovenia is one of Europe's smallest states, with a population of only two million, just twice the population of Birmingham. This beautiful land has borders with Austria to the north, Hungary to the east, Croatia to the south, and Italy to the west. There is a very short stretch of Adriatic coastline.

The language is complex - there are seven distinct regional dialect groups, and 49 dialects! All Slovenians can understand one another, but sometimes with difficulty.

In 1945, after the war, Slovenia became part of communist Yugoslavia. It continued under communist domination until achieving full independence in 1991. Until the early 1900's Slovenia was predominantly a peasant country. Many village traditions remain.

The Slovenian people are well educated and friendly. Our student readers will be interested to know that university education in Slovenia is completely free - no student loans there! Their only expense is the purchase of text books.



*Peasant Slovenian dress*



*Primoz Trubar*

## A national hero

Slovenia is overwhelmingly a Roman Catholic country. So it is astonishing that Trubar, the Protestant reformer, should be honoured as a national hero. There is even a Primoz Trubar day every 8th June, and a national Reformation Day each year on 31st October. Why should this be?

The reason is that Trubar was the first person ever to apply the collective term 'Slovenzom' to his native people. "To all Slovenzom, mercy, peace and grace and the true revelation of God through Jesus Christ," he wrote. The name has been used ever since.

So Trubar is still honoured for his founding work of the nation. When visiting the country, our guide spoke in glowing terms of what he had done for the country, but felt obliged to add: “However, we are ashamed of him and his religion!!!”

### **Leaves home**

In 1520, when he was twelve, Trubar left his home at Rasica to begin his education. He was never to return again.

First, he was sent to a school in the seaside town of Rijeka, today an important port and the third largest city in Croatia. After two years, he travelled to Salzburg to continue his education, and finally travelled to Trieste in northern Italy where he continued his studies under Pietro Bonomo, a Roman Catholic bishop. The bishop’s pupil proved outstanding, and in 1527 he appointed him as priest in Loka back in central Slovenia, not very far from his birth town.



*Pietro Bonomo*

Although now a priest, Trubar still desired to study, and we find he remained in the priesthood only one year before enrolling at the University of Vienna in 1528. Here it was that he began to hear rumours of the teachings of a man from Germany. His name, he learnt, was Martin Luther. Tales were spread by immigrant miners, travelling craftsmen and traders. This man, Luther, had dared to attack some of the teachings of the Roman Catholic church, and was particularly opposed to the sale of indulgences. Trubar’s curiosity was aroused.

### **Returns to Slovenia**

In 1530 Trubar returned to Slovenia, now to live in the capital city Ljubljana. His home, close to the river that runs through the city, is still standing, and is the oldest building in the city.

Trubar was a great advocate of education. He founded and taught at a school just a few steps from his home, where the Tourist Information Centre now stands. He wrote that every child must go to school - even girls: a notion that was far in advance of the age. He realised the importance of education if the nation was to prosper.



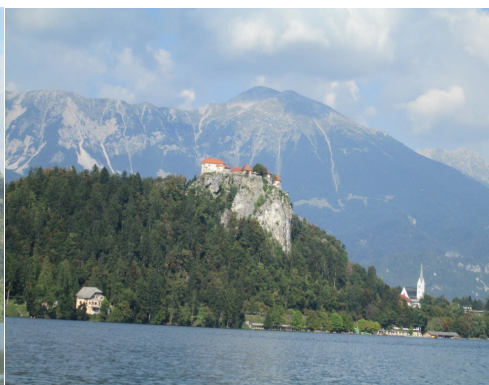
*Back of Trubar’s house*

For seventeen years he remained in the city. As well as continuing his teaching, he began to preach, and for a while was Canon of the city's Cathedral of St. Nicholas. More and more his preaching leant towards Protestantism, until finally, in the year 1547 the authorities were forced to expel him from the city.

In spite of this, by now the Reformation was forging ahead. In the area of Bled (perhaps the most picturesque area of Slovenia), the parish priest Lenart Stojan, supported by the powerful noble Count Dietrichstein, ardently preached the Reformation doctrines. When another Protestant, the Count Herbart Auersperg, took over as lord of Bled Castle, conditions for the spread of the new beliefs improved even more.



*St. Nicholas Cathedral where Trubar preached*



*Lenart Stojan's church on Lake Bled    Count Auersperg's Castle on Lake Bled*

### **Flees to Germany**

After his expulsion from Ljubljana one year after the death of Martin Luther, Trubar made his way to Rothenburg, Germany, where he continued as a Protestant preacher. In the meantime, Ferdinand, the emperor of the Habsburg empire, was determined to enforce the Catholic faith and issued a warrant for his arrest. The emperor decreed that he was to be incarcerated in Ljubljana Castle. The arrest never came to pass.

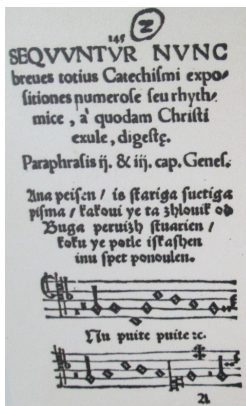
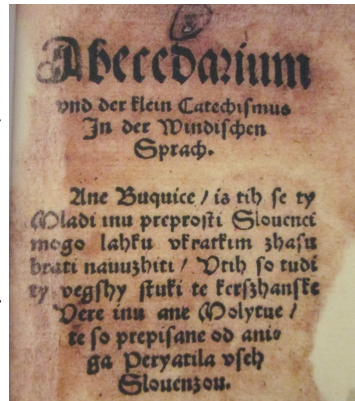


*Ferdinand I*



Though removed from his native land, and lonely, he did not forget his people. It was while he was here, that he prepared a grammar, or rather a kind of word book, of the Slovenian language which he called 'Abecedarium.' This, along with his 'Catechismus,' were the first printed books in the Slovenian language.

The Abecedarium was an eight-leaf booklet for helping people learn the alphabet. It was printed in 1550 in the Schwabacher script, which was a blackletter Gothic typeface fairly close to handwriting. (For those interested in fonts, it can still be downloaded free of charge from the internet as a Windows font.) The booklet was reprinted in Tübingen, Germany, with some corrections in 1555 in a font rather more like today's typesets.



His desire in developing the Slovenian tongue was that the people might become familiar with "our true Christian faith." It is interesting that his Catechismus also contained the first Slovenian printed musical manuscript. The preface to his booklets contained the text: "Every tongue shall confess to God" (Romans 14. 11). His was no easy task. Slovenian was not yet a structured language and there were no established rules of spelling and grammar. The many different dialects were an added problem. Trubar had to create a unified language, based on the type of Slovenian he knew best - the dialect spoken in Ljubljana.

### Gospel of Matthew translated

While a preacher at Rothenburg, he worked tirelessly to translate the Gospel of Matthew into his native Slovenian language, which was finally published in 1555. Although he translated from the Latin Vulgate, he diligently compared his translation with Martin Luther's German version. Over the next twenty years he translated the whole of the New Testament which, as soon as it was ready, was published in three parts. In 1567 he also published a hymnbook, and a commentary

on the Epistles of Paul.

### The entire Bible translated

The whole Bible was translated into Slovenian in 1584 by Jurij Dalmatin, a disciple of Primoz. We were told by a man whose mother tongue is Slovenian, that, if read today, it is surprisingly modern.

Dalmatin hoped his work would be printed in Ljubljana where the first printing press in Slovenia was functioning, but the provincial authorities would not allow it. It was therefore printed in Wittenberg, the town in Germany made famous by Martin Luther. The finished Bibles were smuggled into



Slovenia in barrels. Surprisingly, the Bishop of Ljubljana obtained permission from the pope for the Bible to be used by the Catholic clergy, but it was considered far too dangerous to be read by the townsfolk.

Dalmatin had 1,500 copies of the Bible printed. Amazingly, eighty copies remain in existence. When the Jesuits arrived in Ljubljana in 1597 to progress the work of the counter-reformation, all the books of Primoz Trubar and other protestant writers were burnt - very few escaped. But Dalmatin's

Bible was exempted by order of the bishop. Dalmatin died in 1589 at the young age of 41, five years after he had achieved his monumental task of translation.

In spite of the bonfires, here and there are found in Slovenian libraries original copies of Primoz Trubar's books. Our guide had difficulty in accepting that there are a number of originals in the British Library (near St Pancras station) - but we have it on good authority that the Library does possess a collection. How they got there, we do not know. A copy of Dalmatin's Bible was found only recently in the Vatican library!

In publishing his Bible, Dalmatin showed beyond doubt that the

Slovenian language was mature and rich enough to translate such an extensive and demanding text.

### **His family**

Primoz was married three times. He married his first wife, Barbara (a very common name in Slovenia), in 1549. Sadly, she died of the plague in 1565. The following year he married his second wife, Anastasia, who also predeceased him. His third wife was German, named Agnes, whom he married in 1581. She outlived her husband. He had one son named Felicijan, born to his first wife, Barbara. Felicijan published the last book written by his father, a translation of one of Luther's works.

### **His death**

By the time of his death, Primoz had written 26 books as well as translating the whole of the New Testament. He had lived to see the whole of the Bible translated by Jurij Dalmatin.



*Primoz Trubar,  
woodcut in older age*

Primoz Trubar died on 28 June 1586 at Tübingen, Germany, at the age of 78, where he was buried with great honours.

His motivation to advance the Slovenian language was a love for the truths of the gospel and that his fellow countrymen might read the Scriptures for themselves. We would love to know more of his spiritual experience but have been able to find out nothing further. There are Slovenian books about him, but nothing seems to have been translated into English, hence his comparative obscurity in this country and the USA.

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### **A few miscellaneous points of interest relating to Primoz Trubar**

- Did you know that on his 505th birthday in 2013, rather amazingly Trubar was given his own dedicated Google dingle?



- Did you know that in 2007 Trubar had his own one Euro coin? An astounding 29,650,000 coins were issued. The inscription



STATI INU OBSTATI means “To stand and withstand.”



- Trubar’s school for boys and, unusually for the day, girls stood on the site of the Tourist Information, 200 metres from Trubar’s house. On top of the hill in the background is the castle in which Emperor Ferdinand wished to imprison him (but never did).
- Were there Baptists in Slovenia? There is evidence that the Church of St. John the Baptist on the shore of Lake Bohinj, was used as a Baptist meeting house in the Middle Ages. These ‘anabaptists’ were much persecuted, and this remote location would have been the safest place for them. Quite possibly they were baptised in the lake, as



baptism by immersion was then the practice. The church was built in the mid-11th century, or even earlier. In 1296 it paid a papal tithe when it was recorded as Sand Johannes. There are numerous frescoes dating from the 1300's (including one of St. Christopher which is notorious as he is shown with six toes on his right foot).



*Church of St. John the Baptist, Lake Bohinj - the most photographed church in Slovenia. In 1926 the stone bridge replaced a wooden bridge.*

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**ROBERT BRUCE**, crowned King of the Scots in 1309, many times led his troops against England in the Scottish War of Independence. On one occasion the king slept in a barn. On awaking in the morning, he saw a spider attempting to climb up a beam. Several times it failed. The king watched attentively, until at last the spider succeeded.

Bruce jumped up and exclaimed: "This spider teaches me an admirable lesson of perseverance. Twelve times have I been beaten by the English. I was about to despair, but now I will try once more."

He went forth once more, and this time, in the famous battle of Bannockburn, he achieved a glorious victory. Scotland was at liberty.

## **THE CROWDED CHAPEL**

By Andrew Rayner

Crowds queued at the door. There were not enough places for everyone to sit in comfort. The upsets over pews were numerous; some people thought they owned them. Some people bought them by paying a pew rent; they had their names posted on the ends in little brass ticket holders. Some people said this was unfair; why should those that had money be guaranteed a seat whilst others had to wait and battle for the remaining ones?

For some the chapel was just the place to be on a Sunday, to show their finery, to catch up with the gossip after the service. However, for many it was the place they needed to be; they would not miss the service for anything. It was where their souls were fed; to them it was the very place where there was contact between heaven and earth. Like Jacob's ladder, with the angels ascending and descending, something rose heavenward from their souls and something came down from above. Grace, blessing, forgiveness, healing and peace flowed down and worship reached upwards far beyond the roof of the building. Week by week thirsty souls longed for their thirst to be assuaged. The great God of heaven and earth met with them; they had a little view of Him and His great goodness; their hearts were melted in love to their Saviour. At times bitter tears of repentance flowed. At other times there were sweet tears of joy and wonder; how could it be that the Lord of Glory should deign so much as to think of them, let alone love them, let alone die a cruel death at the hands of creatures for them? The floorboards were marked with their tears. A value could not be placed on the House of God because it was the very gate of heaven.

That was then. This is now. Everything is still in place. The pulpit and the pews, the Bible on the pulpit cushion, the preaching. A few things have appeared over the years: there is now an amplification system so that the hearers can always hear without difficulty; an efficient heating system has been installed instead of the old coal boiler; comfortable cushions cover each pew so that no one need sit in discomfort; the old stained floorboards have been covered. But there is one loss: the crowds have gone. Yes, there are a few faithful souls still meeting in the place but no amount of additional comfort will now entice the crowds to enter. They do not consider themselves to be in need.



Meanwhile, instead of crowding into God's house, the people are enjoying a relaxing morning in bed, reading the Sunday papers and then watching the build-up to the afternoon's extensive sports fixtures, preparing the Sunday 'roast', preparing to head out to the pub for the Sunday 'roast', indeed all manner of things. The chapel was for a bygone age when people believed in God and the afterlife, in heaven and hell. Although the evidence for the existence of a Supreme Being is as overwhelming as ever, their eyes are blind and they are more than happy to be blind; perish the thought of having to consider judgment and an eternal sentence.

But can things be different? What would make the difference? What made the difference before? Was it not the Lord's work in former years? Has He changed? Is the arm of the Lord "shortened, that it cannot save?" Are there some amongst the faithful few who are pleading day and night for the Lord's arm to pluck out lost sheep like brands from the burning, that His house might once again be filled?

"And may the gospel's joyful sound,  
Enforced by mighty grace,  
Awaken many sinners round,  
To come and fill the place."

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## LARGE LIGHT

A missionary in Africa was reading to his hearers that wonderful gospel chapter - the third chapter of John. He came to the sixteenth verse: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." As he read the verse, one of the bystanders cried out, "Read that again." It was read again. The poor man replied, "Is that true? God love us? God give His Son to die for us? Oh, *that is large light.*"

This poor heathen man had been living in darkness, and this sweet gospel declaration brought light into his soul. All of us by nature love darkness rather than light, but the entrance of God's words gives light and understanding. This hearer of the gospel uttered a sublime truth when he said the text gave him "*large light.*" No one has yet fathomed the depths of mercy contained in that word "*so.*"

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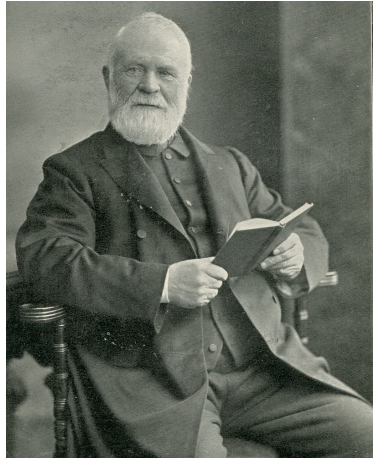
## WILLIAM SMITH - PART 8

Times of affliction, the people's hearts opened to supply his needs; many preaching engagements; Rehoboth Chapel, Tunbridge Wells re-opened, where later he would be Pastor. We continue the life of this servant of the Lord.

*(CONTINUED FROM WINTER 2017 PAGE 20)*

### **The Prince of Wales, and the Prince of Peace**

After this I was engaged to preach at Northampton. It so happened that on the Saturday when I had to pass through Coventry that the Prince of Wales was there on a visit. He had just arrived as I got there;



there were thousands of people turned out to see him. As I passed through the crowd and underneath the arches of evergreens, decorated with ribbons of every shade of colour, I saw on one of them these words: "Welcome, sweet Prince, to this our city!" I said to myself, the visit of this earthly prince will cost the people of this city thousands of pounds to meet the expenses of his visit, and yet they give him a hearty welcome. How very differently the Jews treated Jesus, the Prince of the kings of the earth - "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Thus my meditation of Jesus was sweet, for I felt I was among those that believed on His name; and while the world was giving their prince a welcome to their city, I gave Jesus a welcome to my heart. Tears of love and gratitude flowed down my cheeks as I wended my way through crowds of people and bands of music; but I proved:

"My inward peace they could not wound,  
Because my God was near."

At length I got to the station, took my ticket, and entered the train; but before I got far on my way my comfort was withdrawn, and I began to feel very cold. I looked about the carriage to see if I could find any draught, but I could not, and I felt the cold chill all the way. When I arrived at Northampton I walked fast up to my lodgings, but could not get warm. I could not eat anything when I got there, so I drank a little brandy and warm water and went to bed. I went to sleep for a short time,

and when I awoke I felt very ill. I got out of bed, and became very sick, and vomited for some time; then I broke out into a perspiration, and at once got into bed again, and lay until morning.

About eight o'clock I got up, feeling very weak and poorly. I could not eat any breakfast, so I lay on the couch until it was time to go to chapel. I only had to walk across the street, but when I went into the pulpit I was afraid I should not be able to go through the service. The Lord, however, so strengthened me, both in body and mind, that I preached an hour with ease. After the morning service I sank very low again. I ate but very little at dinner. I had a little brandy and soda water in the afternoon, and that refreshed me a little, so that I was enabled to go again in the evening; and the Lord helped me to speak in a very remarkable manner, and the word spoken was made a blessing unto His people.

After the service we went home, and I ate a little supper and then went to bed. I soon fell asleep, and slept several hours. In the morning, when I got up, I felt a little better, and as I had promised to call and preach at Welton on my return home, I decided to do so.

### **A serious illness comes on**

After breakfast I told a friend that I had decided to call at Welton and preach in the evening, so he invited me to stay and have dinner with him, and then go in the afternoon. I accepted the invitation, and we then went a long walk before dinner. This made me feel rather weak again; but after dinner I walked to the station, which was about a mile. I took a ticket for Crick - the station is a few miles from Rugby. I had never been to Welton before, and I thought it was near to Crick station. At length the train arrived there. I got out, gave my ticket up, and went up the road. I asked a person how far it was to Welton. "Three miles," was the reply. This made me feel a little weaker, as it was now getting dusk, and it was a strange road to me. I walked as fast as I could, and when I thought I was nearly there I met another person, whom I asked how far it was to the village. "Two miles," was the reply. I now began to feel very agitated, and in a short time my nose began to bleed very fast. I then stood still for a time, and let it bleed; this made me feel still weaker. In a few moments it abated, and I walked on, and it soon became dark.

At length I saw some houses on the side of the road, and I asked a man how far it was to the village. He said, "You are just entering into it." I

asked him if he knew the manager of the little Baptist chapel. He replied, "Yes," and he then showed me where he lived. I thanked him, and knocked at the door, and the man's wife let me in. I told them I felt ill, and I was afraid I should not be able to walk to the chapel if it was far away. He told me it was not far, and I might lean upon his arm. I had a cup of tea, and then we went to the chapel, and I leaned upon the man's arm. I went up into the pulpit very weak in body, and not very strong in faith; but, bless the Lord, out of weakness He made me strong, so that I went through the service, and was very much helped, and the people were blessed and edified.

When I got back from the chapel my good hostess said she would make me some gruel for my supper. I thanked her. She made it, and put some brandy into it; but the first spoonful I put in my mouth was all I could take. I slept but very little that night, and in the morning, after breakfast, I started to the station; but being so weak I could not walk very fast, so I lost the first train, and had to wait two hours for the next. This made me feel ill, and I began to wonder whether I should ever reach home. At length the next train came, and I got into it. When I got to Rugby I found that train went down the Trent valley, so instead of getting off at Bedworth station, which I should have done if I could have caught the first, I had to get off at Bulkington, which caused me to have to walk a mile and a half before I got home. I called at a friend's house on my way and rested for about an hour. I then managed to walk home, and by this time my face had begun to swell.

Mrs. Smith asked me what was the matter; I said I did not know. She said, "You look as if you have been in a storm." I said, "I am in one." She then went to the chemist and got some cold cream to put on my face; but that did me no good, so she sent for the doctor. When he came, and saw me, he shook his head, and said it was a serious case of erysipelas. He ordered me to bed at once, and said every draught from the window of my bedroom was to be stopped. He then went home and sent me some medicine to take about every three hours. My head kept swelling until I had no features discernable, and my body smoked like a small furnace. This lasted about nine days.

During this time I had no sensible feeling of the Lord's presence. I never quite lost my reason, but was kept looking and longing for something from Him, so that my affliction might be sanctified. On the

ninth or tenth day I felt very much cast down, because of my sad state, both of body and mind. I asked the Lord what it all could mean, and He suddenly dropped the following words with power into my mind:

“You must not learn God’s truth  
As schoolboys learn their task;  
Such knowledge is not proof  
Against delusion’s blast.  
An empty knowledge bloats with air,  
But dies when dreadful storms appear.”

I exclaimed, “Lord, if I had nothing more than empty knowledge, it would die in this storm.” From that time I felt a change, and began to get better. I was favoured with sweet communion with the Lord, and my meditation of Him was sweet; and His word was so sweet that I told a friend (though I could only speak in a whisper) that I could preach, and so I did inwardly, though not to be heard by the creature.

I had not yet been out of bed, and as the fever gradually abated I began to feel very cold, and I felt as though I was lying on sheets which had been dipped in grease, which had been warm, but had now got cold. This made me feel uncomfortable at times, but I had to endure it until the doctor gave orders for me to have a change of linen. When he gave orders for this, I was lifted out of bed and clean sheets were put on, and I was washed and made very comfortable. I lay in bed for another week, and when I was able to sit up I was not allowed to come downstairs for several days. During the time I was in bed I was very much blessed in my soul.

### **Trials and encouragements**

I still improved in my health, through the Lord’s blessing attending the means used for that end. My wife said she felt sure I should not die, because while she was in trouble about me the Lord dropped the following words with power into her soul: “He shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord.” This raised up faith in her to believe that He would be faithful to His Word, and she proved Him so.

Walsall was the first place I went to preach at after my recovery. I spoke in Mr. Mountfort’s pulpit, and the Lord was with me in a very remarkable way, and so blessed the word I was enabled to speak that there was scarce a dry eye in the chapel. Mrs. Mountfort told me she had not had such a time of refreshing from the Lord since the death of Mr.



Mountfort. One man was so blessed that he gave me five shillings. This was very acceptable at that time, because I needed it.

The next place at which I went to preach after my affliction was Newark Street Chapel, Leicester. I stayed at the house of Mr. Jackson. I was still very weak in body, but this friend gave me several glasses of old port wine during the three days I stayed with him, and that strengthened me very much, so that I left his house much improved in my health.

I cannot remember much about my preaching there, only I know some liked what I was enabled to speak and others did not. I remember one man used to sit before me with his Bible, and every few minutes he would rattle the leaves over as fast as he could, which annoyed some of the friends. But it did not annoy me, because he only displayed his ignorance.

After this I went again to Stamford several times. During the week before one of my visits I was very much tempted and tried with many things, and on the Saturday I felt as though Satan might as well go to preach as me. I scarcely knew how to get ready to go. I could get nothing from the Lord, so I had to go as I was, very much cast down. On the Sabbath I was led to speak of the temptations and trials many of the Lord's people had to pass through. I cannot remember what my text was, but the Lord blessed the testimony I was enabled to give. It was sealed upon the heart of a poor woman, who had walked several miles with four children to hear, so that she was delivered from all her sins and fears, which had been a great burden to her for a long time.

They brought her to me after dinner. She told me of her deliverance, and I hope I felt grateful to the Lord for His mercy, both to her and to myself. She expressed a desire for me to baptise her. I told her I should be pleased to do so if I lived nearer Stamford, but I lived sixty miles away, and the trains ran so that I could not get there before night.

Some months after this I went to preach there again. I was very much helped in the morning, and many were favoured in hearing. While I was at dinner a great darkness came over my mind, and I wondered what it could mean. I began to fear I should not be able to speak in the afternoon. I went to the chapel in great agitation of mind, and I went into the pulpit the same. The clerk gave out hymn 328, and when he came to the third verse it entered into my heart with Divine power. All

my darkness and fears fled, my soul was set at liberty, and I proved the poet to be true and the devil a liar, as I had done before.

### **Rehoboth Chapel, Tunbridge Wells**

In January 1874, Rehoboth Chapel, Tunbridge Wells, was re-opened by Mr. Hull and Mr. Ashdown, after being closed for some time. Mr. J. Carr, senior, who was the cause of its being re-opened, felt a desire that it should be carried on by having as supplies men who knew by experience what they preached. In April Mr. Hull was engaged to preach at Leicester. On his return he called at my house at Bedworth, and stayed all night. In the morning, while we sat talking together, the postman brought him some letters, and among them was one from Mr. Carr, asking him if he could call and give them a week evening service on his return to Hastings; and if he knew any friend he could recommend to them for a Sabbath.

When he had read it he handed it to me, and asked me if I could give them a Sabbath. I looked at the Sabbath named in the letter and said, No, I was engaged for that day. He asked me where I was engaged. I said, For home, that was Bedworth.

Just then Mr. Sinkinson came in with a friend, and they both sat down. He then asked me which Sabbath I was engaged to preach at home. I told him, and then Mr. Hull said, "I want him for that Sabbath." After a pause, Mr. Sinkinson said, "Then I think you can have him, for I have written to a minister asking him to supply for me the Sabbath previous to the one you want William for (meaning me), and in his reply he said he could not, but he could have come on the next Lord's day, which was the day I had engaged, so we agreed for him to come. When Mr. Sinkinson heard all, he said, "William, I believe it is the Lord's doing." Thus the way was opened for my first visit to Tunbridge Wells.

For the information of those who may not know why the chapel was closed for a time, it was built in 1851 for Mr. Edwards, who at that time professed to be a Baptist in principle, and the articles of faith were drawn up according to those principles, which are clearly laid down in the Word of God. He, with others, who professed to believe the same things as he propagated, subscribed to the articles, and were joined together in church fellowship, and all seemed to go on very well for a time. At length, under some strange influence, he proposed to turn the church into an open communion one. This being contrary to the articles, some of the

members and trustees would not consent to it. After trying to force his new creed upon some of the friends, to no purpose, and they being dissatisfied with his ministry, sent him word they did not require his services any more. Then the doors were locked against him. This caused him to leave, and some of his hearers left with him. After a time the Salem Chapel was built for him. In that place he was left to go farther from the truth, by denying the eternal punishment of the wicked, and here I leave him.

After this, the friends at Rehoboth carried on the services by supplies, but some of them proved to be men of loose habits, others only ministers of the letter and not of the Spirit; so by degrees the chapel was emptied and had to be closed.

### **Various preaching engagements**

Returning to my narrative, I preached at Northampton on the first Sabbath in May, and on the Monday evening, or Tuesday morning I started for Hastings. I arrived there about noon. Mr. Hull met me at the station, and there we met with Mr. and Mrs. Godwin. We accompanied them as far as to Mrs. Davis's, where they were going to stay for a few days. When we left them we called to see two ladies who I had never seen before. Mr. Hull introduced me to them as a friend of his from Bedworth. They treated me very kindly, and when we were about to leave, they invited us to come to tea in the afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. Godwin. We agreed to do so.

They shook hands with us, and in so doing one of them left two sovereigns in my hand. This so overcame me that when I got into the street I burst into tears of gratitude at the Lord's goodness so clearly manifested unto unworthy me; for when I started from home I left Mrs. Smith without any money, and told her she must have a few things on trust until I returned home. I had not told anyone my position, but the Lord knew, and how blessed it is when we can watch His hand in His gracious dealings with us, and prove Him to be a God that hears and answers our prayers both in providence and grace. I told Mr. Hull my position before I started from home and what I had given to me, and he rejoiced with me. We went to tea, and a very comfortable afternoon I spent with them.

Mr. Godwin preached in the evening for Mr. Hull; his text was taken from the first chapter in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 16th verse. I had

a good time in hearing the good man that night. When he left Hastings I never saw him again on earth; but I hope to meet him again in heaven. I stayed at Hastings until Saturday; during my stay I went with Mr. Hull on a visit to several of the friends; when I left each house they put a piece of money into my hand, which filled me with amazement.

On the Saturday, I left for Tunbridge Wells. Mr. Carr met me at the station and accompanied me to his house in Calverly Road. There I had my food, but I had to sleep just opposite because he could not find me a bed at his house. I was very much tried on the Sunday morning because I could not find the words I wanted to speak from. In searching for them my mind was arrested by these words: "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor. 1. 4.) I preached from the words in the morning, and the Lord made my discourse a blessing unto several who were present. Among the number was a business man who came from London that morning.

I was led to enumerate many of the troubles the people of God were called to pass through while in this vale of tears, and that such needed a word of comfort. I said among other things, looking at business men when in a state of prosperity, we are apt to think they had no trouble; but I said, if a person came and got three hundred pounds in that man's debt, and then failed so that the creditor lost that amount, it would trouble him though it might not ruin him, and this man would want something comforting. The Lord made what I said a comfort to a businessman who had come from London, for after the service was over he came into the vestry and said: "Sir, your sermon was for me. I used to sit under James Wells; he was a good preacher. I heard on Saturday that a tradesman in Tunbridge Wells who has been having goods from me had failed. I came down this morning to enquire whether it was true, and I find it is, so I shall lose about three hundred pounds, but it will not ruin me. It troubled me when I heard about it, but what I have heard this morning has comforted me, and I shall return by the next train."

Thus I proved the Lord was with me on my first visit. After the services of the day I retired to rest and had a comfortable night's sleep. In the morning I arose quite refreshed. After breakfast was over I started home. I arrived there in the afternoon and found Mrs. Smith and son quite as well as I expected. Before tea I put all the money on the



table which the Lord had inclined His people to give me. I told her how I came by it. She looked amazed and was quite overcome at the Lord's goodness thus manifested towards us, and we both wept together.

After this I went to supply at the various places I had engaged to preach at on the Sabbath, until September 20th, when I came again to preach at Rehoboth. The Lord blessed my testimony again to the comforting and establishing of the souls of His people. This led to my engaging to supply four Sabbaths in 1875. I returned home to Bedworth. On January 10th, 1875, I visited Tunbridge Wells again. I preached on the Sabbath, and the Lord blessed my message to the comfort of some, and the convincing of others of their lost and ruined state as sinners before Him, a just and holy God.

*TO BE CONTINUED*

## **GOD OF THE HILLS, BUT NOT OF THE VALLEYS**

### **The Syrians defeated by Israel**

And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the Lord, Because the Syrians have said, The Lord is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord (1 Kings 20. 28).

Ben-hadad, the drunkard king of Syria, sent a demand to Ahab, king Israel. He wanted for himself silver, and gold, and the 'goodliest' of the women and children of Israel. Shamefully, King Ahab agreed.

But Ben-hadad was not satisfied. He instructed his servants to take from Ahab's house *anything* they desired. This time King Ahab did not agree. So Ben-hadad sent a great army to secure his demands. We read "the Syrians filled the country."

God was mindful of His people. He sent a prophet to Ahab: "Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thy hand this day." With God's promised help, they "slew the Syrians with a great slaughter."

But it was not long before the Syrians came up again. Why were they so bold after the great slaughter they had suffered a short while before? Well, the king of Syria's servants had said to him that the gods of Israel were "gods of the hills." If this time we fight them in the *valley*, they reasoned, we shall overcome them.

Now we come to the text. God was about to make it known that He was not a God just of the hills, nor a God even of the hills and the valleys - but that He was the almighty God who reigns over all things.

How deficient are many people's views of God today, so very similar to those of the Syrians who thought He was just a God of the hills.

- God is a God of love, they say. But they forget that He is also a God of justice.
- God is too kind, they say, ever to condemn someone to a never-ending hell. But they forget that it was the Son of God who said "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."
- God will overlook our little faults, they say. But they forget that the word of God declares that if a man "offend in one point, he is guilty of all."
- God, they say, requires us only to live according to the ten commandments to the best of our ability. But they forget Christ's words: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

No, our God is not just the God of the hills. He is the *almighty* God. We read that to the dismay of Ben-hadad's army, when fighting in the valley the children of Israel slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day. The Syrian's had to prove that the God of Israel was also the God the valleys.

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## GRAVE INSCRIPTION

In the midst of life we are in death;  
 Be ye therefore ready also  
 For the Son of Man cometh in an hour  
 When ye think not.

*(Harpenden Graveyard; John Missenden, d. 1868)*

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## A FEW CURRENT MATTERS

### The snowbow

An unusual moonbow was featured in our Spring 2017 edition (page 40).

In the cold weather in December an even more unusual phenomenon was seen when a snowbow was seen arching across the skies above the Peak District. The Met Office said: “It is quite unusual in



this country to have a combination of low sun at the same time as falling snow, which is necessary to produce a snowbow.” Sunlight is refracted through snowflakes in the same way as rain. The rainbow is mentioned only twice in the Bible, both times in the book of Revelation. In the account of Noah, the reference is simply “My bow.”

It was recently reported that the record held by Sheffield for the longest-lasting rainbow has been broken. A rainbow on 14 March 1994 lasted for six hours, from 9am to 3pm. On the last day of November 2017 a rainbow in Taipei, Taiwan was seen from 7.15am until 4pm, almost nine hours.

### Ageing will never be beaten

A study by the University of Arizona has concluded: “Ageing is mathematically inevitable. There is logically, theoretically, mathematically no way out. Ageing is an intrinsic property of being multicellular.” It had been hoped that the discovery of ‘telomeres’ could be the key to keeping the human race for ever young. Telomeres are caps, much like the ones on the end of shoelaces, which stop the chromosomes that house our DNA from fraying. How true are the words of the woman of Tekoah, “For we must needs die” (2 Samuel 14. 14).

### Personal debt

Britons owe £205billion on credit cards, personal loans, car finance and overdrafts. Banks have reported a surge in unpaid debts. MPs said the figures - revealed in a Bank of England survey - were deeply concerning.

**Oldest man**

A reader sent a cutting on the world's oldest man who had recently celebrated his 113th birthday. A few days later it was reported that the man, Francisco Olivera, who lives in southern Spain, had died. He had been to hospital only twice, enjoying a daily walk round his village until he was 107. He recovered from a cataract operation at the age of 98. His 82-year-old daughter Maria was his full-time carer.

**Sunday trading**

European countries have a variety of Sunday trading laws. In Germany, Sunday trading is limited to railway stations, airports and petrol stations. In France, until last year high street shops were allowed to open on five Sundays per year, but this has now been changed to twelve Sundays, with some tourist towns allowed to open every Sunday. In Poland, a bill has been put forward to the Polish parliament by the Solidarity trade union to ban Sunday shopping for larger retail stores on all but seven Sundays. In 2015 restrictive laws were introduced in Hungary, causing a public outcry. Following a referendum, shopping hours in Hungary have gone back to being unregulated.

**Christmas Day shopping**

Millions spent Christmas Day shopping online as sales began, some sites crashing from the strain. Disgruntled customers then spent time on social media complaining they could not get through. It was estimated that some £844million was spent on Christmas Day. What a very sad way to occupy such a special day.

**Speed of emails**

An email travelling from Britain to Australia without attachments will arrive 0.2 seconds after the send key is pressed. In comparison, a blink of an eye takes 0.35 seconds. That makes an effective speed of around 85,000 miles per second, or slightly less than half the speed of light. What would our forefathers have said?

**Births to living-apart families**

One in ten UK children are born to parents who live apart, official records show. In 2016 a record 10.3 per cent of newborns were from families in which mother and father have different homes. In some poorer northern towns, 70 per cent of babies are born to unmarried mothers. Many of these babies will be abandoned by their fathers.



The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, instead of standing up for Biblical marriage, has embraced the idea that families can be made of ‘myriad combinations’ of men, women and children.

The average family today is 1.9 children, the lowest level on record. In the mid-1930's the average was 2.42 children.

### **Reference to God as “He”**

The Church of Sweden has said its ministers should no longer refer to God as ‘the Lord’ or ‘He’ because it displays a gender bias. The national Evangelical Lutheran Church issued the instruction in a new handbook. Archbishop Antje Jackelan said: “Theologically we know God is beyond our gender determinations. God is not human.” However, a theology professor at Sweden’s Lund University said the move was “undermining the doctrine of the Trinity.” This daring blasphemy is almost unbelievable - surely a Christian by definition must follow Christ, who constantly referred to ‘My Father.’ Sadly, this move is afoot in more than one denomination in our own land.

### **Bible references dropped from the nativity story**

The Scripture Union has removed mention of the Bible in its simplified version of the nativity story issued last year to 100,000 children. The Union feels that the removal of explicit reference to the Bible takes away a barrier. Whilst we do not agree with this approach, we appreciate that their aim was simplicity. There is woeful ignorance amongst many children - a 2014 survey found that one in three children aged 10 to 13 did not know that Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus.

### **Transgender minister**

The UK Methodist Church has appointed its first transgender minister, a father of two who now lives as a woman. The Church of England has recently approved an adaptation of the ‘Service of Affirmation of Baptismal Faith’ for use ‘to mark a gender transition.’ Clergy who wish to stage a service for a parishioner who has had a sex change will use the service. Last July, the General Synod of the CofE called on the House of Bishops to consider preparing such a service. The votes in the House of Bishops were 30 in favour and four against or abstaining. In the House of Clergy 127 backed the motion with 44 against or abstaining, and in the House of Laity 127 supported the motion with 56 against or abstaining. Shamefully, the greatest demand came from the Bishops.

## SPRINGTIME



“The ever-changing seasons  
In silence come and go;  
But Thou, eternal Father,  
No time or change canst know.”

These lines were written by Walsham How, Bishop of Wakefield in the 1800's (perhaps best known for his hymn *For all the saints, who from their labours rest*). The Bishop brings before us a great truth - the changeableness of everything here below, but an unchanging God.

Neither spring nor autumn are found in the Word of God, although there are a number of references to summer and winter. What a beautiful season spring is! As the Bishop said, how silently it comes. Almost overnight it seems the primroses burst forth to herald in the lengthening days.

Spring is full of surprises. What does it mean for you? I know of one little girl, for whom spring began when she went to stay in her grandparents' home in a Sussex village at Eastertime. Primroses abounded everywhere, in the woods, lanes and hedgerows, and even the walls of the cottage gardens. Given the freedom to roam, she delighted in picking many bunches to take into her grandparents. It was the beginning of warmer weather and longer evenings after the long winter.

Isaac Watts compares that “land of pure delight,” the heavenly Canaan, with spring - this time an *everlasting spring*:

“There everlasting spring abides,  
And never-withering flowers.  
Death, like a narrow sea, divides  
This heavenly land from ours.”

# PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



“For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee (Isaiah 54. 10).

**SUMMER 2018**

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### ***Cover picture:***

Cader Idris, the mountain range that lies at the southern end of the Snowdonia National Park, Wales. From here Mary Jones began her walk to Bala.



# PERCEPTION

Volume 10

SUMMER 2018

Number 38

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## EDITORIAL

TEXT 1: *The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more (Isaiah 19. 7).*

TEXT 2: *Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full (2 John 1. 12).*

One can hardly imagine a world without paper. As we look round our homes, they are full of paper - letters, bills, books, magazines, newspapers, catalogues, envelopes, shopping lists, road maps, school reports, calendars, bank notes, postage stamps - the list is endless. It is not surprising that the world production of paper is over 400 million tons each year - and is rising.

The value of paper was realised during the Second World War, when there was a great shortage. The need to conserve paper in Britain led to rationing from 1940 with publishers having their paper supplies cut to 60% of their pre-war usage. The 'Book Production War Economy Agreement' of 1942 between the Ministry of Supply and the Publishers Association brought in regulations governing the production of books with strict guidelines covering print size, words per page, blank pages and so on. Paper rationing in Britain continued until 1949. The Editor is showing his age when he recalls reading these economy books as they continued to circulate for some time after the end of rationing. At school, in the mid-1950's when an exercise book was full (or we claimed it was full) we had to take it to one of the teachers, who went through it page by page to ensure you had not wasted any space.

When the digital age began to dawn in the 1970's, and in particular with the expansion of the internet in the 1980's, we were told to expect a paperless future. The office would no longer be cluttered with paper. Sadly, the truth appears to be the opposite. In 1989, when I first began to prepare the annual accounts for the Bethesda Fund, at the end of the year we had to prepare what is known as a Trial Balance. This is a list

of how much has been spent on everything during the year. Bethesda had no computer in those days, so it was done manually. It was about three pages long. Twenty years later, I printed out the Trial Balance on the computer, and found it was an astounding 286 pages! True, it was more detailed, but most of what was produced you did not really need to know. So much for the paperless office!

Most of you will know that the word ‘paper’ is derived from the Latin *papyrus*, the word for the *Cyperus papyrus* plant. Papyrus was used in ancient Egypt and other countries around the Mediterranean to produce a paper-like material made by laminating together natural plant fibres. On a day trip to Egypt, my wife and I were shown the process, which was achieved by laying strips of Papyrus, first one way, then the other way. This produced a strong and versatile material quite good enough to write on. At the end of the demonstration we were given a piece of Papyrus to bring home - which at the moment, I have been unable to find.

The word ‘paper’ is found only twice in the Bible in the two texts at the top of this editorial, one in Isaiah, and the other in the second epistle of John. Isaiah prophesied that the land of Egypt was to be brought down, not by the hand of an enemy, but that God Himself would visit the land. Although Egypt was once a land of bondage to God’s people, now in their trouble they looked to Egypt for help, instead of waiting only on God. That great river Nile, the glory of the land, would fail. Those valuable paper reeds would wither. The country was renowned for its linen, but now “they that work in fine flax shall be confounded.” What a lesson there is here - how quickly can God bring down even the most mighty of nations.

However, God did not forsake his people. Later in the chapter we read that “an altar to the Lord” will be found there in Egypt, and the visitor will find that “five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan.” How can this be? Well, God is a merciful God: “And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord” (verse 22). Notice this: He shall smite - *and* heal. If any of God’s people there in Egypt were able to write, what mercies would they have been able to record on their “paper reeds!”

Many of the great men of the past are remembered for what they *wrote* rather than what they *did*. Perhaps we think of Adolf Hitler and

his autobiographical *Mein Kampf*, or Winston Churchill's four volume *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*. If we turn to the religious world, Matthew Henry is remembered for his famous *Commentary on the Whole Bible in Six Volumes* - but if we were to ask someone something he did in his life, few people would know anything at all.

We never read of the Lord Jesus writing a book, although He said that the Scriptures are "they which testify of Me" (John 5. 39). We have often wondered at the declaration written by John at the end of his Gospel: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." From this we conclude that we know only a very little of all that Jesus said and did here below. We know as much as the Holy Spirit has been pleased to allow us to know, and no more. But all the paper in the world is insufficient to record all His wondrous deeds! The Psalmist once asked, "Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?"

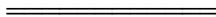
John, in the second of our two texts, also wrote of paper and ink. He tells us he did not intend to write at length, as he preferred to speak with those to whom he was writing "face to face." The practice of writing letters with 'paper and ink' has now largely disappeared, prey to email and text messaging. In many religious libraries, including our chapel libraries, a section is devoted to "Christian Correspondence." Many of the gracious letters written in the past have thankfully been preserved for us to read. If time should continue for another hundred years, we fear there will be found in those future libraries very few truly gracious letters written in the twenty-first century! We are all too busy!

Finally, is there anything good written on our *hearts*? Paul speaks of the fleshy tables (or tablets) of our hearts. May it be with us as good John Berridge wrote:

"May all my Saviour's love and smart,  
Be sweetly graven on my heart,  
And with me fast abide."

What a favour if that blessing is ours.

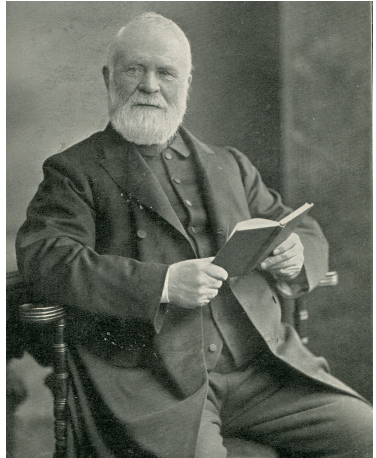
With greetings and best wishes to you all.  
The Editor.



## WILLIAM SMITH - PART 9

Death of Mr. Sinkinson, Pastor at Bedworth; receives an invitation to preach for six months at Rehoboth Chapel, Tunbridge Wells; leaves Bedworth and moves to Tunbridge Wells. We continue the life of this servant of the Lord.

*(CONTINUED FROM SPRING 2018 PAGE 36)*



### Death of Mr. Sinkinson

I returned home from Tunbridge Wells on the Monday with the good wishes of the people, and the testimony of a good conscience towards God.

The next week Mr. Sinkinson died. I was preaching at Stamford at the time he departed this life, and did not hear of his death until I returned home to Bedworth. I helped to carry his mortal remains to his last resting-place. Mr. A. B. Taylor, of Manchester, buried him in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection at the last day.

During Mr. Sinkinson's illness and for some time after his death, I preached at the chapel as often as I could on a Sabbath and on a Tuesday evening, until the church chose a person who was a man of means, to be their stated minister. His gifts made room for him for a time, but as the Lord did not make room in the hearts of His poor tried and exercised people to receive his testimony, they were starved for lack of that savoury meat their souls loved; so after a time he had to leave, which proves that money is not a lasting substitute for the manifestations of the Lord's presence. His people esteem the words of the Lord's mouth more than money, or even their necessary food.

After I had fulfilled my engagements in the Shires, I returned to Tunbridge Wells to supply at Rehoboth two Sabbaths, on April 11th and 18th. On both these Sabbaths the Lord gave me sweet liberty in speaking, and many of His people heard the Word gladly, so the time soon passed away, and I returned home to Bedworth when my work was done. I found Mrs. Smith and my son as well as might be expected

under the trying circumstances she was placed in with the people at Bedworth chapel. She was one who could not hear the minister to profit, so she had to suffer reproach and was wounded by those who once were our greatest friends. But they had to suffer themselves afterwards, and were brought to confess their faults, and we both forgave them.

### **He preaches at Hastings under a painful affliction**

I had to preach at different places until October 24th; one of the places was Hastings. The Saturday I went there I had a dreadful pain in my face, and it was suggested to me I should not be able to preach on the Sabbath, and I really thought I should not, and this caused my fears to rise very high, and I sank very low in my mind. I could not eat when I got there, and I was very restless all night. In the morning my face was no better, and this seemed to confirm what had been suggested to my mind the night before. I could eat only a little bread and milk. I wondered what I must do. I tried to ask the Lord to ease me of my pains, both of body and mind.

About ten o'clock the pain in my face ceased and my mind became calm. Just before eleven I walked to the chapel as if nothing had been the matter with me. After the singing I read and engaged in prayer. After singing the second hymn I read for my text Cor. 15 verses 3 and 4. I was enabled to speak with great freedom for one hour, and the Lord blessed the word spoken to the comfort of many of His tried children. I was favoured again in the evening, and my face was quite free from pain from that time until some weeks after.

On the Monday morning I called to see some of the friends. Mrs. Davis said, "I saw you go by on Saturday, and I said, 'We shall have a good day on Sunday.'" I asked her why she thought so. She replied, "Because you hung your head down and never looked at anyone, you looked more like a man going to be hung than a man going to preach;" and I have proved since then it is not a bad way of reckoning a parson up; for it is not a light thing for a man to stand in God's name between the living and the dead, for it requires every steward to be faithful to his trust, and if he is it will bring upon him an evil report as well as a good report. It did upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and the servant cannot expect to fare any better than his Lord.

I called on Mrs. Ford, and she said what a great blessing she



received under my prayer and also under the word preached. Thus I proved my first visit to speak in the Lord's name at Hastings was not in vain.

### **Invitation to preach for six months**

On April 28th, I received a letter from Tunbridge Wells signed by Mr. Carr, sen., and Mr. Thos. Stevenson, which reads as follows:

To Mr. Wm. Smith, New Town, Bedworth.

My dear Friend, We are requested by the friends of Rehoboth Baptist Chapel, Tunbridge Wells, to inform you that a public meeting of the congregation, 38 in number, was held on Wednesday evening, April 28th, after the service, when the following resolutions were put and carried unanimously. The first proposition was to give you an invitation for the first six months in 1876 with a view to the pastorate, providing your labours should be blessed to the ingathering, comfort and edification of living souls seeking for the bread of eternal life; and that there shall be (D.V.) a church formed at the expiration of five months, say about the middle of May, 1876: and the second proposition was to guarantee you one hundred pounds per year, and not to fall below that amount, and should the cause produce more after the interest on the £500 mortgage and incidental expenses being paid, you would then be entitled to the amount over and above the one hundred pounds.

JOSIAH CARR, SEN. THOS. STEVENSON.

This letter took me by surprise and brought me into great exercise of mind. I laid the matter before the Lord. I then took my Bible to see if I could get any direction from Him through His Word. I opened on the 22nd chapter in the book of Proverbs, and when I read down to the following words, they were applied with great power unto my soul: "Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge. For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips. That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have I not written unto thee excellent things in counsel and knowledge. That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?" They

completely overcame me, and I was broken down in true humility at the Lord's feet. I begged He would be with me and direct me aright in all things.

I showed Mrs. Smith the words and told her with what power they entered into my heart. We wept together, and she said, "You will have to go." I reasoned the matter over in my mind, but I could not feel reconciled to supply six months together. I thought if they had invited me to come every other month through the year, I could see my way clear to accept their invitation, and could make my other engagements accordingly. I made it a matter of prayer to the Lord, knowing He could influence their minds to alter their former plan; and to my great surprise I received a letter from Mr. Carr to say, the friends had thought it would perhaps suit me better if I came every other month, instead of staying the six altogether. Here I saw the Lord had granted me my desire and made the way clear for me to come without me touching it. I wrote at once to say I felt free to agree to their last proposition; thus far the matter was settled.

### **Begins his probationary period**

After fulfilling my engagements at Hastings and Tunbridge Wells, in October, 1875, I returned home, with the people's good wishes for my welfare while absent, hoping to see me again on the first Sabbath in 1876. I arrived home safe, and found Mrs. Smith and son moderately well in health, but much tried because she could not get any comfort under the ministry at Bedworth.

I went about and preached in different parts of the country until the first Sabbath in January, 1876. On that day I commenced my labours on probation, in which were included Monday and Wednesday evenings. The Lord blessed my testimony to the comfort and edification of many of His people.

During the month the congregation increased and the cause began to prosper. Notwithstanding this, there were some that did not speak well of me, and there were others that flattered me; but I lived long enough to prove which of the two have been and are now my best friends. It was not the flatterers. I would say to every person, Beware of flatterers, for they will be sure to prove false unto you in the end. The Lord had the same characters to deal with in His day, but He showed them up before His death.

**Preaches alternate months at Tunbridge Wells**

At the end of the month I returned to Bedworth. Having heard some were for me and some against me; this made me to look unto the Lord for His guidance and blessing, and leave all the rest for Him to manage. The Lord did not suit all His hearers, and I am sure He was the best preacher that ever stood up; never man spake like this Man. The words He gave me before I engaged to come to Tunbridge Wells were hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Him, and they were the means of causing me to look to Him for all I stood in need of, and to take but very little notice of anything else. I felt I had the testimony of a clear conscience in the sight of a heart-searching God, which is no small mercy to be favoured with, in such days of deception as we now live in. I found Mrs. Smith and son well in health, and we were very pleased to see each other.

I went about to fulfil my engagements as usual during February, and returned to Tunbridge Wells for the first Lord's day of March. The Lord helped me again in the pulpit and gave testimony to the word of His grace, so that many poor souls were made glad through the preached word. This very much encouraged me, and I was helped to believe I was in my right place. Notwithstanding this, I was very much exercised in my mind, and it caused me many errands to a throne of grace to ask the Lord not to let me be deceived in the matter, for I felt myself so insufficient in knowledge and ability to become a stated minister over any part of the Lord's family. At times I nearly fainted at the thought.

I was very much helped through the month, and when the end of it came I returned to Bedworth, but found Mrs. Smith very poorly. Mr. B. I heard had been speaking against experimental preaching, which had upset her very much; why he should do this I leave to the judgment of those who may read these remarks. I am satisfied if his preaching was not known by experience, it could do his hearers no good in the trying hour. My friends there had been used to experimental preaching, and that was the reason his letter preaching did not suit them for long.

After going my round in the Shires as usual, I returned to Tunbridge Wells, and on the first Sabbath in May I was much helped in preaching, and the people were much helped in hearing. During the month, I visited several of the friends at their homes, and felt it good to hear them relate what the Lord had done for their souls, and this began to draw my

heart towards them, so that I began to feel a union formed between us.

### **Forgets it is service night - but the Lord helps him to preach**

I remember that on the last Wednesday in the month, Mr. and Miss Carr took me to see Miss Reader. She lived then at Lip Trap Farm with her brother. They stayed a short time and then left, and I stayed to tea. At the table we entered into spiritual conversation, and I quite forgot that I had to preach that evening. About six o'clock she said, "I will go and put on my things and we will start," (we had about two miles to walk to the chapel). I said to her, "Where are we going?" She replied, "To chapel." I seemed struck dumb for a short time. I then said, "I had quite forgotten it was service night," and my mind became very much agitated to know what I was to preach from, for I had no time to look into the Bible. It was suggested to my mind I should be shut up and filled with confusion because I had forgotten all about having to preach.

I was dreadfully tried as I walked along, but could think of nothing to preach from. At length we arrived at the chapel. I went up into the pulpit in a very agitated state of mind. How I got through the reading and prayer I am not able to say; but while they were singing the second hymn, as I was turning over the leaves of the Bible, my eye caught sight of these words, "O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them." They entered into my heart with power, and I had such light and understanding given me in them, which delivered me from all my fear and confusion.

I gave these words out for my text and was greatly helped in speaking from verses eight and nine in Psalm 89. Some of the friends remember that discourse with comfort, as well as myself. This was a good finish up for the month, for it was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power, for I was enabled to speak over an hour with great liberty.

On Thursday I returned home to Bedworth. On my way I hope I felt a nearness unto the Lord in prayer, and this raised up faith in my heart to believe that all was well between God and my soul. I arrived home quite safe and found Mrs. Smith poorly, but my son quite well. I found things at the chapel were in a very unsettled state. Mrs. Smith and several of the Lord's people could not hear Mr. B. to profit. I was still the junior deacon. They told me there was to be a church meeting next



*Rehoboth Chapel, Tunbridge Wells, as it was*



*Today the chapel is a hair salon*

Monday evening, so I contrived to get home after Sunday soon enough to attend.

### **Difficulties in choice of a Pastor at Bedworth**

When I got there I found the meeting was to confirm their choice of Mr. B. as their stated pastor. I told them he would have to take the evening service on Tuesdays as well as the services on the Sabbath, as he was their pastor. This quite surprised them and they expressed a desire that I would preach on Tuesday evenings, but I refused to do so.

On one occasion Mr. B. had said that those who preached experience were rotten to the core. On the next Tuesday evening I was led to take my text out of the Psalms, not knowing anything he had said on the Sunday, and I was led to speak of many things that I had experienced which were recorded in the book of Psalms. This offended some of those who favoured letter preaching, but it did not trouble me, as I hope what I preach I know to be true by experience.

During the month, Mrs. Smith got better. At the end of the month



I returned to Tunbridge Wells, and preached again on the first Sabbath in July. I was favoured in speaking, and several said they had a good time in hearing. I preached on the next three Sabbaths and Wednesday evenings. I passed through many changes during the month.

After the last Wednesday evening service I bid some of the friends good-night, and on the next morning I returned home to Bedworth. I arrived there in safety, through mercy, and found Mrs. Smith very much cast down through the ill-treatment she had received during my absence, from those who at one time were our bosom friends. This grieved me very much, and caused a separation between us; but the Lord dropped these words with power into my soul: "They shall surely gather together, but not by Me, and whosoever riseth against thee shall fall for thy sake." This quieted me, and I was enabled to leave all my concerns in His hand, and watch the issue of events, knowing He is "too wise to err, and too good to be unkind."

### **Mrs. Smith accompanies him to Tunbridge Wells**

After fulfilling my engagements in those parts I returned to Tunbridge Wells. I accompanied Mrs. Smith and my son as far as London. I saw them safe in the train for Tunbridge Wells, and I went down the Mid-Kent line to Catford Bridge and got out there and walked to Forest Hill, and preached there on the next day. Mrs. Smith got safe to Tunbridge Wells. One of the friends met her and took her to their house, and she stayed among the friends until I arrived there the next week. I preached again on the first Sabbath in September, and the Lord was in our midst, and that to bless and encourage the poor and needy of His flock.

Mrs. Smith accompanied me on the Monday to see some of the friends; we saw most of them, and we both felt a union to them in the things of God, and they treated us with the greatest kindness. The congregation kept increasing, and many times I was blessed with great freedom in the pulpit, which caused me to believe the Lord had got a work for me to do at Tunbridge Wells, but notwithstanding that I was not free from the attacks of Satan. Sometimes he would tempt me to believe the liberty I was favoured with when in the pulpit was nothing but fleshly excitement. This drove me to a throne of grace to ask the Lord to keep me from self-deception, and from every evil way, word and work. He was pleased to hear me and grant me my request.

**Finds a suitable house at Tunbridge Wells**

As the Lord continued to bless His word to the comfort and edification of His dear people through my feeble instrumentality, some of the friends proposed that I should look for a house before we returned to Bedworth. I found one in Cambridge Street just suitable. The rent was £20 per year, rates and taxes about £5. Here I was puzzled to know how I was to find this amount every year, as I only paid £5 1s. 8d. per year for the house I hired at Bedworth. I had faith to believe, if my coming to live at Tunbridge Wells was of the Lord, He would find me all I needed to keep me, and pay all my just debts. So I agreed to hire the house, but the man who had just left it had got the key, as his notice to leave did not expire for one month.

I and Mr. John Carr, jun., went and agreed to give the man £1 if he would deliver up the key. He was willing to do so. I gave him the money, he gave me a receipt and the key. Thus far the business was settled. I went and told the house agent I had paid the other tenant £1, and he had delivered up the key. I gave it to him, and he got all needful repairs done in the house before we returned to Bedworth; so we started to provide for our new home before we had given up our old one. I preached on the last Wednesday evening in September. I gave the key to Mr. Carr, and he put more furniture in the house after we were gone.

**Prepares to leave Bedworth**

We arrived home in safety and found all was right at our house, but not so at the chapel. We began the next day to sell our few things. Some of our friends bought the chairs, others the tables, others the chests of drawers, so we soon parted with all but the beds and some of the crockery and glasses, and those things we brought with us to Tunbridge Wells.

Being busily engaged in getting ready to leave those parts I could not interfere with the chapel grievances. During the time we were disposing of our goods I began to sink very low in my mind. I thought I did not possess sufficient gifts for a settled pastor. I used to wander about the fields and lean upon gates, trying to ask the Lord to direct me aright in this important matter and not suffer me to do anything contrary to His Divine will, but to lead me in a right way; but I received no answer. This brought me to my wits end. We had sold all we intended to part with, Mrs. Smith had given up her work, so I was in a great strait.

I felt I could not pack anything up. We had only about four days longer to stay there before it was time for us to return to Tunbridge Wells. I got into such a state I thought I would write and tell Mr. Carr I could not come, so he might give the agent notice I was not coming, and he could give the furniture away to some one. I told Mrs. Smith what I thought of doing. She cried, "What shall we do now I have given up my work, and we have sold the bit of furniture we had in the house?" Her reply had such an effect upon my mind, I could not answer her a word.

I got up out of my chair and walked into the shop where her silk winding engine stood. As I was crossing the floor the Lord dropped these words with power into my soul: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." I cried, "Oh Lord, do order mine right." I turned back into the house, took up my Bible, turned to the 37th Psalm, and these words were applied with divine power to my heart: "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He will give thee the desires of thine heart." All my trouble was gone, my darkness was turned into light, faith was raised up in my heart to believe all was right, and would be right when I got to Tunbridge Wells. I then said, "You can pack up Mrs. Smith, I can go now." So we both set to work, and we soon got everything packed up, and sent them by rail on the 9th of October, and they arrived safely on the 11th.

### **A sad departure from Bedworth**

We called to bid some of our old friends farewell, and I shall never forget the meeting and parting. We wept together, and then embraced each other. From that time all the shyness, which had been caused through the division at the chapel, was removed; we shook hands, and parted as good friends as we were before. We then left for Bulkington to spend the last night with Mrs. Smith's mother, and her brother and sister. We went round the village to bid her relations farewell.

The next morning, after breakfast, we started, with the rest of our luggage, to Tunbridge Wells. Mrs. Smith's youngest sister accompanied us, and stayed for some time to help Mrs. Smith to clean and get the things in the house straight.

We arrived at Euston station quite safely. We engaged a fly to take us and our luggage to Charing Cross. When we got to Bedford Square, a drunken man, driving a hansom, ran the shaft of his hansom right through our cab window and smashed it all to pieces. It just missed

Mrs. Smith's face, and sent some of the glass into my neck. If the shaft had caught her in the face it must have ruined her for life, if it had not killed her. It alarmed us all very much.

Our driver got down, and went to the man and demanded his name and address, and took his number. He then drove on, and we got to the station without any further annoyance. The Lord has promised to be a shield unto His people in times of danger, and in this case we proved Him faithful to His promise. We left Charing Cross at 2.15, and arrived at Tunbridge Wells 3.30.

### **Kind friends prepare the house for them**

When we got up to the house we found our luggage had arrived quite safely, and was unpacked, and carried into the house; so we had but little to do that night. When we opened the cupboard door we found plenty of food, put there by some kind friend or friends. We also found the front room carpeted, also some chairs, and a round table in the centre. Upstairs they had put a mahogany chest of drawers and a carpet, for which I desired to feel grateful both to the Lord and to those who had shown us so much kindness. So we have cause to remember October 11th, 1876.

At the end of the week I went down to Trowbridge for two Sabbaths. I shall never forget the humble feeling I had while I sat in the pulpit. I felt I was not worthy to sit where that dear man of God, old Mr. Warburton, used to sit; for I knew I could not preach like him; but I had good reason to believe that the Lord owned and blessed the testimony He enabled me to bear, of His goodness and mercy unto poor sensible sinners, who are made to feel their need of Him as their Saviour.

On the Monday, I went in search of the cemetery, and when I found it I went in and began to look for Mr. Warburton's tomb. I found it, and when I put my hand upon it, this verse came sweetly into my mind, and caused me to shed a few tears of love at the end of the tomb:

“Sweetly sleep, dear saint in Jesus,  
Thou with us shalt wake from death;  
Hold he cannot, though he seize us,  
We his power defy by faith.”

I stood and mused on the happiness of the spirits of departed saints, and I hope I can say my meditation for a short time was sweet, and I

returned with a solemn awe upon my soul. I like wherever I go to visit the graves or tombs where the bodies of the saints rest, in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection at the last day.

After this I went down to Bath to see Mrs. and Miss Barry, friends of mine, who were in apartments there. I preached in the evening, and Miss Barry took down the sermon. After the service, she went home and wrote it out, and sent it to Mrs. Smith; so when I got back home to Tunbridge Wells she could tell me all about my sermon. She lent it to some one to read, and she never had it returned. *TO BE CONTINUED*

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## MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SPINES ARE DIFFERENT

Something that has long puzzled scientists is that men and women have differently shaped spines! Humans are the only creatures to exhibit this difference. Even chimpanzees, our so-called nearest relatives (sharing 98.7% of human genes), have the same spine whether male or female. Researchers at the Harvard University, Massachusetts, have concluded that the lower part of a woman's spine *evolved* to be more flexible and supportive than a man's to increase comfort and mobility while for nine months she carries her unborn baby.

Of course, we reject absolutely any notion of *evolution*. Rather, God *designed* it this way, as among His creatures only the human mother carries her baby standing on two feet. It is a major challenge, as mothers carry their babies well in front of the hip joint. Without special *design* there would be a danger of the mother tipping over, as the centre of gravity shifts forward considerably, far in front of the hips. The gender differences in spinal shape are evident from birth, as an MRI scan of 70 newborns conducted at the Children's Hospital, Los Angeles has shown.

In both men and woman, the curvature of the spine in the lower back, called the lordosis, stabilizes the upper body above the lower body, another example of God's wonderful *design*. Scientists may speak of wonderful evolutionary mechanisms, but the Christian knows "that God hath made man upright" Ecclesiastes 7. 29. He *made* them that way from the beginning.

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## THE POWER OF STEAM

*“For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (James 4. 14).*

The word ‘steam’ is not found in the Bible, but we do have the word ‘vapour.’ In physics, a vapour is a substance in its gaseous state. Unlike other forms of water, water vapour is invisible. This is why the first centimetre beyond the spout of a boiling kettle cannot be seen. What we normally refer to as steam is in fact wet steam, the visible mist or aerosol of water droplets formed as the water vapour condenses.

Some of our readers will be old enough to remember the days of steam trains. Frequently, while standing at the station, the engine would develop more steam than it needed. The safety valve would open, and a huge swirling cloud of steam would envelop anyone standing on the platform. But quickly it cleared, and daylight was restored.



This figure was used by the apostle concerning our life: it “appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” We appear for a brief moment of time, and then we depart for ever.

This solemn thought should cause us to consider the brevity of our lives compared to an infinite, never-ending eternity. Many will dismiss such thoughts as quickly as they can - these considerations interfere with their enjoyment of life. Felix trembled as Paul “reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.” What did he say to Paul? “Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will

call for thee.” But Felix, your life is but a vapour: you may not live to have a convenient season. If God has a purpose of love and mercy towards us, then His grace will not allow us to put these thoughts to the



back of our mind, although we may try for a time. Thoughts of eternity will be with us continually.

### **Steam - the driving force**

Steam has been the driving force behind British industry for 300 years. Without it, the Industrial Revolution could never have happened. Even now, steam provides 75% of the electricity we use every day.

### **First use of steam power**

A very rudimentary steam engine can be traced back to the first century. An Egyptian mathematician and engineer by the name of Heron describes how steam ejected from nozzles placed at an angle caused a pivoted ball to rotate. This suggests that the conversion of steam pressure into mechanical movement was known in Roman Egypt, and Heron's machine is considered to be the first recorded steam engine. However, it was not capable of any useful work. He called the machine *aeolipile* after the Greek god of the air and the wind.



*Heron's aeolipile*



*Classroom model*

### **Other early developments**

One other interesting use of steam is dated to the year 1125. A church in Reims (probably the Cathedral) had an organ installed that was blown by steam! A 'steam organ' had been constructed originally by Gerbert, master of the Cathedral School at Reims, round about the year 990. It seems that the authorities were wary of this remarkable invention and it was not allowed into the cathedral for another 135 years. One can hardly blame their caution as no doubt the steam was produced by a roaring furnace.

Leonardo da Vinci (b1452) designed a steam-powered cannon which worked by a sudden influx of hot water into a sealed red-hot cannon.

Various other devices using the power of steam were made in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One such device was found in the kitchens of the wealthy - a jet of steam playing on rotary vanes was used to turn the spit to roast the meat.

The power of steam was finally realised when in 1605 a Frenchman named Florence Rivault discovered that water enclosed in a bombshell when heated generated enough pressure to explode the shell.

### **The first steam-powered pump**

In 1606, a Spaniard named Jeronimo invented, and was granted a patent for, a steam-powered water pump. This was used successfully to drain a flooded silver mine in northern Spain. Over the next hundred years or so many improvements were made to pumps powered by steam.

### **Thomas Newcomen (1663-1729) - inventor and Baptist preacher**

The first really practical steam engine is credited to an English inventor, Thomas Newcomen, who created his 'atmospheric' steam engine in 1712.

Born in Dartmouth in 1663, Thomas was apprenticed to a blacksmith in the town. He became an ironmonger by trade, and was also an 'ardent' Baptist elder and lay preacher. His wife Hannah was associated with the nearby Kingsbridge Baptists. It was Thomas's father, Elias, who persuaded the eminent minister John Flavel to move from the West Midlands to Devon. For some years Flavel preached alternate Wednesdays at St. Saviour's in Dartmouth. When the pastor of the Dartmouth Baptist church passed away in 1710, Newcomen took over most of the pastoral duties, though not officially appointed pastor.

A letter exists from Thomas to his wife Hannah urging her to tell their three children that he "should greatly rejoice to hear they were seriously enquiring the way to Zion with their faces thitherward."

It seems that Baptists were much involved in the development of steam engines. A company was floated known as the *Joint Stock Company of the Proprietors of the Invention for Raising Water by Fire*. At least four of the proprietors were Baptists!

### **The piston and cylinder**

The most important invention of all was the development of a

‘piston and cylinder.’ In 1680 a French mathematician, Denis Papin, designed a piston-and-cylinder engine, which was used by and further developed by Thomas Newcomen in his ‘atmospheric’ engine. The biggest problem was getting the piston to fit the cylinder, and often the gap was sealed by a ring of wet leather.

Newcomen’s first working engine was installed in a coal mine at Dudley in Staffordshire. It had a cylinder 21 inches (53cm) in diameter and nearly eight feet (244cm) long. It could raise ten gallons of water in one minute.

When Newcomen died at the age of 66, he received little credit for his invention, most of the limelight falling on James Watt who refined Newcomen’s ideas.

### **James Watt (1736-1819)**

The Scotsman, James Watt, was a great steam pioneer and an industrial hero. He was from a Presbyterian family, and both his parents had been strong Covenanters. Thanks to his engineering genius, steam engine design went ahead at a tremendous pace in the late 1700’s. With his business partner, Matthew Boulton, he opened a factory, the Soho Manufactory, in Birmingham, an industrial wonder of its time.



*James Watt*

In 1769, James Watt had taken out patents that allowed him to dominate steam engine design and improvement. As a result, other engineers were prevented by law from developing new, alternative designs.

As with Thomas Newcomen, the biggest problem remained the production of a truly round cylinder. James Watt tried having cylinders bored from cast iron, but they were not perfectly spherical. He was forced to use a hammered iron cylinder. It was reported to the Society of Engineers that ‘neither the tools nor the workmen exist who could manufacture such a complex machine with sufficient precision.’

In 1774 an engineer, John Wilkinson, invented a boring machine with the shaft holding the boring tool supported at both ends, extending through the cylinder. With this he was able successfully to bore a true cylinder.

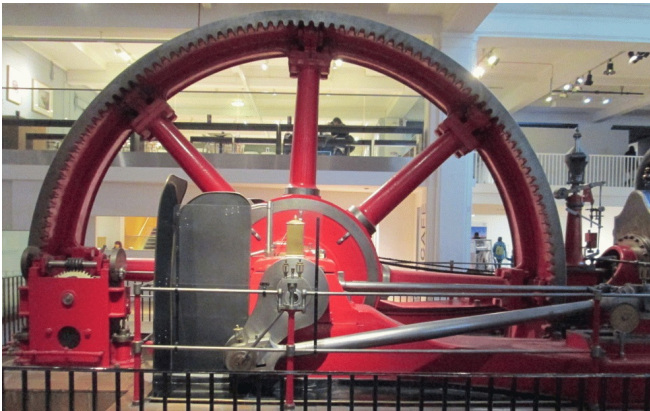
In 1800, Watt's patents expired and a new generation of engineers, including Cornishman Richard Trevithick, were waiting in the wings ready to take up the challenge.

There is a popular story that Watt was inspired by seeing a kettle boiling, with the steam forcing the lid to rise, showing him the power of steam. This story is told in many forms: in some, Watt is a young lad, sometimes it is his mother's kettle, and sometimes his aunt's.

### **The factory system**

By the late 1800's, steam engines were at the heart of a massive factory system. This system connected mills, industrial towns and even nations together, and created new towns, packed with houses, shops and services for the factory workers. People suffered from long hours of hard work, and overcrowding led to ill health. There was nothing new in this but it had never happened on such a large scale before.

Increasingly reliable and efficient steam engines had become Britain's main power source, driving everything from cotton mills to lawnmowers. At the heart of each factory there was a steam engine like the one below, which drove no less than 1,700 power looms *at the same time* using a complex system of rotating shafts, pulleys and belts. The superb engineering can be judged from the photograph.



In the mid-1800s, industries were enjoying rapid growth. With a thriving population at home, and new markets overseas, demand for manufactured goods was growing fast and factories

themselves were getting bigger. As a result, factory owners wanted more powerful, efficient steam engines.

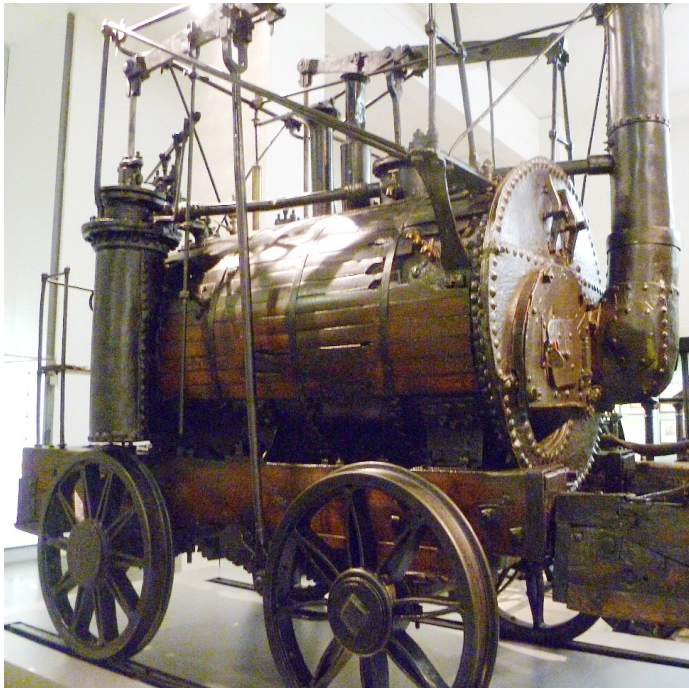
### **Raising the pressure - greater efficiency**

Making engines more powerful and efficient became all-important. It was already known that engines using high-pressure steam could be

made much smaller for the same power output. However, not all steam engine development went smoothly. The second engine constructed by James Watt and Matthew Boulton at the Soho Manufactory unpredictable, and its violent motion resulted in the engine becoming known as 'Beelzebub'. It was later adapted with increased reliability, earning a more affectionate nickname, 'Old Bess'.

James Watt was not the first British engineer to use 'strong' steam, that is, steam at high pressure. Richard Trevithick had initialised this concept, but it brought the risk of boiler explosions and attracted fierce criticism from James Watt, who said Trevithick deserved to be hung!

### ***The Puffing Billy (around 1814)***



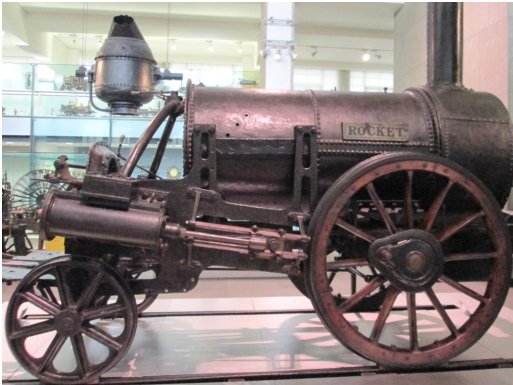
*Puffing Billy - the chimney is at the back, not the front*

Many people think that Stephenson's *Rocket* is the oldest steam locomotive. This is not the case. The *Puffing Billy* is the oldest surviving steam railway locomotive in the world. It was built around 1814 by mine manager William Hedley, an enginewright named Jonathan Forster, and a blacksmith, Timothy

Hackworth. Rather than carrying passengers, it hauled coal trains - at a little more than walking pace - along a five-mile stretch of railway between Wylam Colliery and the nearby River Tyne. There, the coal was loaded onto ships for transport around the coast. It had two pistons and weighed about eight tons. It ran until 1862.



### Stephenson's *Rocket*



The *Rocket* was built by Robert Stephenson in 1829. Although not the first steam locomotive, it was the first to bring together a number of advances in technology. It had a top speed of 29 mph, and can be called the first modern steam locomotive. Stephenson was the first to put the flange on the inside of the wheels, and patented a flat-

topped cast iron rail, whose shape helped it to bear heavy loads.

Both locomotives are preserved in London's Science Museum.

### Today's high-speed trains

We wonder what these early builders of steam locomotives would think if they could see some of today's high speed trains! Speeds of over 400mph have been recorded under test conditions.



*The new Eurostar e320 series can reach speeds of 200 mph*



## SINGLE-SYLLABLE VERSES IN THE BIBLE

Did you know that there are over 150 verses in the Authorised Version of the Bible which consist of words of just one syllable?

Here is one of them:

- Deuteronomy 4. 29: But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

This simplicity makes the AV the easiest of all versions of the Bible to read.

In Ecclesiastes 3, the famous chapter on ‘times,’ verses 3, 4 and 8 all contain single-syllable words. Most other languages would not manage so many single syllable words as they do not have the form of infinitive verbs found in English. Basically, an infinitive verb is a verb with the word ‘to’ in front: e.g. to have, to hold, to sleep, to run.

From the New Testament here is one single-syllable verse, which we will compare with the French:

- Matthew 13. 46: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.
- Matthieu 13. 46: Qui, quand il a trouvé une perle de grand prix, et il est allé vendre tout ce qu’il avait, et l’a achetée.

The English has 20 syllables and the French 28 syllables, 40% more.

Here are two more examples of single-syllable word verses:

- John 1. 13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- Revelation 1. 14: His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire.

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The minister called to read the Bible to a poor girl, Nellie Conroy. She listened attentively while he read to her the Beatitudes from the “Sermon on the Mount.” When he had finished, she said, “There is one more.” “No, Nellie,” said the minister, “I read them all.” “No,” she insisted, “there is one more: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.’”

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## A PECULIAR PEOPLE

by Joseph Charles Philpot

*“A peculiar people” (1 Peter 2. 9).*

What an involuntary testimony do ungodly persons often bear to the truth of the Scriptures!

What, for instance, is more common in the world, and amongst those who are lying dead in a profession, than language of this kind: “What an odd kind of people there are at such a chapel! What particular notions they have! What peculiar sentiments they entertain! There is only a set of peculiar books suited to them, and there are only a few peculiar preachers whom they will hear; and in all their words and actions they manifest an exclusiveness, a bigotry, a narrow-mindedness which is very different from what you witness at other places!”

Is not this bearing a testimony to the truth of God’s Word? Does not truth unwillingly fall here from the lips of enemies? Has not God Himself said that they are “a peculiar people?” Then this very peculiarity which is stamped upon them, and which the keen eye of the world discovers, is an evidence that they are those, of whom God has said that they are “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light.” This “peculiar people” has existed through all ages, and will exist until the final consummation of all things.

Abel was one of this peculiar people; and the peculiar blessings that God favoured him with, drew down upon him the wrath of his murderous brother, Cain. Noah was one of this peculiar people, whom God directed to build the ark, as typical of Christ Jesus the Lord, in whom His dear people find a refuge from the deluging waves and showers of God’s wrath. Lot in Sodom was one of this peculiar people, who vexed his righteous soul from day to day by witnessing their ungodly deeds. Abraham in the land of the Canaanites, Isaac his son, Jacob his grandson, were all ancestors of a peculiar people, upon whom God had set His own stamp that He had separated them from the nations of the earth.

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## **WARNINGS AND EXHORTATIONS**

### **from an aged one to the young (and not so young)**

We are grateful for this timely article from one of our older readers, who is much burdened for the young people.

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In more than one place in the Bible we are told to “tell it to the generation following” (Psalm 48. 13; Psalm 102. 18; Psalm 145. 4; Joel 1. 3). It is God-honouring to tell the young of the wonderful deliverances we have known in our own pathway, the sacred visitations we have had and the manifestations of the love of Christ. However, it should not end there. What of the times of adversity, chastening and affliction? So often such times are the fruit of our own sins and backslidings. These too, should be told to the young to serve as warnings.

“With caution we should tread,  
For as we sow we reap.  
And oft bring mischief on our head  
By some unwary step.”

How important it is to seek God at every step in life’s pathway. In youthful days it is natural to be full of self-confidence and self-sufficiency. Also to be determined to have one’s own way and steer one’s own course. The natural heart may be full of pride and even of arrogance. If one is called by grace all these things will have to be subdued and the natural self does not like it.

I distinctly remember two things in particular from my days as a young church member. First that I despised the “grey heads” groaning out their prayers at the prayer meetings. But often, the elderly have been led by the Holy Spirit into deeper things which the young have not yet experienced. But heed the warning, for you might be led into deep paths sooner than you think, and in ways you never imagined. These deeper paths will affect your prayers.

The second thing I remember is that a mature Deacon often stopped my protests by saying, “When you get older you will see things differently.” This was intensely annoying at the time, but many years

later I have proved it to be true. Again, dear young friends, take heed.

One further aspect I feel strongly about, (which has influenced me to write this article above anything else), is a concern for the young who have been led to make an open profession and join one of our churches. Whilst it has been a joy to see so many of them come over the last few years, sadly some have fallen away and either gone to churches where lighter things are preached and social activities supplement the services, or they have left religion altogether.

It has been my firmly held conviction for many years that the early days following baptism are among the most dangerous times in the life of a child of God. After all, Satan has lost one he thought was his, and he does not let go easily. Perhaps older members have failed by not enquiring enough after the welfare of the young in their early spiritual days.

These observations are made from my own experience. Within a few weeks of joining the church, Satan's influence lured me away more and more, resulting in walking in backsliding more or less for 19 years (1960-1979). The outward profession continued so that others thought all was well. The remembrance of it now fills my heart with shame and I have had to walk out much of God's chastening since because of it. I will write no more concerning the personal aspect except to bring it to the notice of new young members in particular. One line of Hymn 644 is often on my mind, "Treat all as deceivers that lead not to Christ," whether they be things or persons. In fact, the whole hymn is very apposite to new members. May all such indulge in self-examination (2 Corinthians 13. 5). It is my conviction that self-examination is sadly lacking in Zion generally leading to apathy and coldness.

Dear young friends, and older ones too, remember, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6. 7). Some of us have proved it.

"When in the slippery paths of youth  
With heedless steps I ran,  
Thine arm unseen conveyed me safe,  
Brought through from youth to man."

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## **MARY JONES AND HER BIBLE (OR SHOULD IT BE BIBLES?)**

Llywelyn the Great was prince of Gwynedd, mid Wales. He needed to protect his vast cattle ranges. The answer was to build a fortress from which he could survey the extensive area which he controlled. Castell y Bere was the result, begun in 1221, set on a high hill in the greenish-gray rugged region of the Cadair Idris (Cader in English).

Little did Llywelyn think that one day a poor Welsh girl, born to illiterate parents, would play in the ruins of his castle, which had been abandoned as long ago as 1294. The castle was less than a mile from the home of Mary Jones, whose name we know so well.

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Most of the readers of this magazine will have read, or had read to them, the story of Mary Jones and her Bible - that twenty-six mile barefoot journey she took from her home at Llanfihangel-y-Pennant over the Cader Idris mountains to Bala to buy a Welsh language Bible - a journey incredibly accomplished in one day.

The purpose of this article is not to retell that story, interesting and heart-warming as it is, but rather to fill in a little of the not-so-well-known background.

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### **Her parents**

Jacob Jones and his wife Mary (also a Jones) were married on 25th May 1783 at St. Michael's Church, Llanfihangel-y-Pennant. In the marriage register, Jacob is described as a Peasant. Neither he nor his wife were able to write. Both made their mark in the register.

Mary's father died from asthma on 16th April 1789 at Llanfihangel-y-Pennant about the age of 30 when Mary was four. Her mother, after a widowhood of almost 48 years, died on 4th March 1837 at Cwrt, Abergynolwyn, at the age of approximately 80 when Mary was 52. Both parents are buried together at St. Michael's Church.



*St. Michael's Church, Llanfihangel-Y-Pennant*

### **Birth of Mary**

Mary was born on 16th December 1784 at Pen-y-Bryniau Mawr. Her parents, Jacob and Mary Jones, had only the one child. At three days old, on 19th December 1784, Mary was baptised at the St. Michael's church in which her parents had been married. The granite font in which she was baptised is thought originally to have been in the chapel (also called St. Michael's) of the nearby ruined Castell y Bere. The church is unusual in that it has one window set at an angle, the lepers' window, or the lepers' squint. Looking through the window from the outside you can see the pulpit. Lepers, not allowed inside the church with the congregation, could watch the service.

### **Move to Llanfihangel-y-Pennant**

Very soon after Mary was born, the family moved to a cottage called Tyn-y-Ddol in the village of Llanfihangel-y-Pennant. This is a remote part of Wales - no mobile phone signal here! The cottage was by the side of the fast-flowing river, Afon Cadair, at the head of the Cwm Llan valley. (*Afon* means river in Welsh. *Cwm* is a steep-sided hollow at the head of a valley.)



After the death of her father, Mary and her mother continued to attend the chapel of the Calvinistic Methodists at Cwrt, a walk of about two miles. Visiting ministers included the Rev. Thomas Charles, from whom Mary eventually obtained her Bibles.



*Ruins of Mary Jones' house 'Tyn-Y-Ddol'*

### **One Bible - or three?**

Most of the Mary Jones' stories refer to only *one* Bible. This does not appear to be correct, and seems to have been perpetuated from the original, though inaccurate, telling of the story by Robert Rees (see below). Mary herself claims there were *three* Bibles.

When she was interviewed a few months before she died, she said: "When the Bibles came, Mr. Charles gave me three for the money that is the price of one. I set off home with my precious burden."

### **Bible Number One**

The Bible that Mary herself used is in the Cambridge University Library. On the flyleaf in Mary's handwriting is written: "Mary Jones was Born 16th December 1784. I bought this in the 16 year of my age. I am daughter of Jacob Jones and Mary Jones his wife. The Lord may give me grace today. Mary Jones This is the True Owner of this Bible Bought in the Year 1800 Age 16."

The Bible was a 1799 edition printed at Oxford. (Oxford is called

*Rhydychen* in Welsh.) It was the 1620 revision of the Bible translated into Welsh by William Morgan in 1588, with marginal references on either side of each page. It included the Book of Common prayer in Welsh at the front and Edward Prys's Metrical Psalms at the back. Although of a modest page size (just over eight inches by five inches) the inclusion of this extra material made the book well over three inches thick. The Oxford printers, not surprisingly, employed Welsh-speaking typesetters to do the job.

### **Bible Number Two**

The second Bible is in the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth. This Bible was given by Mary to her aunt, Ann Richard. She was not truly her aunt as Ann was Mary's mother's cousin. Written on the inside cover are the following words: "Ann Richard Her Bible When I am dead and in my grave with all my bones In this book you shall see my name then I shall not be forgotten."

The editor and his wife were pleased to receive permission from the National Library to view this Bible. The Museum conservationist, Dr. Maredudd ap Huw, kindly agreed to retrieve the Bible for us from the Library's secure, temperature-controlled facility. It was in a lined storage box, well-padded. Dr. Huw allowed us to hold the Bible and turn its leaves, but great care had to be taken as it is now very fragile. He told us that when he was at University one of his lecturers was the great grandson of Thomas Charles from whom Mary obtained the Bible at Bala. The size of the Bible is 5¼ inches wide, 8¼ inches high, and 3¼ inches thick (13.3 x 21.0 x 8.3cm).

There is an envelope glued on the inside of the cover. On the front of the envelope is written "Lydia's Bible." Inside the envelope is a paper of explanation written in Welsh by someone named Lizzie Rowlands. This is a translation: "This is the Bible of Lydia Williams, the niece of Mary Jones who lived with her but died before her. On her death bed Lydia gave me the Bible, which was one of three given to Mary Jones by the Reverend Charles. Lizzie Rowlands." The paper goes on to tell us that for a while the Bible was lodged in a school at Penrhyndeudraeth.

Who was this Lydia Williams? From research carried out towards the end of the 1800's it appears that when Mary's mother's cousin, Ann Richard, died, the Bible went to her son. The son married and had a

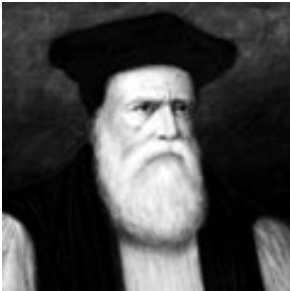
daughter Lydia, who eventually acquired the Bible.

Many histories refer to Lydia as Mary's niece. This was definitely not the case as Mary was an only child. Older women not related to the family were sometimes referred to as 'Aunt' as a courtesy title, and this may be a possible reason for the reference to Lydia as a 'niece.' An alternative explanation is that Mary was Lydia's god-mother.

### Bible Number Three

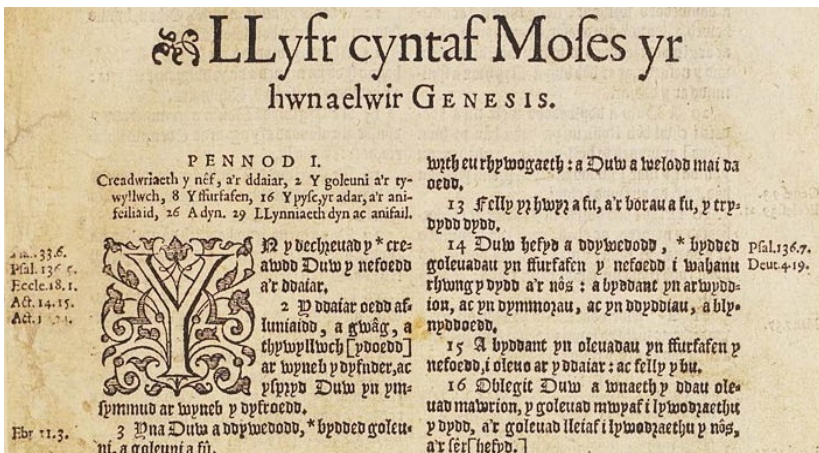
The third Bible is thought to have been given by Mary to her son John who emigrated to America. Nothing is known of its whereabouts.

### The Welsh Bible



*Bishop William Morgan*

William Morgan's 1588 Bible had an enormous influence over the Welsh language, and his standardized Welsh remains a model of excellence to this day. In style, accuracy and faithfulness, his Bible was the equivalent of the English 1611 Authorised Version. It was the standard Welsh Bible until the twentieth century, and continues to be used to this day. On the title page he placed the words from 2 Timothy 3. 15: "The holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." In 1595 Morgan was appointed Bishop of Llandaff.



*Genesis chapter 1*

## **Marriage**

Mary was married on 27th February 1813 to Thomas Jones at St. Mary's Church, Talyllyn when she was 28 and Thomas 25. Here in Wales, where nearly everyone seemed to be called Jones, there was no change of surname on her marriage! On their marriage certificate Mary is described as a Weaver, and Thomas as a Flannel and Lynsey Weaver.

## **Children**

The couple had six children, of whom all but one died aged 18 or under. There must have been much sadness in the family as the following list will show:

*Lewis* was born in December 1813, and died aged 18 from TB (Tuberculosis).

*Mary* was born in December 1815 and died in August 1817, aged 1 year 9 months.

*Jacob* was born in February 1818 and died aged 15 from TB.

*John* was born in July 1820. He emigrated to America sometime in his 20's. Nothing more is known of him.

*Ebenezer* was born in September 1822 and died young.

*Mary* (another Mary) was born in January 1826 and died from TB in 1831 aged 5.

Mary's husband, Thomas, died of TB on 21st July 1849 at the age of 51.

## **Old age**

Later in life, Mary lost her eyesight. She had, however, memorised large portions of the Bible, which was a great blessing to her.

Shortly before her death, a long-standing friend, Lizzie Rowland, gave this description: "She was nearly 80 years old, small, thin, with a melancholy expression, and quite blind, living in a small, miserable cottage. It was the poorest I have ever been in with an earthen floor, a small table with a rush candle on it and a couple of three-legged stools. She wore the old Welsh dress, a petticoat and bed gown, an apron made of linen and a white cap with a pleat. To go out to chapel, she would wear a 'Jim Crow' (a soft felt hat), a blue homespun cloak and a hood. In the winter she used to carry a lantern with little windows made of horn, not to light her way as she could not see, but so others could see her."



## Her death

Mary died on 29th December 1864 at Brynecrug at the age of 80, and is buried at Bethlehem Chapel, Brynecrug, with her husband. She had been a widow for 15 years.

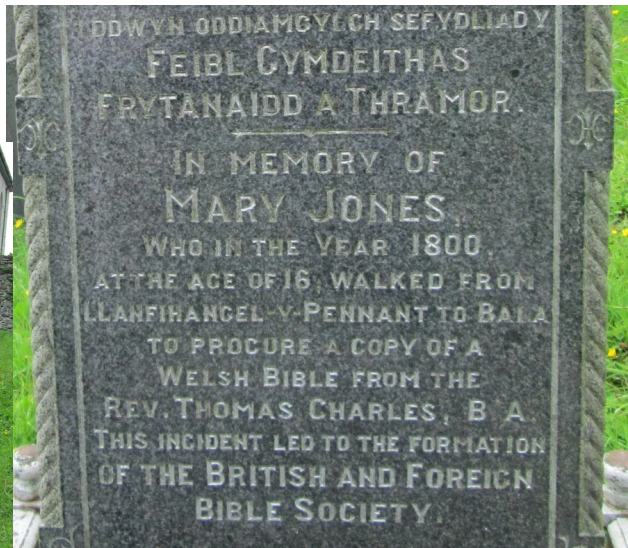


*Bethlehem Chapel, Brynecrug*

Bethlehem Chapel was once a Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, but is now a Presbyterian Chapel. The current building replaced the original chapel built in 1800 which would have been the one that Mary Jones and her family attended. In an 1851 census the attendance was 210 at the morning service, 212 at the afternoon Sunday School, and 250 at the evening service.



*Grave of Mary and Thomas Jones*



*Mary was 15 years of age, not 16. She herself wrote: "I bought this in the 16 year of my age."*

### **The Mary Jones' story**

As far as we know, the first person to write her story was Robert Oliver Rees. It was in Welsh, and was published in 1878 fourteen years after her death. The title was *Mary Jones a sefydliad Y Beibl Gymdeithas*. Lizzie Rowlands was upset when she read his account, as there were a number of inaccuracies, and some things that were not right at all. She wrote a severe letter to Mr. Rees pointing out his errors, or as she called them, his 'falsehoods.' Lizzie said: "I wrote Mr. Rees a stinging letter, calling his attention to the falsehoods he had written in his *Mari Jones a' Y Beibl*. I showed the letter to Dr. Edwards and to Dr. Parry before sending it, and they approved of it. Indeed, they encouraged it because they thought the story written by him was not only too sentimental, but unjust to Mr. Charles."

Four years later the book was translated into English by Mary Emily Ropes (1842-1932) under the title *Mary Jones and her Bible*. In the book she appears under her initials only: M. E. R. Mary Ropes was born in Russia, but eventually moved to London. Sara Eade, who has carried out a tremendous amount of research which is published in her book *The World of Mary Jones* claims that Mary Ropes' book was a translation of Robert Rees' book. If her book is truly a translation, then she can hardly be described as the authoress. Since that time there have been many editions, some under the same title, and others such as *To Bala for a Bible; Footsteps on the Mountain; Under the Shadow of the Idris*. The story has been translated into languages such as Tamil, Malayalam, Thai, and Telugu, as well as many European languages.

The preface to the 1894 edition states: "The narrative which follows has been carefully founded upon the facts obtained from the most trustworthy material." We wish this was truly the case.

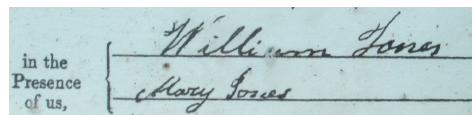
Much of the story is told as conversations between Mary, and her mother and father. These conversations could never have taken place, as Mary's father died when she was four. We have Mary going with her mother to the weekly meeting - and coming home to tell her father all about it. We have her father coming home to tell Mary that a school was to be opened in Abergynolwyn - but by that time her father had been in his grave four years. There is an account of her father objecting (at first) of Mary's plan to walk the twenty-five miles to Bala to procure a Bible. By this time Mary was fourteen and had been fatherless for ten



years. Sadly, these instances occur throughout the story.

The account given of Mary's arrival at Bala, and the retrieval of a Bible (meant for someone else) from a cupboard and given to Mary, although a touching story, does not agree with Mary's own account: "I came to Bala and trembling, knocked the door of Mr. Charles' house. I asked for Mr. Charles and was told he was in his study at the back of the house. I was allowed to go to him and he told me the Bibles had not arrived. I started to cry because I did not know where to stay. He sent me to an old servant of his who had a house at the bottom of the garden, until the Bibles came. When they came, Mr. Charles gave me three for the money that is for the price of one. I set off home with my precious burden. I ran a great part of the way."

The story of Mary Jones and her Bible has been enjoyed by generations of children. Thankfully, the basic story that Mary walked those twenty-five miles to Bala to obtain a Bible, remains incontrovertibly true. However, much of what has been written in the story, and is claimed to be written "from the most trustworthy material," is in essence just imagination and factually incorrect.



*Mary's signature when witness at a cousin's wedding*



*Interior of St. Michael's Church*



*Mary's Cottage at Brynchrug  
as it is today*

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### **MRS. SPURGEON'S BOOK FUND**

In July 1875, Mrs. Charles Spurgeon began a fund to distribute good books among poor ministers. Often there was a large family to maintain, and there was no spare money to buy books. She felt it was very important that every minister should have a small library. The work was formally designated "Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund."

A few months before the book fund originated, Mrs. Spurgeon had sown in a large flower pot some lemon pips, hoping that one at least of them would spring up and grow into a healthy plant. To her delight one did take root, and a frail stump with two tiny leaves made its appearance. In her mind, Mrs Spurgeon associated her book fund, then a "tender plant," with the little lemon tree. To her, each leaf represented the sum of £100 which she believed, sooner or later, would surely come to hand. The growth of the tree was steady and continuous, and, curiously enough, the fund kept pace with it. By the end of the second year, more than £2,000 (today £150,000) had come in and been spent on books. It was to God and not to man that she looked for the money to carry on her work. "The book fund has been nourished and fed from the King's treasury," she wrote. "I say this because I have never asked help of anyone but Him." Later she wrote, "I recall with very glad satisfaction the first donation which reached me. It came anonymously and was but five shillings worth of stamps, yet it was very precious."

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## A FEW CURRENT MATTERS

### **Professor Stephen Hawking (1941-2018)**

Professor Hawking died on 14th March 2018 at the age of 76 after a life dedicated to exploring the universe, and, famously, the black hole phenomena.

He attended St Albans School from 1952 until 1959, a school attended by a number of our readers. The school's flag was flown at half-mast following his death. In 2015, The Hawking Building was opened at the school and featured state-of-the-art science facilities.

At the age of 22 Professor Hawking was diagnosed with motor neurone disease and given only a few years to live. His *A Brief History of Time* sold over 10m copies.

Among his reported words are the following: "Time didn't exist before the Big Bang, so there is no time for God to make the universe in." "I'm not afraid of death, but I am in no hurry to die - I have so much to do first. I regard the afterlife to be a fairy story for people that are afraid of the dark." Although we admire all he was able to accomplish in spite of his severe affliction, we feel these to be very solemn words. What a mercy it is if we possess that faith by which "we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God" (Hebrews 11. 3).

### **Headmistress warns of rise of the 'screenagers'**

Charlotte Avery, headmistress of St. Mary's School, Cambridge, has described today's young people as 'screenagers' in reference to their reliance on technology. She has called for much tighter filter controls on smartphones to protect the young from explicit content. Meanwhile, pupils at Eton College have been banned from using smartphones and laptops in their rooms after 9.30pm because addiction to social media is leaving them sleep-deprived.

### **Death of the world's oldest person**

In the last *Perception* we reported the death of the world's oldest man at the age of 113. Now the world's oldest person has died at the age of 117. Nabi Tajima was born on 4th August 1900, while Queen Victoria was still on the throne. The great-great-great grandmother lived in the Japanese town Kikai. Another Japanese woman is now the world's oldest person, Chiyo Miyako, who turned 117 in May.

### **The fogbow**

In previous *Perceptions* we have featured a rainbow, a moonbow, and a snowbow. We now have another unusual bow to report - this time a rare fogbow which became visible over the Scottish countryside in October. Photographer Richard Toulson captured a stunning image whilst walking at Collochan, Dumfries. Due to the small size of the water droplets that make up the fog, the colours are very weak.



### **Older brides**

Women are waiting longer to marry. The average age has passed 35 for the first time. Of couples who marry, nine out of ten have lived together before marriage. Thomas Pascoe, of the Coalition for Marriage, said: “It is time the Government stopped pandering to a minority who say all relationships are equal, and start backing this important institution.”

### **Amazon deliveries on the Lord’s Day**

One of our readers has brought to our attention that it is possible to opt out of Sunday deliveries. On the Amazon website, log into *Your Account*, select *Your Addresses*, then *Edit*. Click on *Weekend delivery* and uncheck *Sunday*.

### **Ancient footprints found**

Scientists from Arizona University have analysed a set of footprints found at an archeological site in Tanzania, eastern Africa. They claim that the footprints could be 3.6m years old and were made by ancient ape-like humans called *Australopithecus afarensis*. The females of the

time grew to only 3ft 5ins, the men rather taller. Much later, they say, *Homo erectus* arrived when men abandoned climbing trees around 2m years ago. The research has been published in the Journal of Human Evolution. “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions” (Ecclesiastes 1. 29).

### **St. Clement**

A fragment of bone claimed to belong to Clement has been found in a waste bin. It was in a red and gold wax sealed case marked ‘*Ex. Oss. S. Clementis*’ meaning in Latin ‘*From the bones of St. Clement.*’

Little is known of Clement’s life. The Roman Catholic church places him as the second pope after Peter! He may well have been the ‘fellowlabourer’ Paul mentions in Philippians 4. 3: “with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers.”

A letter written by Clement to the Corinthians exists. One of the most famous churches in Rome is claimed to be built over Clement’s house. Some think that Clement was exiled to the Crimea condemned to work in the marble quarries, and was martyred in A.D. 98 by being thrown into the Black Sea with an anchor tied round his neck. Felt makers and hatters have St. Clement as their patron saint because, so tradition says, Clement, forced to flee from his native city, was worn out by constant tramping. His feet were badly cut and blistered and he sought a remedy by collecting bits of wool clinging to the bushes and placing them in his sandals. After a day’s journey he found the pressure and warmth had united the ball into a firm substance. When he reached Rome he perfected the process and manufactured felt.

We best remember him by the tune St. Clement written by C. C. Scholefield, number 813 in the Companion Tune Book. Strangely enough, Scholefield’s name was also Clement: Clement Cotterill Scholefield. He was born in Edgbaston, West Midlands in 1839 and died at Godalming, Surrey in 1904. At one time he was chaplain of Eton. Musically he was described as “an amateur,” and not a prolific composer. One other tune he wrote was called St. Nicholas, but it does not appear to be particularly good. He also wrote accompaniments to parts of the church litany. The tune St. Clement remains very popular to this day. It is a most useful tune as it suits several different metres, 9.8.9.8, or LM, or 104th. It is sometimes said: “If you don’t know which tune to have, choose St. Clement because it will probably fit!”





## “TREES OF THE FIELD”

How beautiful is the fresh green as the trees come into leaf in early May. Then how welcome is their shade on a burning June day! One of the saddest things today is that so many of our native British trees have suffered devastating diseases in recent years. The English elm

once dominated the British landscape, but it has been ravaged by Dutch elm disease, with an estimated 25 million trees lost. Although labelled ‘Dutch’ it is thought to have originated in Asia, but was first identified in the Netherlands in the 1920's. All of us have noticed our diseased Horse Chestnut trees, caused by a bacteria which has spread rapidly, affecting the bark and leaves of the tree. Now our ash trees are affected by dieback, this time through a fungal disease. Oak trees are also in decline partly through bacterial disease, and partly through a wood-boring beetle, the buprestid beetle.

One elderly friend in the Bethesda Home at Harpenden, Mrs. Pauline Watts, always a great lover of wildlife and nature, said many times that she felt the decline in trees was a judgment on us, referring to the many Old Testament prophets who attributed the devastation of the trees in the land to the hand of God. Only recently we became aware of the box blight, which is a disease of leaves and stems of the box caused by the fungus *Cylindrocladium buxicola*. It causes the leaves to turn brown and fall. The National Trust property at Ickworth in Suffolk is badly affected across the estate, and the Trust is raising money to begin a restoration process. For every 200 scones sold in their café, enough money is raised to replace one metre of hedging. That's 400,000 scones to do the whole Italianate garden!

Not only is plant life affected, but we have a threat to British honey through a decline in the number of bees. The cause is the *varroa mite*, a parasitic mite that attaches itself to the body of the bee and sucks body fats, thus weakening the bee. Without the pollinating bees, mankind could be in grave danger. How all these things remind us of the fall of man and God's curse upon the ground - they are part of the “thorns also and thistles.”



# PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



“He maketh wars to cease unto the end of  
the earth” (Psalm 46. 9).

**AUTUMN 2018**

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**Cover picture:** Floral arrangement for Remembrance Day

# PERCEPTION

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## OUR MAGAZINE

We do want *Perception* to be a help to our younger friends, as well as providing other items of interest. If there is any topic you feel would be helpful, we will always try to address it. Please feel free to email the Editor with any requests or suggestions. This quarter, we have included an article on 'Reading the Bible' which we hope may be of help. We recently read this remark by one of our younger ministers: "There have been many occasions, blessed be God, when my soul has been strengthened through the private reading of God's Word, and also through the reading of gracious experiences of the saints gone by." We have always included part of an autobiography in every issue of the magazine.

May the Lord bless you all.

## EDITORIAL

### THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S MERCIES

I wonder how we would feel if we knew that within a few minutes it was very possible that our life would be terminated by the enemy's bullet? How we would face the prospect of eternity? That is what faced countless young men waiting to go "over the top" in the trench warfare of the First World War.

As you receive the *Perception* magazine this quarter, it will soon be the time of the year when we especially remember the Lord's past mercies to our country. Often we read in the Scriptures: "Be ye thankful." This year being the 100th Anniversary of the end of the First World War, we feel before God that we would be wrong if we failed to make special mention of God's deliverances granted to us as a nation.

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After the dreadful Gunpowder Plot of 1605 the Government passed an Act of Parliament entitled *The Observance of 5th November Act*

1605, also known as the “Thanksgiving Act.” It required church ministers to hold a special service of thanksgiving annually on 5th November, during which the text of the Act was to be read out loud. Everyone was required to attend. The act was not repealed until 1859. The preamble to the act set out the background in this way:

“Many malignant and devilish Papists, Jesuits, and Seminary Priests, conspired most horribly, when the King’s most excellent Majesty, the Queen, the Prince, and the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, should have been assembled in the Upper House of Parliament upon the Fifth Day of November in the Year of our Lord One thousand six hundred and five, suddenly to have blown up the said whole House with Gunpowder: An Invention so inhuman, barbarous and cruel, as the like was never before heard of.”

The preamble concluded with the desire that “Thankfulness may never be forgotten, but be had in a perpetual Remembrance, that all Ages to come may yield Praises to his Divine Majesty for the same, and have in Memory this joyful Day of Deliverance.”

The act required that all “Ministers in every Cathedral and Parish Church, or other usual Place for Common Prayer shall always upon the fifth Day of November say Morning Prayer, and give unto Almighty God Thanks for this most happy Deliverance.”

\* \* \* \* \*

## **PART OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. B. A. RAMSBOTTOM**

On Lord’s day morning, 5th November 2017, a day we always remember (or should remember), Mr. Ramsbottom preached at Bethel Chapel, Luton from Psalm 44. 3: *“Because Thou hadst a favour unto them.”* This is part of the sermon.

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You must all have noticed the connection between our two readings this morning (Joshua 24. 1-13, Nehemiah 9. 1-25). One was Joshua looking back on all the Lord’s gracious dealings with His people through the wilderness, then bringing them into the land of Canaan, and then Nehemiah at a later date almost covers the same ground, with

gratitude, with remembrance of the Lord's loving dealings with His people in Egypt, bringing them out through the wilderness into the Promised Land. And the emphasis with Joshua and with Nehemiah was what we have in this clause here. It was "because Thou hadst a favour unto them." It was not because they deserved it. They were sinful; they were unworthy; they were continually rebelling; and yet the Lord was merciful and gracious, and this was the reason: "Because Thou hadst a favour unto them."

So that is the point we have here before us in this verse and in this Psalm. Let me just remind you of the circumstances. Psalm 44, God's ancient people were in great need. They were in terrible trouble. We are not told exactly during which period of their history this Psalm was written, but it was a time of great trial, great trouble, great difficulty. Things were not going well. They were being defeated in battle. They looked back to former days, and they remembered what the Lord had done for them then, and they realised that they did not deserve it then, and, well, they did not deserve it now.

Let me remind you of the beginning of this Psalm: "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work Thou didst in their days, in the times of old." This is exactly the same point as Joshua and Nehemiah - Egypt, the Red Sea, the wilderness, entering the Promised Land, crossing Jordan, overthrowing Jericho - these wonderful victories, these wonderful blessings. "Our fathers have told us, what work Thou didst in their days, in the times of old. How Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thy hand, and plantedst them; how Thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out." Now this is it: "For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them." What was the secret? "Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them."

So here they were in this time of dreadful need, so helpless, feeling so unworthy, so undeserving. But they remembered what the Lord had been, what He had done, and they remembered that He was still the same. Though they were so unworthy, they realised that all these wonderful blessings in the past were solely on that one ground: of His mercy, the riches of His grace towards them. So this was their plea now: "Because Thou hadst a favour unto them."

Now I am sure you can see the application of this to our country at

present. *November 5th* - the Lord commanded deliverance. It was an impossibility, and that was going to be one of the greatest outrages of all time. These things that are happening, these things with ISIL today, they are terrible things, but this was an attempt to destroy the whole of Parliament, the whole of the Commons and the whole of the Lords, and the King and Queen who were going to be present, and the whole of the royal family. The idea was that the Roman Catholics would take over the whole of the country, but the Lord in a most remarkable way commanded deliverance for us.

A member of the House of Lords received a mysterious, anonymous letter. He could see it was serious. It was almost telling him, whatever he did, not to be present in Parliament on November 5th. He was so troubled about it, he took it to the authorities, and they searched the whole of Parliament and found Guy Fawkes with this dreadful plot, ready to blow up the whole of Parliament and all that were in it. But then November is the time when we also remember that glorious deliverance when William of Orange came over from Holland and delivered us a second time from the dreadful power of popery. And then next week we think of those two terrible wars.

So in a sense, we are in this today. We remember what the Lord has done. We remember we did not deserve it. England did not deserve it then. We realise the predicament we are in at present. We do not deserve deliverance, but the Lord is still merciful and He is still almighty. "Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob." This is a beautiful word. We have another one: "There the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." We have another one: "Thy God hath commanded thy strength." He only needs to speak and it is done. All through that reading in Joshua, all through that reading in Nehemiah - deliverances. The history of ancient Israel, the history of our country, coming closer, the history of our churches, and then we come to it personally. We long for it at Bethel; we long for it in our homes and families, our circumstances; we long for it in providence and in grace; we long for it in our own souls.

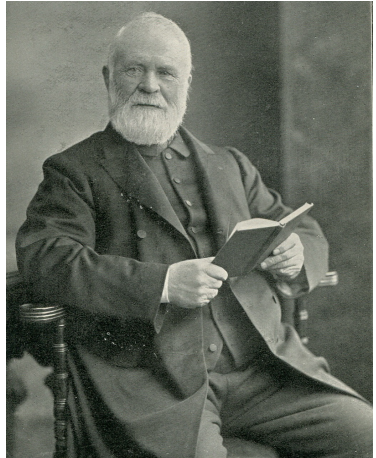
"Because Thou hadst a favour unto them."

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## WILLIAM SMITH - PART 10

Begins the Pastorate at Rehoboth Chapel, Tunbridge Wells; finds the chapel needs many repairs; a new schoolroom is built; afflictions of body. We continue the life of this servant of the Lord.

(CONTINUED FROM SUMMER 2018 PAGE 16)



### He enters upon the Pastorate

After I returned from Trowbridge, I fulfilled my engagements at Tunbridge Wells and other places, until the end of the year.

On the first Sabbath in January, 1877, I began to preach regularly, with a view to the pastorate. On May 3rd, a church was formed by Mr. Hull, of Hastings. There were fourteen persons, including myself and Mrs. Smith, who joined themselves together in church fellowship, upon Strict Baptist principles. Each of their testimonies seemed to bear the marks of the blessed Spirit's teaching; but I am sorry to say they did not all wear well. Man may be deceived by men, but no one can deceive God. He will bring every hidden thing to light, either in this world or the next. On May 6th, we attended to the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and I hope He was present with us at His table.

### A sad case

Along with two others, I baptized a young man. I found out that he neglected his work, until at length he brought himself into difficulties, and had to leave the town. He went to live at Crowborough, and when he had been there a short time he left off coming to chapel. Neither I nor the deacons could write, because we did not know his address.

One day, as I was walking towards the South Coast station, I met him coming from the train. I asked him how it was he never came to chapel, neither to the ordinance nor to hear me? He replied, "Because the Lord has revealed to me that I was not to come any more." I told him such a revelation never came from God, it came from Satan. I then



exhorted him to attend to his work more, and try and fill up his place at the chapel, as a member ought to do when he was able. This offended him, and he still kept away.

After a few weeks one of my deacons saw him and asked him how it was he did not come and fill up his place at chapel. He said because I had insulted him. This statement I denied; and at our next church meeting I related all I had said to him, and the church justified me in what I had said. He was asked to come, and meet me before the church, but he refused to do so because he knew I had said nothing to him but what I could prove to be right. The church set him aside for three months; and one of the deacons wrote and told him the decision of the church. He sent a note to say he should take no notice of any of us. After this I saw him in the street and told him he should not be offended at the truth; but he took no notice of my counsel. At our next church meeting his conduct was condemned by all present, and his name was crossed out of the church book. The deacons then wrote and told him he was no longer a member with us; and he sent his dismissal back with a note saying, he should take no notice of us.

He stayed away for some time; but one Sabbath he came and placed himself among the members just as I was going to administer the ordinance. I told the deacons to pass him by and take no notice of him. They did so, and after it was over he got up and walked out. We heard no more of him until the next ordinance day, when he made his appearance again, but the deacons passed by him again and took no notice of him. He kept doing the same thing month after month until he wearied himself out. Then he stayed away altogether; thus our silence frustrated all the evil designs of our adversaries.

I have seen him since the above circumstance occurred. He confessed he was wrong in what he had done. I asked him if he had not been advised to act as he did. He said he had, and this confirmed me in what I had thought. I did not ask him who his advisers were, because I wish to leave all such evil-disposed people in the hands of Him who is "Too wise to err, and too good to be unkind," and who will render unto all such according to their work. We never received him back into the church, as I judged it prudent not to do so, but I have helped him, in a pecuniary way, since this sad occurrence.

### **The goodness of the Lord manifested**

It is now fourteen years since I came to live at Tunbridge Wells, and during that time I have had much to try me, both in the church and outside of it; but I believe all I have had to pass through has been needful. It has weaned me from an arm of flesh, and made me to trust alone in Him whose name is “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and for ever.” I believe I have still some real friends, both in the church and among the congregation, who pray for me and study my welfare temporally and spiritually, and I am sure I study theirs. Some in the church have been begotten by me, through the Gospel, others are seals to my ministry, and I have been favoured to baptize forty-three of them, of whom I have good ground to hope I shall one day meet them all in heaven. At this time we number sixty members.

### **Chapel expenses**

When I took the pastorate, there was a £500 debt upon the chapel, and it was in a very dilapidated state, and needed repairing before the people could meet to comfortably worship in it. This gave me an errand to a throne of grace, and I hope I was favoured with sweet liberty before the Lord.

I saw the deacons and told them that I wished some scheme could be proposed by which means the debt on the chapel could be paid off. At our next church meeting I brought the matter forward, and it was unanimously agreed that I should name it to the congregation. There was a box on each door that led into the chapel. After I had named the matter to them, I told them that whatever sum they were pleased to put into the boxes would be appropriated exclusively for paying off the debt that was on the chapel. The Lord graciously inclined the hearts of the people to respond to the appeal in a very liberal way, so that in three years it was all paid off. Thus I proved Him to be faithful unto His promise.

After this was paid, we wanted money to repair the chapel. The floor wanted repairing, so we had that done and some painting also, which cost £18, and that was paid. The Lord was truly in our midst, and many with myself, felt it good to meet together in the house of prayer.

In 1880 we had the gallery stairs boarded in, and four new gas stoves put into the chapel to warm it in the winter. We also had the chapel cleaned, the wood-work painted and the gallery varnished, and

other items, for which we paid the sum of £49 12s. 11d. Up to this time we met for prayer, and conducted the Sabbath school, in the old vestry which became too small as the church and the school had increased.

In 1881 we had a church meeting to consider what could be done, and after a little conversation respecting the matter, it was unanimously agreed that the old vestry should be pulled down and a new one built twenty-one feet larger, which was done the same year for the sum of £172 12s. 3d., which was subscribed among the friends and paid. Thus we had reason to thank the Lord for His mercies.

We now wanted some chairs, and some deeds stamped, which had to be done in London. The cost was £4 8s. 4d., which was paid in 1882. In the next year, the friends complained of feeling a strong draught coming up the gallery stairs and descending on their heads in the centre of the chapel; so to prevent this we had the top of the gallery stairs on each side of the chapel closed in and a door at the top, so that it could be opened or shut, as the case required. This, with a few more small matters cost £34 19s. 6d., which was subscribed and paid in 1883.

About the beginning of 1884 we were obliged to have the drains and other matters seen to, which cost the sum of £106 17s. 9d., which by the help of kind friends was paid.

In 1885 we paid £5 6s. for books, which were given to the school children as prizes for regular attendance and good behaviour.

In 1886, the Lord made his Word spirit and life to some, as He had done in the souls of His people whom I had baptized before, and they came forward and declared unto us what He had done for their souls. They were received unanimously as fit candidates for baptism. We then needed new dresses for them; so we provided some, which cost £2 8s. 8d., which was paid by the friends.

In the year 1887 it was thought by some that the chapel was not sufficiently ventilated, so we had a large ventilator fixed in the top of the roof, and that with some other repairs amounted to the sum of £21 3s. 10d. After this was done the friends complained of a draught, which came under the seats, and made their feet cold. To prevent this we had all the fronts of the seats, at the bottom, boarded up, which proved an effectual remedy for that complaint. This cost £25 19s. 4d., which with the above amount was paid by the united help of friends both in and out of the church and congregation. We also paid on January 6th, 1899, for

building the wall in front of the chapel, and for making a place to put refuse in, £9. 9s.

### **A new schoolroom needed**

Our school had increased so that there was not room for the number of children that attended, which the laws of our land required. We, therefore, had a meeting among ourselves to consult what would be best to be done in the matter. At length it was proposed that a new schoolroom should be built on the top of the large vestry. This was unanimously agreed to, as we thought it would be better to do that than leave ourselves open to the interference of the officers of the law. In March, 1889, we entered into a contract for the building of the room; but after the men began, our right to build it was disputed by some of the people in Bedford Terrace, whose back lights were just opposite, and they supposed it would darken them. This caused the work to cease for a short time. However, I asked a retired builder about the matter, and he kindly came and measured all the surroundings, then drew a plan of the building showing the height of it, and proved by figures that we were within the limits of the law, and that no one could hinder us from building; so the men went on with the work.

When the bricklayer got up to the top of the building he perceived that the one of the vestry chimneys was very unsafe, so that had to be pulled down and rebuilt. Then we also agreed to have one side of the vestry matchboarded to correspond with the other side.

### **The Lord delivers out of a trial**

All this made me begin to wonder how it was to be paid. We had some collecting cards printed, and gave them to the school children, and some of the teachers and friends. Very soon, with the money collected by the cards, and what was given as donations from kind friends, we raised the sum of £182. We then borrowed £140 from Mr. Carr, who felt a pleasure in advancing the sum at four per cent interest. I told the congregation that what money they chose to put in the boxes at the doors would be appropriated towards helping to pay off this debt. This appeal was responded to liberally by the friends, so that I was enabled to pay all the cost of the schoolroom and other extras, which amounted to £322 19s. 11d. by the 16th of August the same year. We had now £140 to find to pay Mr. Carr. I named this to the friends, and they responded to my appeal, so that I was enabled to pay all the £140 by

nine instalments; the first was paid on 21st October 1889, and the last on 4th May 1891. Thus the Lord helped us in our undertakings to pay all our debts in an honourable way, and I desire to give Him all the praise. May I not well say, What has God wrought!

### **Taken ill while visiting Manchester**

In May, 1891, I was engaged to preach two Sabbaths at Manchester. I also engaged to preach at Lutterworth, Bulkington, and Bedworth on my down journey. I did so, and Mrs. Smith was with me. On the following Saturday we started from Bulkington to Manchester, and we arrived there safely about 5 o'clock. Mr. Lewis, one of the deacons, met us at the station, and conducted us by tram to his house, where we were made very comfortable.

On the Lord's day morning we were accompanied by him and Mrs. Lewis to the chapel, which I found to be a large one. I preached morning and evening with some degree of liberty from Job 19, first clause of the twenty-fifth verse, and according to report some felt it to be a time of refreshing to their souls. I preached again on the Tuesday evening, and on the Wednesday we went to Accrington, and stayed at Mr. Chandler's. On the Thursday evening I preached at Peel Street Chapel, and my testimony was received very cordially by the people, and I hope with power and sweetness by some.

On the Friday, Mr. Chandler, Mrs. Smith and myself went for a walk. It was very cold, and we were caught in a heavy hailstorm. While waiting for a tram I took a chill. When we returned to Mr. Chandler's I did not feel much of it, and after dinner we took our leave of Accrington, Mr. Chandler accompanying us to the station. We took our tickets for Bury, as I had promised to call and see Mr. Moxon, who met us and conveyed us to his house in a cab. We stayed a few hours, and took tea with him and Mrs. Moxon; and we enjoyed our visit very much. After tea we sat and conversed a short time, and then returned to the station, in a cab, for Manchester. When the train came in we bid our friend farewell, and I did not feel much of the chill I had taken until we arrived at Manchester, where we found our kind friend Mr. Lewis looking out for us. When I got out of the carriage on to the platform I felt cold, and began to shiver. I walked as fast as I could to the tram, which made me feel a little warm.

We got safely to Mr. Lewis' once more, had supper, and then went

to bed. I did not sleep much all night. In the morning we got up as usual. I had some breakfast, but felt very poorly. About ten o'clock I went to the chapel and married two young people. I then returned with Mrs. Smith and Mr. Lewis, and kept indoors all the rest of the day, and I felt a little better. After a little sleep on Saturday night we got up on Sunday morning, had breakfast, and about ten o'clock went in a cab to chapel. I had a sweet feeling while they were singing the second hymn. When I got up I made a few remarks upon what I felt, saying I wished all the singers had felt the same; and I was helped through the service in a remarkable way.

When it was over we returned to Mr. Lewis' in the cab. I still felt very poorly, and began to be troubled with a cough. I rested in the afternoon, and after tea we went again in the cab, for the evening service. After I had read and engaged in prayer, and the second hymn was sung, I felt very poorly, but I got up and took a text. What it was I cannot now remember, and in trying to speak I became so confused that I do not know how I got through the service; but I got through, and when I came out of the chapel there were several waiting in the street to shake hands with me, and they wished me the Lord's blessing. We then left in the cab for Mr. Lewis', and arrived at his house safely. I still felt very poorly, and could eat but little that night; neither did I sleep much.

On Monday we were to have dined with Mrs. Oliver, a friend we became acquainted with when she and her dear husband came on a visit to Tunbridge Wells some years ago; but I felt so poorly we could not go, so Mrs. Smith went and apprised her of it. We were all very much disappointed; but I still kept getting worse. In the afternoon I asked Mr. Lewis if he would go and ask their family doctor if he could give me something to patch me up until after Tuesday, as that was my last evening to preach there. He did so. The assistant came in to see me, as the doctor was not at home. He felt my pulse, and said: "You don't know how ill you are. You have influenza and bronchitis, and your temperature is fast rising towards the death point. You must go to bed; you are in a dangerous state." I went to bed very much cast down, as I felt my chest very weak, and my cough very troublesome. I gradually became weaker in body, and perspired very much; and now the great accuser of the brethren was permitted to bring all kinds of accusations against me. I said: "Lord, I can't die here" (that is at Manchester). I



felt I wanted to die among my own people.

The doctor's assistant paid great attention to me, and I believe he gave me suitable medicine for the complaint. At the same time I believe the Lord stopped the progress of the disease in answer to His people's prayers. I was surprised to hear of so many of the saints being led to pray for my recovery.

At the end of the first week I began to feel my temperature gradually get lower, and the perspiration to abate ; so that I felt a little stronger, and could sit upright in bed with some pillows behind me, and a blanket wrapped round me.

One day I wrote a letter to the church and congregation which, it appears, was made a blessing to some, who wanted it published. But I objected to this, as I thought it would be pulled to pieces by critics, and in the end cast away as not worth reading. I so far recovered that by the end of the second week I was able to dress and get downstairs; but I felt so weak that I could only walk a little at a time. I felt every day to gather a little more strength.

### **Returns home to Tunbridge Wells**

As the weather was very cold and changeable, the doctor advised me not to go out until I felt I could take the journey home, which I ventured to do on the following Wednesday.

We started from Manchester on the 10.5 train, and arrived safely at Tunbridge Wells at 5.5. I felt very weak when I got out of the train. I rode home with two of the friends who met us at the station, and I felt very pleased to be once more permitted to arrive safely at my own home again. I shall ever have cause to be thankful to the friends, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis and their daughters, for the kindness they manifested towards us both during our stay with them; and I hope the Lord will reward them tenfold.

*TO BE CONTINUED*

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Bishop Taylor Smith, Chaplain General to HM Forces in WW1, no matter what business he was engaged on, and whoever might be present, whenever the hands of the clock reached noon, he would break off and say, "*The hands of the clock point heavenward - let us kneel before God in prayer.*"

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## LEST WE FORGET

### A few thoughts on the 1914 - 1918 War

‘Lest we forget.’ This phrase is commonly used in war remembrance services and commemorative occasions in English-speaking countries, especially those of the British Commonwealth. The phrase was first used in a poem written in 1897 by Rudyard Kipling called *Recessional*:

God of our fathers, known of old,  
Lord of our far-flung battle line,  
Beneath whose awful hand we hold  
Dominion over palm and pine -  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget - *lest we forget!*

Maybe Kipling was thinking of Deuteronomy 4. 9 “lest thou forget,” or Deuteronomy 4. 23 “lest ye forget.”

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Why should we be writing today of a war that ended 100 years ago. Was it important? Probably lots of other things happened a hundred years ago, but most have by now been forgotten. So why do we want to remember this war? First of all, a few things about the war itself.

#### The War

We speak of the 1914-1918 war as The Great War, or sometimes as The First World War, and sometimes The War to End All Wars.

#### Why was it called The Great War?

Well, in the war more than 70 million soldiers, sailors and airmen were involved. Not thousands of people, but millions. So it was a *great* number. Nine million of those soldiers, sailors and airmen died, and seven million ordinary people died as well. So a *great* number of people died. 21 million people were wounded, another *great* number. Another 20 million people throughout the world died of diseases spread by the war or from famine, which is another *great* number. So that is why it was called The *Great* War.

### Why was it called a *World War*?

Altogether, 40 different countries throughout the world became involved in the war. Some countries fought with us, and these included France, Italy, Russia, Japan, and the United States of America. These countries were known as our Allies. Britain and its Allies were fighting against countries like Germany, Austria, Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria.

### Why was it called *The War to End All Wars*?

Sadly, this was never to be the case. The expression became a ‘catch-phrase’ during the war. Why? Well, the British author H. G. Wells published a number of newspaper articles which then appeared as a book with the title *The War That Will End War*. Then Woodrow Wilson, the President of the United States at the time, speaking to his people, declared, “I promise you that this will be the final war - the war to end all wars.” He only made this statement once - but it caught on.

### Why was there a war at all?

Why did all these different countries end up fighting each other?

To give a simple answer to that is not easy, and it is really beyond the scope of this *Perception* article. If we were asked to summarise the cause of the war in one sentence we would say something like this: That Germany desired to spread and obtain political control of other countries and areas for its growing population and trade. Or to put it even more frankly - Germany’s greed.

But we *can* say what actually started the war - that is easy.



*Archduke Ferdinand in his  
car with his wife*

One Sunday morning, at about quarter to eleven, on the 28th June 1914 a man of great importance from Austria was riding in a car with his wife. Earlier in the day, a bomb had been thrown at their car but it missed and damaged the car behind. Now they were on their way to the hospital to see those who had been injured in the blast. Suddenly, out of the

crowds, a man pushed forward with a gun. He first shot the man’s wife,

and then the man. The man's dying words to his wife were: "Don't die darling, live for our children." He then died within minutes. His wife died on the way to hospital.

The man was Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria. If he had lived, he would one day have become King of Austria. His wife's name was Sophie. They were not in their own country at the time, as they had been invited to visit the country of Bosnia, a little south of Austria, and they were in the capital city, Sarejevo.

### **How long did the war last?**

The War lasted 4 years, 3 months, and 2 weeks, from 28 July 1914 to 11 November 1918.

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How can we sum up the last one hundred years?

We will begin on a note of thankfulness. At the end of the First World War life expectancy for men was 51 years. By 1950 this had increased to 66, and by the turn of century (2000) it was 76, and is still rising. We can be truly thankful for the many advances in medicine.

Since the end of WW1, sadly and solemnly, we have become an almost totally secular country. What remains of our established church, the Church of England, for the most part is formal and almost totally lacking in spirituality. The church follows the world, instead of giving a lead over moral and ethical issues. We have seen our own beloved denomination shrink to a fraction of what it once was - very few services these days with 'seats down the aisle.'

Humanistic sentiments have crept into every area of life. The God-given marriage relationship of one man to one woman (for life) is at best set on the same level as other unscriptural relationships.

How earnestly we should pray that the Lord might in mercy yet visit our land and send forth His blessed Spirit to convince the nation of sin. Ezra once said: "And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage" (Ezra 9. 8).

O that Ezra's God might once more be known in our once-favoured land!

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## THE ARCHERS

“The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him” (Genesis 49. 23).

There can be very few things found in use today as ancient as the bow and arrow, and those who fire them - the archers. The text above is part of Jacob’s prophetic blessing of his sons, in this case Joseph.

All of us are familiar with the traditional yew trees found in most of the churchyards in this country. Many also contain poplars.

Why is this? Well, the yew was there to supply the wood for the townsmen’s bows, and the poplars supplied their arrows.

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At least two Old Testament kings were mortally wounded and met their death through the archers’ arrows. First, there was King Saul: “And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.” Then a little later on, that good and gracious King Josiah: “And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded.” Few mourned at the passing of Saul, but how different when Josiah died: “All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.” Poor Jeremiah was much affected, but perhaps was comforted by the “singing men and the singing women (who) spake of Josiah in their lamentations.” Maybe their song was a little like Joseph Hart’s:

“Earthly cavern, to thy keeping  
We commit our brother’s dust;  
Keep it safely, softly sleeping,  
Till our Lord demand thy trust.”

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We want to speak first of God’s arrows, then Satan’s arrows.

### God’s arrows

Psalm 45 was written ‘for the sons of Korah.’ In verse 5, the Psalmist tells us that God’s arrows are “sharp in the heart of the king’s enemies.” By nature, *all* of us are the King’s enemies. Paul, writing to the Colossians, reminds them that they were “enemies in your mind by

wicked works.” But God had sent his sharp arrows into the hearts of the Colossians, and Paul was able confidently to say: “yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death.”

Those first thoughts, “Is there a God? Is eternity true?” may be God’s arrow in your heart. What a mercy if we fall under it (see Psalm 45. 5). Make this your prayer:

“Convince us of our sin,  
Then lead to Jesus’ blood  
And to our wondering view reveal  
The secret love of God.”

### **Satan’s arrows**

Satan’s arrows are described by Paul as “fiery darts.” “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (Ephesians 6. 16).

A Scottish lady (Cathie Macrae of Lochalsh), who died at a comparatively young age from TB, describes some of Satan’s darts while she was in hospital: “The tempter often came to me with the sneer, ‘You think the Lord will hear your prayers but you see He doesn’t.’” One day she read the 18th chapter of Luke about the importunate women who wearied the unjust judge by her “continual coming.” She was then able to defy Satan and told him, “God *will* hear my prayers.”

On another occasion she wrote: “Satan keeps telling me that I am not saved and that all my happiness in my new life is a delusion. Psalm 118 verse 13 came to me as the Sword to fight him (metrical version):

“Thou sore hast thrust that I might fall,  
But my Lord helped me.  
God my salvation is become  
My strength and song is He.”

We do not sing Gadsby’s hymn 550 very often, but he uses this striking couplet:

“And the old prince of hell  
Says, All the Bible’s lies.”

What a terrible arrow that was from Satan, to think the Bible is lies! But William Gadsby had fastened in his heart a Nail (with a capital N) that was able to resist this fiery dart.

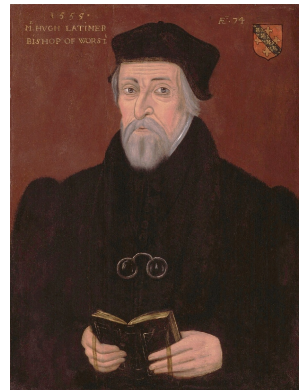


Finally, let us think of those arrows Satan fired at the Son of God during that terrible temptation in the wilderness. How did the Lord Jesus Christ answer Satan? From Scripture alone. Three times He answered him from the book of Deuteronomy. Notice, too, how Satan, in shooting his arrows, himself made use of Scripture, of which he has a good knowledge: “It is written,” said Satan, “He shall give His angels charge over Thee” - quoting from Psalm 91, verse 11. What a dangerous thing it is when Satan brings Scripture before us to try and justify a course of action. How careful we need to be.

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### **A few notes of interest concerning bows and arrows**

- A good bow must be able to shoot an arrow more than 200 yards.
- The English longbow, by the time of the battle of Crecy in 1346 could cover up to 320 yards - a fact that the French and Genoese armies failed to realise. The crossbows used on the continent had a lesser range and were much slower to use. The battle was a resounding victory for the English longbow men during the 100-year war.
- A bow is usually made from a long, straight branch of the yew tree with no knots. In most cases the length of the finished bow is the height of its future owner. The cut yew has to be seasoned for about three years before it is suitable for use.
- The bow string was formerly made of linen. If it got wet, it stretched, hence the saying “keep a spare string to my bow.” The archer kept it under his hat.
- The martyr, Bishop Hugh Latimer, burnt at the stake in the reign of Queen Mary in 1555 at the age of 70, was an accomplished archer: “My father,” he said, “taught me how to draw, how to lay my body in my bow - not to draw with strength of arms as divers other nations do. I had my bows bought me according to my age and strength, so my bows were made bigger and bigger. For men shall never shoot well unless they be brought up to it.”
- The last recorded use of the bow in battle in Britain seems to have been a skirmish at Bridgnorth in Somerset in October 1642, during the English Civil War.



In England and Wales, the government tried to enforce practice with the longbow until the end of the 16th century.

- The word ‘archer’ comes from the Latin *arcus*. A person who is fond of archery is sometimes called a *toxophilite*. The arrow-maker is known as a *fletcher* - if that happens to be your surname then probably somewhere in your ancestry was someone who made arrows! The most skillful part of making an arrow is not the shaft or the point - it is the tail, the part with the feathers, or fletching as it is known.



*The archer selects his arrow. The development of firearms has rendered bows obsolete in warfare, but today many pursue archery for recreation.*

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## CASTING ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM

When difficulties or trials come into our lives, the Word of God exhorts us to cast our care upon the Lord. Canon Richard Hobson of Liverpool had this to say: “No one had greater need of this comforting exhortation than I. It is well to know and feel that there stands on record the dear Lord’s gracious command to cast all our care upon Him. How often we ‘cast’ it, but do not ‘leave’ it there; rolling it upon Him for the time being, but taking it away from Him, and bearing it again just as before.” (Canon Hobson preached the funeral service of Bishop J. C. Ryle.)

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## BEVIS MARKS SYNAGOGUE

The address is 4 Heneage Lane, London.

Heneage Lane, near Aldgate Station, is not too difficult to find. However, walk up and down the street and you will not find the synagogue. It is tucked away between office buildings and a friendly passer-by had to tell us how to reach it.

It was never meant to be easy to find. For over three hundred and fifty years Jews were banned from England, having been expelled in the year 1290 by King Edward I. Then in 1656 Oliver Cromwell permitted them to return. Some attribute to Cromwell the unworthy motive that it was because they were businessmen - and rich. We are willing to attribute a more charitable motive to Cromwell: that it was because he had some sympathy towards God's ancient people.



Bevis Marks is the oldest synagogue in the United Kingdom. All of the area's other fifty-one churches have been modernised and altered to various degrees. Bevis Marks remains exactly as it was built with the exception of electric light added in 1929. Previously, it was lit by seven



chandeliers of twenty candles each. The seven chandeliers represent the days of the week. Today the candles are only lit for weddings and very special occasions. It takes at least half an hour to light them.

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### **The foundations laid**

When the foundations of the synagogue were laid in 1699, the gate was purposely positioned so that the building might not be seen from the street. The Jewish community was still viewed with suspicion and the worshippers wanted to do nothing to draw attention to themselves. Their only desire was to be left in peace to worship in their accustomed way. The area (now known as the Square Mile) contained fifty-one other churches, including St. Botolph in Aldgate where Daniel Defoe was married (he was buried in Bunhill Fields). The synagogue was built to resemble the other churches so that even if it were to be spotted it would ring no alarm bells.



The layout was based on the older 1657 synagogue in Amsterdam, but to a smaller scale. Bevis Marks seats 400, Amsterdam 1,500. Until the holocaust, Jews made up 10 per cent of Amsterdam's population.

### **Built by the Sephardic Jews**

The synagogue was built by the Sephardic Jews. Sephardic Jews are all descended from Jews who fled to England and elsewhere to escape the Spanish Inquisition. (*Sepharad* is the Hebrew word for Spain.) By contrast, Ashkenazi Jews are mainly from north eastern Europe including Russia. Today, only two per cent of Jews in England are Sephardic Jews.

Sephardic Jews are all traditional Jews. There are no liberal Sephardic Jews. This means that in the synagogue the men and women do not pray together. The women sit upstairs in the gallery and the men downstairs. The children can sit where they like until their Bar Mitzvah. Boys become a Bar Mitzvah at the age of thirteen, and girls a Bat Mitzvah at twelve. *Bar Mitzvah* in Hebrew means “son of commandment”, *bar* meaning son, and *bat* meaning daughter. At this age they assume all the rights and obligations of a Jewish adult.

The gallery is supported on twelve columns representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Strangely, the building, including furniture and pews, was constructed by a Quaker, Joseph Avis, for a contract sum of £2,650, a very considerable sum of money in those days. Like the Quaker himself, the pews are exceedingly austere, although well made, in English oak. Every individual seat in the pews is numbered in gold paint. Each seat lifts up and seems to cover a locking box built underneath. What was kept in the box to be worthy of a lock? We do not know. It is said that Queen Anne presented an oak timber from a Royal Navy ship for part of the roof construction. Joseph Avis returned all the profit he had made on the work saying he would not wish to benefit from building the house of God.

Today, services are held every day, starting at 7 o'clock in the morning with *Shahrit Minyan* (morning prayers) for the nearby office workers. A *minyan* requires ten men to be present. Liberal Jews will include women as well, but not Sephardic Jews. Some of the Torah scrolls used are 300 years old. When the synagogue celebrated its 250th Anniversary, Prince Philip was a guest. When it reached its 300th Anniversary, Prince Charles was the special guest. A special service was held in 2006 to remember the 350th anniversary of the return of the Jews to England, and this time the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, was the guest. They occupied seats never usually used as they are reserved for

only the most important visitors. We are reminded of the scribes who loved “the chief seats in the synagogues” (Matthew 23. 6). Every year, the day before the Lord Mayor’s Show, the Lord Mayor is invited to attend a service in the synagogue.

The area no longer has much of a Jewish community. In the past, it was not regarded as a nice area to live. It is said that the air was foul and “had a reputation for vice and villainy unequalled anywhere else in the British Isles.” When the Metropolitan line was opened in 1863, (the first ever underground line which ran between Paddington and Farringdon,) many of the Jews were able to leave the area.

The Old Testament scriptures in use at the synagogue at first sight appeared to be the 1611 AV (King James) Bible. On closer inspection we realised there were differences. We understand they are a 1917 edition of a Jewish Publication Society version, which is certainly very

much after the spirit of the 1611 AV. This version, like the AV, is based on the Hebrew Masoretic text, and retains the old second person pronouns and verb endings. Although not published until 1917 its similarity to the AV is striking. Each page contains a commentary. At the beginning are several pages of music, probably for use with the Psalms.

Above the entrance is carved in Hebrew: HOLY CONGREGATION THE GATES OF HEAVEN.

The building is dated 1701, or the Jewish year 5461. The current Jewish year is 5778.




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The article in the last *Perception* about single-syllable verses in the Bible has reminded one of our readers of the late Mr. C. A. Wood who often quoted: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19. 10). Mr. Wood described this as the single-syllable Gospel. This remark has always stuck in the mind of our reader.

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## THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Christian's fight with Apollyon

by John Bunyan

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But now in this Valley of Humiliation, poor *Christian* was hard put to it; for he had gone but a little Way, before he espied a foul Fiend coming over the field to meet him: his name is *Apollyon*. Then did *Christian* begin to be afraid, and to cast in his mind whether to go back or to stand his ground. But he considered again, that he had no armour for his back, and therefore thought that to turn the back to him might give him greater advantage, with ease to pierce him with his darts; therefore he resolved to venture, and stand his ground: For, thought he, had I no more in mine eye than the saving of my life, 'twould be the best way to stand.

So he went on, and *Apollyon* met him: Now the monster was hideous to behold: He was cloathed with scales like a fish; (and they are his pride); he had wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke, and his mouth was as the mouth of a lion. When he was come up to *Christian*, he beheld him with a disdainful countenance, and thus began to question with him.

*Apollyon*. Whence come you? and whither are you bound?

*Chr*. I am come from the City of Destruction, which is the Place of all Evil, and am going to the City of Zion.

*Apol*. By this I perceive thou art one of my subjects; for all that country is mine, and I am the prince and god of it. How is it then that thou hast run away from thy King? Were it not that I hope thou mayest do me more service, I would strike thee now at one blow to the ground.

*Chr*. I was born indeed in your Dominions, but your service was hard, and your wages such as a man could not live on; for the wages of sin is death.

*Apol*. There is no prince that will thus lightly lose his subjects, neither will I as yet lose thee; but since thou complainest of thy service and wages, be content to go back; what our country will afford, I do here promise to give thee.

*Chr*. But I have let myself to another, even to the King of princes,



and how can I, with fairness, go back with thee ?

*Apol.* Thou hast done in this according to the proverb, changed a bad for a worse: but it is ordinary for those that have professed themselves his servants, after a while to *give him the slip*, and return again to me. Do thou so too, and all shall be well.

*Chr.* I have given him my faith, and sworn my allegiance to him. How then can I go back from this, and not be hanged as a traitor?

*Apol.* Thou didst the same to me, and yet I am willing to pass by all, if now thou wilt turn again and go back.

*Chr.* What I promised thee was in my non-age [youth]; and besides, I count that the Prince under whose banner now I stand, is able to absolve me; yea, and to pardon also what I did as to my compliance with thee: and besides, (O thou destroying Apollyon) to speak truth, I like his service, his wages, his servants, his government, his company, and country, better than thine; and therefore leave off to persuade me further. I am his servant, and I will follow him.

*Apol.* Consider again, when thou art in cool blood, what thou art like to meet with in the way that thou goest. Thou knowest that, for the most part, his servants come to an ill end, because they are transgressors against me and my ways. How many of them have been put to shameful deaths? But as for me, how many times, as all the world very well knows, have I delivered, either by power or fraud, those that have faithfully served me? And so I will deliver thee.

*Chr.* His forbearing at present to deliver them, is on purpose to try their love, whether they will cleave to him to the end: And as for the ill end thou sayest they come to, they *wait* for their glory, and then they shall have it, when their Prince comes in His glory.

*Apol.* Thou hast already been unfaithful in thy service to him; and how dost thou think to receive wages of him?

*Chr.* Wherein, O Apollyon I have I been unfaithful to him?

*Apol.* Thou didst faint at first setting out, when thou wast almost choaked in the Gulph of Despond. Thou didst attempt wrong ways to be rid of thy burden, whereas thou shouldest have stayed till thy Prince had taken it off. Thou didst sinfully sleep, and lose thy choice things. Thou wast also almost persuaded to go back at the sight of the lions.

*Chr.* All this is true, and much more, which thou hast left out; but the Prince whom I serve and honour, is merciful and ready to forgive: But besides, these infirmities I possessed in thy country, and there I sucked them in. I have groaned under them, been sorry for them, and have obtained pardon of my Prince.

*Apol.* Then Apollyon broke out into a grievous rage, saying, I am an enemy to this Prince; I hate his Person, his Laws, and People: I am come out on purpose to withstand thee.

*Chr.* Apollyon, beware what you do; for I am in the King's highway, the Way of Holiness; therefore take heed to yourself.

Then *Apollyon* straddled quite over the whole breadth of the Way, and said, I am void of fear in this matter; *prepare thyself to die*; for I swear by my infernal den, that thou shalt go no further. Here will I spill thy Soul!

And with that he threw a flaming dart at his breast; but *Christian* had a Shield in his hand, with which he caught it, and so prevented the danger of that.

Then did *Christian* draw his sword; for he saw it was time to bestir him; and *Apollyon* as fast made at him, throwing darts as thick as hail; by the which, notwithstanding all that *Christian* could do to avoid it, *Apollyon* wounded him in his head, his hand, and foot. This made *Christian* give a little back: *Apollyon*, therefore, followed his work with all his might, and *Christian* again took courage, and resisted as manfully as he could. This sore combat lasted for above half a day, even till *Christian* was almost quite spent. For you must know that *Christian*, by reason of his wounds, must needs grow weaker and weaker.

Then *Apollyon* espying his opportunity, began to gather up close to *Christian*, and wrestling with him, gave him a dreadful blow; and with that *Christian's* sword flew out of his hand. Then said *Apollyon*, I am sure of thee now: And with that he had almost pressed him to death; so that *Christian* began to despair of life.

But, as God would have it, while *Apollyon* was fetching of his last blow, thereby to make a full end of this good man, *Christian* nimbly reached out his hand for his sword, and caught it, saying, Rejoyce not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall I shall arise; and with that gave him a deadly thrust, which made him give back, as one that had received

his mortal wound. *Christian* perceiving that, made at him again; saying, Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. And with that *Apollyon* spread forth his Dragon's wings, and sped him away, that *Christian* saw him no more.

In this combat no man can imagine, unless he had seen and heard as I did, what yelling and hideous roaring *Apollyon* made all the time of the fight: He spake like a Dragon: And on the other side, what sighs and groans burst from *Christian's* heart. I never saw him all the while give so much as one pleasant look, till he perceived he had wounded *Apollyon* with his two-edged sword; then, indeed, he did smile, and look upward: But it was the dreadfullest fight that ever I saw.

So then, when the battle was over, *Christian* said, I will here give thanks to Him that delivered me out of the mouth of the lion, to Him that did help me against *Apollyon*.

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## THE CROWDED CHAPEL GRAVEYARD

A Sequel to The Crowded Chapel

by Andrew Rayner

### The Pastor's burial

Crowds thronged to enter and gather round. They spilled out into the streets on both sides. Never had there been such an occasion in this part of the village. All were dressed in black, all were hushed and serious, there were many open displays of grief. They all wanted to get into the chapel graveyard to witness the funeral of the much-loved pastor. It was just as well that the graveyard was extensive and, for the most part, free of graves. The mourners filled every available space.

### The Pastor's work

The pastor had founded the chapel and he had lived close by. His kindness and compassion to many all around the chapel had endeared him to all who knew him. Whilst he was respected by all, to many there was a deeper affection: he was loved as God's servant, their minister, the one who had been the means of salvation being conveyed into their souls. This was no small matter to them because the knowledge of God's love and forgiveness had transformed their lives and outlook.

The primary object of their love was their Saviour but they could not but love their pastor in Christ. It was through his words that God had taught them of their sins and their need of salvation; it was the pastor's lips that had pronounced the Gospel; it was he who had delighted to see them come to Christ and find forgiveness in His supreme sacrifice. It was no wonder that the pastor's unexpected death had brought out the crowds.

### **150 years later**

That was many years ago. Today the graveyard and the chapel are still there. Time has taken its toll. Much of that crowd which packed the graveyard on the day of their pastor's funeral still crowd the yard, not on the surface as they once did but their bodies fill the ground below. The last one of the funeral crowd lived on for many decades but her mortal remains now rest near those of her old pastor as well those of her friends and relatives.

### **Care of this precious spot**

The gardener is busy keeping the grass cut and the weeds at bay. For him it's just another job to get done. As he drives his mower around the graves, he is vaguely conscious of the bodies which lay below. Meanwhile, a small group of children are playing amongst some of the oldest and largest graves without the slightest thought of the bodies which lay below. Ivy has taken hold of many graves, the engraving to some has largely eroded away and some of the headstones are leaning or lying flat. Very few graves now receive much serious care or attention as the lives of the previous generation have, for the most part, been forgotten.

### **Burials today**

On occasions, the old graveyard can still get busy. Burials still take place in the one remaining vacant corner. However, few amongst the current day crowds have any sense of why the chapel itself was once crowded and how the graveyard had been filled with the bodies of those who loved and feared the Lord over the subsequent decades. Most who stand listening to the ministers' words at the gravesides are careless about their own future; should the open grave momentarily remind them that they must die one day, they push the thought out of their minds.

## Looking forward

Occasionally, a visitor with understanding drops by and reads some of the epitaphs on the gravestones and desires that similar things might be said of them. This leads them to think that, although few pay heed to the place, in God's sight this is a precious resting ground for the bodies of His much-loved saints. They try to imagine the day when the bodies of the saints will rise first. The crowd will rise from the graveyard to be re-united with the redeemed souls in heaven. The trump will sound on Earth. What a day it will be as they soon join the hosts in heaven to worship and adore Him which gave Himself for them. The rapture, the joy, the exaltation, the outpouring of love and worship there will be! *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Hallelujah!*

This article was conceived when considering the graveyard at Clifton Chapel, Beds which was founded by Mr Septimus Sears, the first pastor. During his time, the chapel was crowded to the point that it was necessary to add galleries. He was very well known far beyond Clifton for founding and editing *The Sower* and *The Little Gleaner* as well as for the *Clifton Hymnal*.

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The Rev. Thomas Hog was minister of Kiltarn in the Northern Highlands of Scotland. The last words he was heard to say were: "Now He is come. He is come, my Lord is come! Praises to Him for evermore. Amen!" With these words he passed into the presence of his God and Redeemer. He was laid to rest amidst the weeping of his affectionate flock. He gave instructions that he was to be buried by the doorstep of the church as guard against an unworthy minister ever being appointed over the church. His tombstone bore the following inscription:

THIS STONE SHALL BEAR WITNESS  
AGAINST THE PARISHIONERS OF KILTEARN  
IF THEY BRING ANE UNGODLY MINISTER  
IN HERE

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## **MODERN ECUMENICAL SONGBOOKS - A CRITIQUE**

**by Pat A. Lawrance**

### **Background**

I was called by grace in an old style classic Pentecostal Church in the 1960s. The worship was reverent and the people led godly lives separate from the world and would have nothing to do with ecumenism and Rome. However, things began to change and Pentecostalism became more and more aberrant and the new Contemporary 'Christian' Music (CCM) was adopted. CCM/Charismatic songs gained entrance through the Mission Praise songbook into hundreds of non-charismatic churches. They started with soft rock and gradually brought in hard rock. The Lord mercifully brought me out with a strong arm.

### **What is 'Mission Praise'?**

To quote from Wikipedia:

Mission Praise is a hymn book used in a wide variety of churches, especially in Britain, including the Church of Scotland and the Church of England. The 2009 edition contains 1250 hymns and songs. It originated as Mission England Praise, prepared for Billy Graham's 1984 Mission England campaign. In its 'words only' form, it was a thin booklet of 282 pieces, with a wide mixture of hymns and worship songs. Some conservative Christians saw it as a way of bringing what they perceived as charismatic choruses into mainstream church worship.

Mission Praise has been through a number of editions. Each edition has a words only book in both regular and large print and a music book. The second booklet (Mission Praise 2), came out in 1987, and contained songs 283 to 647. The various editions have owed much to the Jubilate Group for their copyright controlled hymnody.

A new edition 'Mission Praise Combined' was released in 1993; featuring an extra two hundred songs; expanding the collection from 647 to 798 items and renumbering and reindexing all items in approximate alphabetical order. In 1999, 'Complete Mission Praise' was published, increasing the number of hymns to 1021.

The 2005 edition, produced under the Collins imprint, adds a further 123 songs from the last few years.

‘Complete Mission Praise: 25th Anniversary Edition’ was published in 2009 and added another 106 new songs resulting in 1250 overall.

In January 2008, ‘Mission Praise’ became the first major hymnbook to be available online. The new website enables subscribers to access words, sheet music and MIDI files of the songs in Mission Praise and its sister products ‘Carol Praise’ and ‘Junior Praise.’

A new full music 30th Anniversary edition was published in two volumes on 15 January 2015 with 1,385 hymns and songs.

By copyrighting many of the new hymns and their music the book has become a major money spinner. Subscription to the online version, which allows you to download words and music, costs from £40 per year, plus the cost of copyright licences if the words or music are to be shown on a projector in a public building for example. God’s glory seems far from their motive.

‘Mission Praise’ hymn book is an ecumenical trojan horse by the World Council of Churches. There is a hidden agenda to get all churches into the ecumenical fold i.e. the Roman fold. The book has been compiled for the purpose of uniting ‘Christians’ of all denominations.

They have been very successful with most of the protestant churches. However, the Reformed Churches have remained separate and the most difficult to get in, but many are now on the slippery slope, first with the corrupt versions of the Bible and now with the ecumenical chorus books e.g. ‘Mission Praise’, ‘Let’s Praise,’ ‘Junior praise’ etc.

Peter Horrobin, a charismatic who compiled the book, said:

1. This book is a declaration of Christian unity.
2. This book has been compiled to enable the uniting power of music to operate during and after Mission England.



3. We pray that as with 'Mission Praise 1' this new volume (Mission Praise 2) will be extensively used as a means of uniting Christians (including Catholics) of all denominations in praise and worship as they work together in the service of the kingdom of God.

If believers use these leavened ecumenical chorus books they are associating themselves, though unwittingly, with the movement out of which the books came, since these books form a very big part of the ongoing ecumenical movement agenda. The inclusion of some of the older reliable hymns has proven a successful sop to those who are resistant to the new lighter material. Each succeeding new book has less of the older reliable hymns and more of the new.

### **What is wrong with Ecumenical Songbooks?**

1. The song writers - aberrant charismatics, Roman Catholics, Jesuits (song numbers 350 and 570 for example) and New Agers - were instructed not to mention sin, repentance, and the blood in their songs, and some songs which mention blood have been altered. Some of the songs have a strong Roman Catholic content; and though using Christian terminology have a completely different meaning. Some of the authors lead deviant/unbiblical lifestyles, e.g. one well-known female author is Senior Pastor of a Charismatic Church, and another female left her husband and 'married' a woman and is proud of it!
2. There have been unnecessary alterations to well-known hymns, especially the replacing of 'Thee' for 'You' when referring to God. Examples are:

<i>Original</i>	<i>Changed Version</i>
Glory to Thee, my God, this night	Glory to You, my God, this night
Thou art coming, O my Saviour	You are coming, O my Saviour

3. Many of the songs show considerable irreverence. Examples are:
  - 'Oh! oh! oh! how good is the Lord.'
  - 'Yours Lord, wanna be wholly yours.'
  - 'It's easy to say we love Father, for he ain't hard to live with day by day.'

Further examples from ‘Junior Praise’:

- ‘Come to Jesus he’s amazing.’
- ‘And if I were a fuzzy wuzzy bear, I’d thank you Lord for my fuzzy wuzzy hair.’
- ‘It’s good to be alive. La, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, Jesus.’
- ‘Who’s the king of the jungle? I tell you J-E-S-U-S (YES).’

These are just a few samples of many.

4. Often the songs are sung to rock-style music bands and dancing. Many of the authors of these new songs are from a ‘rock-and-roll’ background and have brought their music into the church, their heroes being people like the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix (the American rock guitarist, singer, and songwriter).

### **Comments from other writers**

“It was said of Timothy that from a child he had known the ‘holy scriptures’ 2 Tim 3. 15. The use of ‘Junior Praise’ will lead a child *away* from both the holiness of the scriptures and the very scriptures themselves.”

“Satan is a master of counterfeit, camouflage and compromise. We should jealously guard against any attacks, however subtle (from the angel of light) upon the worship of God.”

“The true function of a hymn book is to be the handmaid to the Word, not to supersede or displace it.”

“History shows that the shared experience of ‘speaking in tongues’ combined with the power of commonly sung charismatic songs became two of the most powerful factors in breaking down the doctrinal barriers between the ‘church’ of Rome and all the mainline Protestant denominations.”

“To use their material is to build bridges leading to the extremely dangerous world that they represent. Those who build these bridges will eventually bring the corruption of that world into their church.”

The Christian Spiritualist Society has purchased 800 copies of ‘Mission Praise.’

### A personal comment

No-one can tell another person that they cannot use these ecumenical chorus books privately as it is between themselves and the Lord but I believe they should be warned of the agenda and dangers behind them, so that they can prayerfully decide for themselves. Much more could have been said about it; this is just the ‘bare bones.’

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## READING THE BIBLE

One of our readers told us that she has been trying to read through the Bible. She had got as far as Leviticus. She had to admit that most of what she was reading was difficult to understand and did not seem to have any relevance to today. Should she take the trouble to continue reading it at all? She admitted that if she was not careful, she could almost end up despising it - which she knew was not right.

Now we are sure that all of our younger readers (and older ones too) must have had this experience when reading their Bibles - and not perhaps just Leviticus. Some of the Epistles can be very difficult to understand, especially when the sentences are long and the words difficult. Ezekiel's prophecy is another example where the reader may have difficulty in grasping its meaning. Then there are those long chapters consisting of lists of names of people who died thousands of years ago. Some people struggle with reading in general, and this can be an added disadvantage.

How should we approach this difficulty?

First, we need to remember that the whole of the word of God, every book, every chapter, every word, is part of God's inspired word. Even though we may not *read* every part of it we need to *treat* every part of it with the same respect and reverence that we would give to the more well-known parts.

In a former age it was common to have a Bible reading scheme whereby the whole of the Bible was read through in one year, and the Gospels and Psalms twice. In older Bibles a scheme of this kind was often printed at the back. There was a time in this country when family worship was common in large households. The whole family and

servants would gather each morning, and sometimes in the evening too. The master or mistress of the house would use ‘helps’ which included a selection of daily Bible readings for a whole year, with suitable family prayers. Most of the readings consisted of one chapter in the morning and a chapter from another book in the evening. The preface to one such book on our own bookshelves published in 1848 refers to the calling together of the household, and goes on to say: “If masters and mistresses would use aright this precious opportunity for imparting divine knowledge, their efforts will be felt by society at large. Surely a heavy responsibility rests upon those under whose roofs so many of our youth are found. We discharge our duty towards them when we treat them with kindness and lead them to the mercy-seat of God. And who can tell what may be the result of attention at family worship?”

In an early prayer book dating back to the time of King Edward VI the commissioners lamented that “porcions have been daileye sayed and the rest utterly omitted.” The prayer book attempted to remedy this neglect.

A systematic reading through the Bible from beginning to end has much to commend it. However, looking at it realistically, however commendable, this is not something that many of our young people would be able to do. It would not be the right approach for them.

Many people try to read too much at one time. Although we would not wish to limit anyone’s reading of the Bible, a few verses carefully and prayerfully read may be of more profit than attempting to read a whole chapter. In the busy lives people lead, to attempt to read a whole chapter may mean rushing through it. There is the necessity to leave for work, children to be got to school and so many other lawful calls on our time. We should never approach the reading of the Word of God as a duty that requires us to complete a set amount. If we do, what should be a pleasure and a privilege may well become a chore. One young person has told me that when she had to be at work by a certain time, her father would often read a long chapter, followed by prayer, while her mother sat anxiously by drumming her fingers, watching the clock and (secretly) wishing he would stop.

In a book like Leviticus we would suggest that rather than attempting to read a whole chapter, first look through the chapter quickly. It is surprising how often there will be one or two verses in an

otherwise difficult and (seemingly) irrelevant chapter which contain something that will arrest your attention, and provide something that we can ponder over. Although some people do not like to mark their Bibles, it may be helpful to place a mark against those verses so that in the future they can be readily picked out and re-read.

We knew a young man who, every morning on his drive to work, pulled off the road into a quiet layby and there, for no more than ten minutes, he read his Bible, and prayed. Some verses he tried to commit to memory and this gave him something to think about during the rest of his working day. This may be a possibility for others, too, depending on circumstances.

To summarise:

- Do not try to read too much.
- Read the verses slowly.
- Think about them, and ask God to guide your reading and help you to understand.
- It may help to read out loud.
- Remove all distractions - phone and email, social media.
- Try to set time aside on a regular basis, and not when you are tired.
- Keep in mind that it is the very WORD of God.
- As Joseph Hart says in hymn 814: "Join prayer with each inspection."
- Remember the well-known saying: "In His Word, God speaks to us. In our prayers we speak to God."

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One passage that may be helpful is Nehemiah chapter 8. Here, the book of the law of God was opened in the sight of the people, and for several hours read before the men and women, and all that could

understand (i.e. the children). Note that it was read in a manner appropriate to the weighty matter with which it was dealing. “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading” (Nehemiah 8. 8). Notice that it was read *distinctly* - it was not hurried over. Rather, it seems that Nehemiah’s readers lingered over it that it might sink into the hearts of the hearers.

There will always be some Bible verses that leave even the most gifted Bible scholars speculating as to the exact meaning. Sometimes, sin can cloud and distort our understanding. If there is a simple, straightforward way of understanding something, then keep to it. Do not be too ready to listen to those who say, “Well, the Greek really means this - or that.” Usually these people do not know one word of Greek! Often it is because they have a pre-conceived notion of the point they are trying to make. Be more ready to listen to William Tyndale in our excellent Authorised Version. (We found this to be the case in our recent article on head-covering - many appeared to be experts on what head-covering in the Greek really meant or didn’t mean. Simply keep to Bible words: ‘head’ ‘covered’ ‘uncovered’ ‘covering.’)

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Divine Instructor, Gracious Lord,  
Be Thou for ever near,  
Teach me to love Thy sacred Word,  
And view my Saviour there.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom” (Col. 3.16).

---

## A FEW CURRENT MATTERS

### **Internet addiction centre**

A London hospital will soon open the first NHS-funded internet addiction centre. Dr. Joanna Begent, who runs a paediatric clinic at University College Hospital in London, said, “I started noticing what was happening five years ago. I am in no doubt that there is a grade of physical damage being done to our children because of the internet. For some children it is an addiction.” She went on to speak of the extreme social pressures of being in a “streak” on Snapchat or a *Fortnite* match.

### Women solicitors outnumber men



*Mrs Colyer*

The number of women working as solicitors has for the first time overtaken men, although there are twice as many men barristers as women. It is now 98 years since women were first allowed to practise following the First World War. The oldest-ever resident in the Bethesda Homes, Mrs. Kathleen Colyer, began work during the First World War. She was one of the first women ever to work in the capacity of a solicitor. Until then women were excluded from the profession. She worked for Fraser Brown, Friar Lane, Nottingham, a firm still there in the same premises. Mrs. Colyer died in the Harpenden Bethesda Home in 1997 at the age of 105. She managed her own affairs until 102.

### Midsummer

The summer solstice, also known as midsummer, occurs when one of the Earth's poles has its maximum tilt toward the Sun. The Sun reaches its highest position in the sky and it is the day with the longest period of daylight. At the poles, there is continuous daylight around the summer solstice. This year's summer solstice, on Thursday, 21st June, was a most beautiful day over most of Britain. A crowd of 9,500 visitors gathered at Stonehenge to watch the sunrise at 4.52am. They were rewarded with a perfect view of the Sun's rays beaming straight into the centre of the ancient stones. Sun worship is strongly condemned by God in Deuteronomy 4.19.

### Romanian Bible

We were pleased to read in the Quarterly Record of the Trinitarian Bible Society that the long-awaited revision of the Romanian Bible has been published. Many revisions have been necessary to reach the stage when the Society could be satisfied that the Bible conformed with the Biblical languages and also, most importantly, the spelling and grammar of the Romanian language as spoken today. The first Romanian Scriptures, the four Gospels, appeared in the year 1552, six years after the death of Martin Luther, and a year before the beginning of the reign of England's 'Bloody' Queen Mary I. Romania is a secular state, and has no state religion, although the vast majority identify as Christian. We pray that the Lord might richly bless this new edition of His Holy Word to the people of the land, and also, the Romanian *Words of Life* calendar.



**Respecting the Lord's day**

Dan Walker, a sports presenter employed by the BBC, has recently been in the news. As a Christian, Mr. Walker was able to secure a contract that he would never have to work on a Sunday. In 2010 he said, "I was convinced that it was the right thing to honour God and follow his commandments. Observing the Lord's Day is a great privilege and brings with it loads of blessings." He is the son of a Baptist preacher, and has been a regular churchgoer all his life. When he was twelve years old, a preacher told him about "the reality of hell for the unbeliever." Mr. Walker, who has three children said: "I remember sitting there feeling a deep conviction of sin, and terror at the prospect of hell. I knew that I was offending God with the way I was acting and the life I was living, and the prospect of going to hell terrified me."

Although we are glad to hear of anyone who respects the Lord's Day, we find it difficult to reconcile Mr. Walker's choice of career with one who professes to be a Christian.

**Christian doctor barred from job**

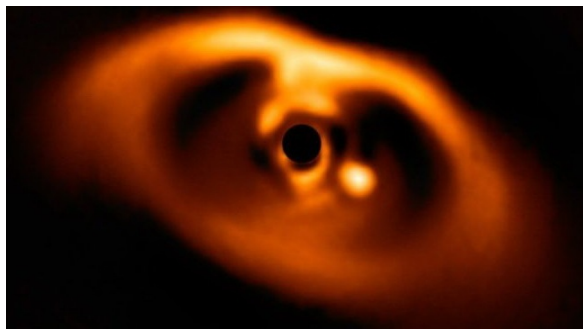
A Christian doctor has been barred from his job as a medical assessor for the Department of Work and Pensions after he refused to identify transgender people by their chosen sex. Dr. David Mackereth said, "I believe that gender is defined by biology and genetics, and that as a Christian the Bible teaches us that God made humans male or female." The Coalition for Marriage comments: "It says something for the bullying and bigotry of the transgender zealots in government that a man with a quarter of a century of public service behind him can be treated in such a disgraceful way."

**Phones in schools should be illegal**

The former head of Ofsted, Sir Michael Wilshaw, has urged the Government to make it illegal for pupils to have mobile phones on school premises. Sir Michael is a former head teacher, and is known for his tough approach on discipline. France has already passed a law banning students from using mobile phones anywhere at school. Sir Michael said: "Any sensible head would ban mobile phones. It's interesting that President Macron is bringing in legislation to ban mobile phones in state schools. We should do the same."

### **A new planet**

Astronomers have identified a new planet which has been named PDS 70b. It is considerably larger than Jupiter, and is thought to have a surface temperature of 1,000C, far greater than that found on any other planet in our Solar System. The planet circles star PDS 70, a journey which takes about 118 years. It was



photographed using the Very Large Telescope (VLT) at Chile.

### **Skirts banned**

At least 40 secondary schools have banned skirts in favour of a gender-neutral uniform. This means that many girls now attend a trousers-only school. In most cases the decision to change the rules has been made to appease a tiny minority of children who may have gender issues. There are also bans in schools in Leeds, Grimsby and Bradford with a high proportion of Muslim pupils which do not allow skirts for modesty reasons. Chiltern Edge School in Oxfordshire has banned boys from wearing shorts in summer but said they were free to wear skirts instead. Earlier this year the headteacher of a leading boarding school, Uppingham School in Rutland, revealed boys were allowed to wear skirts. How utterly confusing and damaging this is to the welfare and mental health of the country's children. Thankfully, we know of one local school where an earlier ban on skirts has been lifted and the vast majority of the girls have gone back to them. May others realise the foolishness of what is happening and revert to more sensible policies.

### **Further threats to the British elm**

In the last *Perception* we mentioned the decline in British elm trees through the devastating Dutch elm disease. A fresh threat has now appeared to our few remaining elm trees through an invasive insect that feeds on elm leaves. The zigzag elm sawfly, originally from Japan, has been progressing across Europe. It has now been found on leaves in Surrey. While the fly rarely destroys trees, large swarms can completely defoliate a tree.

## THE CENOTAPH

The word ‘Cenotaph’ comes from the Greek and means ‘Empty tomb.’ There is only one *truly* empty tomb: “He is not here, but is risen.”

The Cenotaph situated in Whitehall, London is made from

Portland stone, and was unveiled in 1920 by His Majesty King George V. There are no individual names recorded - the inscription reads simply “The Glorious Dead,” words chosen by Prime Minister David Lloyd George. Here,



*Unveiling of Cenotaph in 1920*

on the Sunday nearest to 11 November, a Remembrance Service is held each year at 11.00am to commemorate British and Commonwealth servicemen and women who died in the two World Wars and later conflicts.

There are many instances where the Bible records the names of those men who had given service in battle, and often their brave deeds are recorded too. In 2 Samuel 23 we have Adino the Eznite who with his spear slew eight hundred men at one time. Then there was Dodo, one of three men who withstood the Philistines when everyone else had gone away - he was so weary that “his hand clave unto the sword.” Another is Shamah, who stood alone in a piece of ground full of lentiles and defended it.

Quite a party of our young people visited the WW1 battlefields this year (thank you to Richard Kingham for organising it), when they saw some of those massive memorials such as Thiepval which records the names of 72,000 men who gave their lives in the First World War.





# PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and summer and winter, shall not cease” (Genesis 8. 22).

**WINTER 2018**

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**Cover picture:** The Four Seasons

# PERCEPTION

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## TEN YEARS OF PERCEPTION

You will notice that this edition of *Perception* is ‘Number 40’, marking the completion of ten years’ publication. We feel it right to acknowledge the Lord’s mercies in putting it into the heart of His servant, Mr. John Broome, to venture with a magazine with young people in mind. Mr. Broome completed seventeen magazines, with much gracious content, before he passed away in February 2013. The present Editor has never felt to have the grace of our dear departed friend, whose ministry was such a help to many. Nevertheless, looking alone to the Lord for all-needed help, we “continue unto this day,” and pray that the Lord might be pleased to bless the magazine, not only to our younger friends, but to the considerable number of older readers, too, both here and overseas.

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## EDITORIAL

To our dear young friends and all our readers.

“Of all the creatures God has made,  
There is but man alone  
That stands in need to be arrayed  
In coverings not his own.”

This is the beginning of Joseph Hart’s hymn on “the robe of righteousness” (number 805). How true is this opening verse, and how well Mr. Hart has expressed it! We find that *none* of the millions of creatures that God has made, from the humblest insect to, say, a magnificent stallion, feels the need to cover “their nakedness.” They have no shame to hide.

At the time of the creation, Adam and Eve had no need of clothes. Then, there was no sin in the world. “And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” (Genesis 2. 25). We are given a full account in the third chapter of Genesis of the sad sequence of events. At Satan’s suggestion, the forbidden fruit was taken. The eyes

of them both were opened. They knew that they were naked and they made themselves aprons. Adam could no longer stand unclothed before his Maker. “I heard Thy voice in the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” To this present day to appear before our fellow creatures we need to be covered. But how kindly and graciously God provided for the needs of his creatures. Although Adam and Eve had grievously sinned, the Lord God, the ever-merciful God, Himself made for Adam and Eve “coats of skins, and clothed them.”

### **Our clothing**

We will pause here for a moment. Are the clothes we wear important? It is not unusual to hear comments such as: “Clothes are not important. We can wear what we like. It really doesn’t matter much what we look like. Anyway, we want to look like everyone else of our age.” For a Christian, young or old, to say or think along these lines is really not good enough. When we think how God Himself provided those first clothes, that He designed them and made them to suit Adam and his wife’s needs in their now-fallen state, then we realise that clothing must be something of importance. In an earlier edition of *Perception* (Summer 2016) we included an article on ‘How should Christians dress?’ We do not wish to cover the same ground again, except to emphasise the need at all times for modesty.

John Bunyan in his *Pilgrim’s Progress* speaks of the hubbub caused in the city of Vanity Fair when Christian and Faithful appeared. The first cause of the hubbub was this: “The pilgrims were clothed with such kind of raiment as was diverse from the raiment of any that traded in that fair. The people, therefore, of the fair made a great gazing upon them: some said they were fools, some they were bedlams, and some they were outlandish men.” If ever you are mocked that you do not conform to the dress codes of the world, then think of these two good men.

\* \* \* \*

### **Swaddling clothes**

In this editorial we wish to consider some of the times when garments are mentioned in the Word of God. This magazine coming out in December, we think first of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, and those very first clothes we read of in Luke: “And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger.” Perhaps we wonder why this should be mentioned at all.



Was it important? Yes, it was very important because the angel of the Lord told the shepherds that the swaddling clothes were to be a sign to them. “And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.” When a baby is to be born into the household, those first little clothes are laid out ready, waiting with joyful anticipation for the new arrival. No doubt Mary had carefully carried them on that long journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

### **Without seam, woven**

There is a further reference to the clothing of the Lord Jesus at the time He laid down His life at Calvary. When a prisoner was crucified, it was a Roman custom that the clothes of the victim were divided among the soldiers who carried out their cruel task. In the case of the Lord Jesus, we read that His clothes were divided into four parts, one part for each soldier. Special mention is made (only by John) that the coat of the Lord Jesus “was without seam, woven from the top throughout.” Because of this the soldiers decided to cast lots, to see whose it should be. How remarkable that this event was prophesied by David in Psalm 22: “They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”

Many interpretations have been put on the significance of this garment that covered the sacred, blessed body of Jesus, some rather fanciful. The Jews tend to say it was the work of the virgin Mary. This we do not know. However, we feel it is significant that in the Old Testament there is an emphasis that the garment of the high priest was to be of “woven work.” It is fitting that our great High Priest should wear such a garment as He laid down His life as the one sacrifice for sin.

### **Holy garments**

The importance of clothing is shown to us in the Old Testament. Aaron was to have made for him holy garments. “And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother.” Holy garments? Why did he need *holy* garments? “That he may minister unto me in the priest’s office.” Aaron was to wear these holy garments when he went “in unto the holy place.” Sometimes the question is asked, “Why do the people at your chapel dress up for the services. This puts other people off, and is quite unnecessary. Just wear ordinary day-to-day clothes.” Well, maybe it is looking at it simply, but if Aaron put on holy clothes to go into a *holy place*, how careful should we be when we come into the presence of God in His house.

### **The robe of righteousness - the best robe**

There is only one mention in the Bible of the robe of righteousness: “For He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness” (Isaiah 61. 10).

The prophet Malachi once asked a question: “But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?” No one will be able to stand in the day of His coming without the robe of righteousness to cover him (or her). Why is this? Well, Isaiah tells us that “All *our* righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” We shall not be able to appear in those rags “when He (the King of kings) appeareth.”

In the parable of the prodigal son, the Lord Jesus spoke of the best robe. “But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him.” How much we need that best robe! There is no hope of entering heaven without it.

In the book of the Revelation we read of those who will call out to the mountains and rocks to fall on them, to “hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.” Many years ago when we were on a young people’s holiday in Switzerland, one of the leaders of our group quoted that word in prayer. How it entered into our heart, and what a desire there was to be found safe in that great day, which must come upon us all. There can be no hope of salvation without the robe of righteousness to cover us.

\* \* \* \*

Perhaps you feel this is deep, and beyond your experience. But is it your *desire*? Earlier, in chapter 51, Isaiah had spoken to those who followed after righteousness. “Hearken to Me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord.” Can you come in there? Can you say you are following after it? You have the desire - even though you feel it is only following after. Isaiah went on almost immediately to speak of Abraham: “I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.” Well, those of you who desire to be clothed in Christ’s righteousness: may God call you, bless you and increase you. Then you will be able to say: “Christ has taken all my sin, He bore it on the cross of Calvary, and has covered me with His own righteousness.”

A hymn that has been made a great blessing to many of the Lord’s people is Count Zinzendorf’s hymn (number 103):

“Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress;  
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,  
With joy shall I lift up my head.”

Wishing all our readers the Lord’s richest blessing in the coming year.  
The Editor.

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## MARY - BLESSED AMONG WOMEN

From a sermon preached at Bethel Chapel, Luton, by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom, on Lord’s day morning, 16 December 2012.

*Text: “And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her” (Luke 1. 38).*

### Mary

As we come to consider the angel’s visit to Mary, we are on holy ground. We venture with fear and trembling: “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

I would like to say a few things first of all about Mary. I believe that there never was a more godly woman who ever lived, and she was given the greatest honour that any woman was ever given, to be the mother of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now the Roman Catholics have made far too much of her, and then I think there has been a reaction, so that perhaps we have been afraid of thinking too much of her. But how the Lord Jesus loved her, and how He honoured her, and in His agonies on the cross, some of His last words were that loving request that she should be cared for by the Apostle John!

But as there is so much about Mary wrongly believed today - mariolatry the term is - if Mary was such a godly woman, what is wrong with the Roman Catholic teaching concerning Mary? Well, two edicts from the pope have been issued, one in 1854, one in 1950, and we understand they must be believed by every Roman Catholic on pain of eternal death.

### **The Immaculate Conception**

The first edict was that Mary was born completely free from sin. They call it ‘The Immaculate Conception.’ When you hear of the doctrine of the immaculate conception, they are not speaking of the Lord Jesus; they are speaking of Mary. Now there is no scriptural evidence for that at all. Mary was a sinner, and she knew that she was a sinner; she said, “My Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.” She needed a Saviour as much as any other of the human race.

### **The Assumption**

But then the second edict, which was decreed more recently, known as ‘The Assumption,’ states that after Mary died, she was bodily raised from the dead and ascended and is glorified in heaven. Again, there is no shred of evidence for this at all.

But the Roman church speaks of Mary as a mediator (or should the word be a mediatrix?) She comes between the sinner and Jesus, as Jesus comes between the sinner and His Father. And so there are these many prayers to Mary, and in the rosary there are more prayers to Mary than there are to the Lord Jesus or to His Father in heaven.

### **Erroneous doctrines**

Now I think it is right that we should understand these things, and of course we always stand on this same ground: it is not the Roman Catholics - we are friendly with some of them; we are sympathetic to them - but it is their erroneous doctrines which so dishonour our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and which point out a false way of salvation. So they make too much of Mary. They have almost made her into a God who has to be prayed to, who has to be worshipped.

But may we ever remember what a godly, gracious, favoured woman she was. You think of this: “From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.” “Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.” We must never, never forget that.

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The Communion season at Blairgowrie was over. An elderly woman, who had not long been converted, said, “I canna say much, but my heart’s like a burnin’ coal!”

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## THE WISE MEN'S GIFTS

*“And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh” (Matthew 2. 11).*



*Gold*



*Frankincense*



*Myrrh*

- **gold** for a KING. “And he took their king’s crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold . . . and it was set on David’s head” (2 Samuel 12. 30).
- **frankincense** for a PRIEST. “frankincense . . . the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord” (Leviticus 2. 2).
- **myrrh** for anointing the DEAD (but not now, for HE IS RISEN). “And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices” (John 19. 39 - 40).

### *A few notes on frankincense and myrrh:*

- Both frankincense and myrrh are derived from tree sap, or gum resin. Both are prized for their alluring fragrance.
- *Frankincense* is a milky white resin extracted from species of the genus *Boswellia*, which thrives in arid, cool areas of the Arabian Peninsula, East Africa and India. The finest and most aromatic of this species is *Boswellia sacra*, a small tree that grows in Somalia, Oman and Yemen. These plants, which grow to a height of 16 feet (5 metres), have papery bark, sparse bunches of paired leaves, and

flowers with white petals and a yellow or red center. Apart from its fragrance, frankincense has been used medically for centuries, particularly against vomiting, dysentery and fever.

- *Myrrh* is a reddish resin that comes from species of the genus *Commiphora*, which is native to northeast Africa and the adjacent areas of the Arabian Peninsula. *Commiphora myrrha*, a tree commonly used in the production of myrrh, can be found in the shallow, rocky soils of Ethiopia, Kenya, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Somalia. It boasts spiny branches with sparse leaves that grow in groups of three, and can reach a height of 9 feet (3 metres). Myrrh is anti-microbial and antiseptic.
- The processes for extracting the sap are identical for both plants. Harvesters make a longitudinal cut in the tree's trunk, which pierces gum resin reservoirs located within the bark. The sap slowly oozes from the cut and drips down the tree, forming tear-shaped droplets that are left to harden on the side of the tree. These beads are collected after two weeks.
- The word *myrrh* comes from the Arabic word '*murr*' which translates into 'bitter.'
- The English word *frankincense* is derived from Old French '*franc encens*', meaning 'high-quality incense.' The word '*franc*' in Old French meant 'pure'.

Specimens of both frankincense and myrrh can be found in the Old Operating Theatre Museum and Herb Garret, The Attic, St. Thomas's Church, St. Thomas Street, London, one of the most unusual museums in London. It is in quite an amazing location, built in the attic of an English Baroque church which was used as a Herb Garret, and later converted into an operating theatre in the 19th century. It is well worth a visit.

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**At the prayer meeting,** a request for prayer was handed in by a woman whose 'husband had gone amissing.' Dr. Andrew Bonar began his prayer in this way: "O Lord, here is a sad case - a man amissing. Thou wast once amissing Thyself, but Thy parents sought Thee till they found Thee in the temple. Lord, seek and find this poor man and restore him to his wife and family."

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## **A CHRISTMAS DINNER PROVIDED FOR ONE OF THE LORD'S SERVANTS**

*“Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble” (Psalm 41. 1).*

William Burch was born in Cranbrook on 31 January 1789. He tells us he was minister “over a chapel in Staplehurst, in Kent, the congregation of which is about four hundred persons, of whom about fifty are members in church fellowship.” He was a poor man with a family to support, and a shoe-maker by trade. This Christmas there was no prospect of anything for Christmas dinner, but he tells us how the Lord provided for him in a remarkable way.

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Another very seasonable providence that my memory retains took place one Christmas morning.

I started from home to go about a mile and a half, in order to take some shoes to one of my customers, and, if possible, to get some money to buy something for our dinner on that day. As I was going along I saw a fine large rabbit lying dead by the side of a fence, which I picked up and found to be warm, and, upon examination, it appeared to me to have been killed by something like a stoat, which, having been satisfied in sucking its blood, had left its carcass alone.

But, in meditation, it appeared that something more might be seen besides this. The dear Lord, who ever considereth the poor, knew my necessities, and had gone before me to prepare my way, and in His providence had suffered this circumstance to take place just in time to be made a blessing to me, and for me to see His goodness therein.

I carried the said rabbit with me to where I was going, and when I arrived there the person paid me for the work, and I returned home with both rabbit and money, blessing and praising the Lord out of a heart touched with a feeling sense of the Lord's goodness towards me, a poor sinner.

This rabbit was prepared and cooked, and partaken of for our Christmas dinner accordingly, and, indeed, it was very good and palatable.

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## ANY DEADLY THING

*“And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them”* (Mark 16. 18).

These words were spoken by the Lord Jesus to His disciples. Satan may tempt us that this cannot be true. We know it *is* true because it was spoken by Him who never spoke an untrue word. But we say to ourselves, “Surely, if someone drinks some deadly poison, he will die. This is the law of nature. Nothing can stop the body reacting according to nature.”

Well, we came across the following true story which may help.

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In Manchuria (a region of north-east China) there were many hospitals. The Scottish Presbyterian Hospital in the capital city Mukden, (now known as Shenyang), was the most modern and efficient.

During the spring of 1946 cholera swept through the country like a swift, devouring fire, and those who were preparing anti-toxins were working diligently, almost round the clock. The hospital in Mukden was well prepared for such an emergency. Thousands of doses were ready.

One very hot day, as Dr Li Min Chiu was busy preparing serum that was urgently needed, he became thirsty and asked his ‘left hand’ (assistant) to bring him a drink of cold water. Instead of putting it into the doctor’s hand, he set it down among other cups on the table. Without looking away from his work, Dr Li picked up a cup and thirstily gulped down its contents. Too late he realized what he had done.

“I may as well regard my work as finished,” he said, as he completed the work on that batch of serum. “This will be the last day of my life.” He went home an hour earlier than usual and ate the evening meal.

Then, as he left to go back to work, he turned and said, “If I don’t return by midnight, I fear I shall soon be going to my heavenly home.”

“What has happened?” his mother asked. “You speak with no head and no tail.”

“Today, while absorbed in my work,” he explained, “I gulped down a cup of cholera bacteria. I fear I may develop cholera. I thought I should tell you so that you will know what to do in case I suddenly die.”

“Have no fear,” said his mother. “Jesus gave this promise to His disciples: ‘If you drink any deadly thing, it shall not harm you.’ You

believe and trust in Jesus, and while trying to save the lives of others, if you drank poison by mistake, God can overcome the effect of it. Only trust Him.”

He made no reply but went back to finish his work.

That night at ten o'clock he came home and announced happily: “I have come home well and safe. I came home early to let you know that God protected my life again.”

After a prayer of thanksgiving they went to their rest.

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## THE YORKSHIRE PEDLAR

There was once a man who travelled the country districts of Yorkshire as a ‘pedlar’, walking from place to place selling his goods.

Every where he went, he carried with him a stick, which served the double purpose of both a walking stick and a one-yard measuring stick. After walking many miles his walking stick began to wear down, so was no longer an accurate measure. However, the pedlar continued to measure his goods by it. By those who realised what had happened he acquired the name of *Old Short Measure*.

But one day, Mr. William Dawson, of Leeds, was preaching in the neighbourhood, and the pedlar thought he would like to hear him. Mr. Dawson’s text was Daniel 5. 27: “Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.”

Old Short Measure stood immediately in front of the preacher; and while Mr. Dawson placed different classes of sinners in the scales, he eventually spoke of those who appeared to have much zeal, but displayed little evidence of spirituality. The pedlar was struck down with the force of truth. He took his stick, his favourite measure, from under his arm, raised one foot from the floor, bent his knee, and, taking hold of the offending stick by both ends, snapped it in two, exclaiming, as he dashed it to the ground, Thou shalt do it no more !

Mr. Dawson’s faithful preaching was honoured of God. From that time on the pedlar proved to be an honest man.

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## A TIME TO BE BORN, AND A TIME TO DIE

(Ecclesiastes 3. 2)

In the Old Testament we have lists of the names of people who lived long lives: 930 years, 912 years, 905 years etc., and the oldest of all, Methuselah 969 years. But after every name it says the same thing: "And he died."



One of the oldest people (if not the oldest) to have lived in recent times was a lady named Elizabeth Israel. She was born in Dominica in the West Indies on 27 January 1875 and died on 14 October 2003 at the age of 128. She was born before the car, electric lights or even the bicycle had been invented. She was still working at 104.

At Sunday School recently, during a series of lessons on the book of Ecclesiastes, we told the children that in the time it took to hold our Sunday School this afternoon, over 6,000 people would have died somewhere in the world. Over 55 million people die in the world each year. One day, each of us will be one of those 55 million - a solemn thought for every one of us whether young or old.

There are currently over 131 million births every year, that is 15,000 births every hour, almost three times the number who are dying. This means that the world population is soaring at a tremendous rate. We took comfort in the thought that all these things are in the hand of an all-wise God.

But what will it mean for us when it is said concerning ourselves, "And he (or she) died"? Hymn 236 in the Young People's Hymnal ends each verse with an important question: "Is it well with my soul?" To some questions there can be several different answers, all of which can be right. But there are only two answers to this question. The answers are: "It is well with my soul" or "It is not well with my soul."

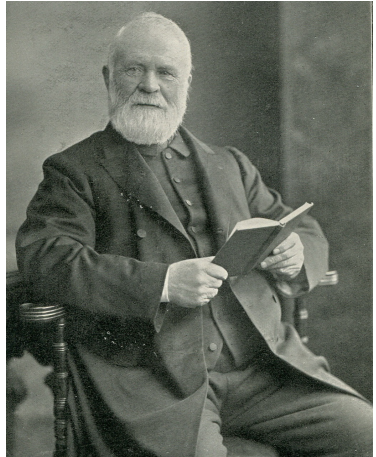
We will end by quoting verse 3 of the hymn:

"If Jesus I know not, no hope can I have,  
He alone gives salvation to men,  
He alone the lost sinner can cleanse and can save,  
By the work of His Spirit within.  
*Is it well with my soul?"*

## WILLIAM SMITH - PART 11

Preaches in much bodily weakness; further increases in church membership; and Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. But here his writings suddenly end, four years before his death in 1903.

(CONTINUED FROM AUTUMN 2018 PAGE 12)



### **Year 1892 - Preaches in bodily weakness**

For about a fortnight after returning from Manchester I felt very weak, and was not able to preach until the second Sabbath in June, and then I only went down in the morning, and administered the ordinance in the afternoon. I went to the prayer meeting on Monday evening, and preached on the following Wednesday evening, when I was very much helped in speaking. On the Saturday Mr. Chandler came to preach the following day, and I and Mrs. Smith went down to Hastings, to spend a week with Mr. and Mrs. Floyd, at Fairlight.

My visit there, with the Lord's blessing, did me much good, and my bodily strength very much increased. I commenced my pastoral labours afresh on June 28th, and I hope I may say the Lord was present to bless the word spoken to the comfort of the souls of some of His dear people. Hymn 247, Gadsby's Selection, was made very sweet to my soul, and hymn 118 was made sweet also.

In looking back through 1892, I must say the Lord has been very kind and gracious unto me both in providence and in grace. I have had to pass through much darkness when out of the pulpit, but I have been very much helped in it when speaking to the Lord's people.

In November I had a severe attack of colic, which brought me down very low in body, but I was kept very calm in my mind. I had a very nice time on Christmas Eve in reading the 43rd chapter in the Book of Genesis, and I was much favoured in prayer afterwards, so through grace I was enabled to end the year well.

**Years 1893 and 1894**

On January 3rd, 1893, we held our Thanksgiving Services. Mr. Popham preached afternoon and evening. We had a collection both services, the proceeds of which were divided between the Sunday School and the Gospel Standard Aid Society.

One day, in 1894, a young friend, a godly woman, came to see me about the ordinance of baptism. I knew she had been in a dreadful state of mind about her soul for a long time, on and off, and she promised the Lord if He ever delivered her soul out of trouble, she would be baptised in honour of His goodness manifested towards her. Now the Lord had delivered her out of her bondage into the glorious liberty of the Gospel, and she wished to pay the vow she had made when her soul was in trouble. There was also another who wished to join the church with her, so I asked two of the deacons to see them on Monday, before or after the prayer meeting, which they did, and a church meeting was called, and they both gave a very satisfactory account of what God had done for their souls, and were received unanimously as candidates for baptism.

On the following Sunday two more offered themselves, and came forward. I asked the members who were at chapel to stay back after the service, as I had a statement to make. I told them two more were willing to join us. They appointed two friends, one member and one deacon, to see them. They did so, and were satisfied. Then another wished to come forward, and the deacons saw her, and were satisfied with her testimony; so they all five came before a good attendance of the church, and stated what God had done for their souls. It was a very solemn meeting; I don't think there was a dry eye in the place. They were all received unanimously.

I was favoured with a blessed time in prayer the next morning, which was a plain proof to me that the Lord approved of what we had done. I baptised four of them on Wednesday evening, August 29th, 1894. The other was attacked with erysipelas in the head, and could not come. I had another special time at the table, while administering the ordinance of the Supper. May the Lord grant me and the saints many more such sweet seasons; then I may joyfully say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" When the other friend got well enough to be baptised another young friend came forward, and wished to be baptised with her. She was visited by two of the deacons, and they were satisfied with the account she gave them of the Lord's dealings with her soul. Another church meeting was held in due course, and she came before us

and gave a very satisfactory account of what the Lord had done for her soul, which had been a work of some few years. She was unanimously received by all present, and on October 3rd, 1894, I baptised her with the one who had recovered from her illness. They were received into the church the first Sabbath in the following month.

### **Year 1895 - A trying twelve months**

We are now entered upon 1895. Some have gone the way of all the earth; others have been near to death but are still spared to us a little longer. We are living in solemn times. It is plain unto all discerning minds that God has a controversy with this nation, by the judgments that are abroad throughout the land. While the rich are feasting, many of the poor are nearly starving for want of the necessities of life. There is but very little labour for the industrious poor, and the country is so burdened with taxes and high rents that when these are paid they have but very little to subsist upon.

This year has been a very trying one for the church. We have lost seven of the church and congregation; but I have good reason to hope that their spirits are now in glory; so our loss is their eternal gain. The waters in Zion run very low at this time; very few seem to be in trouble about their souls, which is a sad sign of the times. The nation, or the greater part of it, is given up to idolatry; and those among the Dissenters, both Baptists and Independents, are so conformed to the world and its fashions that we can hardly distinguish the righteous from the wicked. This being the case, what can we expect but trouble, both in the Church and in the nation? May the Lord stir His dear people up to a sight and sense of their danger, and pour upon us all a spirit of prayer that He would revive His work in all our hearts, and in wrath remember mercy.

In October, I was afflicted with an attack of shingles in my head. This brought me down very low; my head was very sore, and sometimes painful. I got but little sleep, as I could not lay my head on my pillow without pain; but through mercy the Lord did not forsake me in this my time of need, but enabled me to speak in His name every Sabbath, until I thought I must give up, through the weakness I began to feel come upon me.

On Saturday, the 21st October, I was so low, both in body and mind, that I felt as though I should sink altogether. My sins, of omission and commission, stared me in the face, so that I felt I could not look up. I inwardly said, "Lord, if Thou requirest prayer before Thou wilt appear

for me, Thou seest I cannot produce it.”

### **Year 1897 - Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee**

This has been a memorable year to some. One cannot but remember the Lord's goodness manifested towards us a nation in sparing our Queen Victoria to sit upon our British throne for over sixty years, the longest reign in the annals of the English nation. *[Our own Queen Elizabeth II reached her sixty years in 2012 - Editor.]* She has kept her court more pure than any reigning monarch before her, and the Lord has honoured her with long life. I hope I was enabled to pray on the day of her Diamond Jubilee (Tuesday, 22 June 1897) that the Lord would preserve her from all harm while she was exposed to the gaze of both friends and foes, and He did answer my poor breathings in a very remarkable way, which caused me to shed a few tears of gratitude for His manifest mercy unto her and the nation; and I hope He will spare her life for another ten years, if it be His gracious will.

But while we have great cause to rejoice for this great mercy thus bestowed upon us, we have great cause to grieve over the sad judgments which have followed. The engineers' strike will prove ruinous to many families. Then the great fire was a sad disaster to business. *[We believe this to be a reference to the fire at Cripplegate which began on 19 November 1897 in an ostrich feather warehouse. The fire destroyed 154 narrowly spaced warehouses - Editor.]*

### **Three young people baptised**

On July 29th I baptised three young people. Two were man and wife, and the other was single, but all three I believe to be godly souls; and I hope they will wear well, through the blessed Spirit working in them both to will and to do that which is acceptable in God's sight.

### **Reaches his three-score years and ten**

On November 22nd 1897 I attained unto my seventieth birthday; and on the 23rd a public meeting was held, and there were many of my friends attended to congratulate me on my arriving at the age allotted to man, and the twentieth year of my pastorate over the church at Rehoboth. There were several of my brother ministers attended, whom I was very pleased to see. Their names are as follows: Mr. Hull, Mr. Ashdown, Mr. Popham, Mr. Newton, Mr. Dickens, Mr. Botten, and Mr. Brooker. Mr. Mockford was poorly, and could not attend. One of my friends gave a free tea, which seemed to be highly appreciated by all. In



the evening, two illuminated addresses, one to me and the other to Mrs. Smith, were read by the deacons, Mr. Stevenson and Mr. Kemp, the contents of which were given in "The Sower." Then Mr. Carr presented me with a fine worked bag, containing £9 14s. 7d. subscribed by many friends as a birthday present. This so filled my heart that I could say but little in reply thereto. Addresses were then given by each minister, and a hymn was then sung, and the enjoyable meeting broke up; some of the friends with their hearts full of comfort, and I and my dear wife with ours full of gratitude; and I with my pocket also full of money.

### **Year 1898 - a deacon and a church member taken away**

Well, 1898 has rolled into eternity. I still live to prove that I am but a poor pensioner, living entirely upon the Lord's bounty; but I must confess He is very kind unto me, both in providence and in grace.

The year has in some instances been a very eventful year. We, as a church, have had afflictions of a very trying nature among us, and death has taken two away from our midst; but I have good ground to hope that both their spirits are now in glory. One was my old deacon, Mr. Carr, who died September 1st, aged 78. He was a man whose walk and conversation was very straight, and that spoke well for him. He was only laid aside about six or seven weeks. Just before he died he was heard to say, "Yes, I shall soon be landed on yonder shores of bliss," and waved his hand. Some time afterward his cough became troublesome, and in a violent fit of coughing he expired; and his spirit took its flight to glory, where I hope one day to join him.

The other was a Miss Hogbin, whose friends lived at Ashford. She was consumptive, and her disease was accompanied with a very trying cough. She lived with a friend at Lower Green for several months; but at length she became so weak she had to leave and go home to her parents. She was very ill for some time, and then got well enough to leave home and go to visit some friends; she was taken into the hop garden, and for a while she seemed better. About that time she wrote me a very nice letter, which made me think she might revive and live for a few years. It appears, after I had received the letter, she went to stay a short time with Mr. House at Canterbury, and there she was taken worse. She was asked if they should take her home, to which she answered, "Whether I die here or at home, it is well." She died at Mr. House's, November 4th, and was buried at Ashford cemetery by Mr. House, as I was not very well at the time, and the friends thought it was not prudent

for me to go to bury her. I baptised her and another female October 3rd, 1894; her age was 32, and her end was peace. The Lord has a sovereign right to give and take away when He thinks proper.

After He had taken two away, He gave me another to help make up the breach. On the Monday night after Christmas Day a young man came before the church, and gave in his experience of what the Lord had done for his soul, which was very satisfactory to all those present, and he was unanimously received. I baptised him on December 28th, 1898, and he was taken into church fellowship with us on new year's day, and at the ordinance of the Supper I had a very sweet time.

### **Years 1899 and 1900**

So the Lord helped me to begin the year well. We have others *hanging about*, whom, I hope, the Lord will make willing to follow Him through His despised ordinance, and receive the answer of a good conscience, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

On July 24th, 1899, Mrs. Mercer came before the church, and gave in her testimony, which was very satisfactory, and she was received unanimously. I baptised her August 2nd, 1899, and she was taken into church fellowship at the next ordinance, August 6th.

The following year, on August 1st, 1900, I baptised Thomas Walter, who had been before the church, and gave a satisfactory testimony, and was well received. That the Lord may still add unto us those who are saved in Him with an everlasting salvation is my earnest prayer.

*Here Mr. Smith's writings suddenly end, four years before his death. We hope in our next edition, if the Lord will, to provide a few particulars of his last days provided by his son, and an account of the funeral service and burial.*

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**Joseph Irons** is best known for the last hymn in Gadsby's Hymnbook, 1156, "What sacred Fountain yonder springs." One day he wrote to his son who had moved to live far away: "May God Almighty make you a Christian. Let me advise you to avoid Sabbath-breaking. Early inquire for some place of worship where the same doctrines are preached which you have often heard in Grove Chapel, and meditate upon what you hear - and if I never see you again in this world, may I meet you at His right hand in the realms of bliss. Your affectionate father - *Joseph Irons*."

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## POUNDS, SHILLINGS AND PENCE

In the life of Mr. William Smith, he refers frequently to the cost of various items, particularly concerning repairs and improvements to the chapel building. Some of our younger readers are not familiar with pre-decimalisation money, so here is a very brief explanation.

The old currency was often referred to as L.S.D. The L stood for *libra*, Latin for pound as in weight. The S stood for *solidus*, a Roman gold coin. The D was taken from the Roman silver coin, the *denarius*. The L of course is written as £, and S and the D were written in lower case s and d. In his autobiography, Mr. Smith told us that a new vestry was built at a cost of £172 12s. 3d. That is: One hundred and seventy two pounds 12 shillings and 3 pence.

In 1880, £1 had a purchasing power of about £117 in today's money. This means that Mr. Smith's vestry would have cost just over £20,000 in today's money, which seems reasonable.

- Since 1975, all British coins have been made at the Royal Mint in Llantrisant, Wales. Previously, the Mint was in the City of London.
- Under the coinage act 1971, the 1p coin is legal tender for amounts up to 20p.
- 288 million 1p and 2p coins were minted in 2016.
- 1p and 2p coins are expected to last at least 40 years. Many will be around for much longer.
- Since 1971, there have been four different portraits of the Queen on the reverse side of the coin.

Here are two questions from an old 11-plus exam for entry to Grammar School. Can you do them? (Remember there are 12 pence in a shilling, and 20 shillings in a pound, making 240 pence in a pound.)

1. How much is 90% of 14 shillings 2 pence ?
2. Arithmetic books cost £6 18s. 0d for 144. The total cost of supplying each pupil in a certain class with a book is £1 15s. 5½d. How many pupils are there in the class ?

**No calculators allowed!** (Children were expected to show their workings.)

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## CORNWALL AND THE REFORMATION

### The remoteness of Cornwall

During July and August, many of our readers made the long journey into Cornwall, a most beautiful part of Britain with its coastline, its rivers, and its harbours - a lovely county in which to take a summer holiday. (The driving distance from London to Lands End is almost 320 miles.) There is much interesting history connected with this county, which, until the coming of the motorways, was considered very remote indeed. To visit Cornwall was almost like visiting another country.

### The Reformation period

Cornwall was one of the last places in the country to experience the influence of the Reformation. The main reason for the delay was that much of Cornwall did not speak English, and so did not benefit immediately from either the English Bible or the English Prayer Book, which became widespread during the reign of Edward VI in the middle

of the century. It was not until 1600 that English began to be more widely spoken across the county of Cornwall. The little church of St. Feock tucked away along winding twisty roads in the remote village of the same name overlooking the Fal estuary was one of the last to use the Cornish language in their services. Still displayed inside the church is the Lord's



prayer in Cornish, and part of the communion service. (See page 27.)

### Protestant martyrs

We have accounts of two Protestant martyrs from Cornwall and the borders of Devon. The first was **Thomas Benet**, who came to Exeter from Cambridge in 1524. Having renounced the Catholic church, he nailed a paper protesting against the supremacy of the Pope to the door of Exeter Cathedral (rather like Martin Luther). He was burnt at the stake on 10th January 1531 at Livery Dole on the eastern side of the city. This was a triangular piece of land used as a place of execution for

those who committed murder, witchcraft, heresy or treason up until 1537 when the City of Exeter became a county in its own right. The place is now the garden of the almshouses which stand in front of St. Clare's Chapel. The chapel was used in earlier times to pray for the souls of the executed.

A second account exists of one **Agnes Prest** (sometimes called Elisabeth) who was from Launceston, Cornwall, now on the main A30 route into the county. She was burned at the stake at Southernhay, a suburb of Exeter, the county town of Devon, in 1557 during the persecutions of Queen Mary. Here is an account of her trial adapted from Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* and other sources.

### SUFFERINGS AND MARTYRDOM OF AGNES PREST

This poor woman was the wife of a labouring man living in a small village near the town of Launceston, Cornwall. Her husband, and three children, were zealous papists, and she would frequently rebuke them for their superstition. Sometimes her husband forced her to go to church, to follow in its processions, and to conform to the Romish ceremonies. This was so much against her conscience that she prayed to God for His assistance, took courage, and for a time had to leave her husband and family.

For some time she travelled from one place to another, maintaining herself by spinning. But at length she returned to her husband; a few days after which she was accused of heresy by some of her neighbours. She was apprehended, and sent to Exeter, to be examined by the Bishop, Dr. Troubleville, and his chancellor, Blackston. The following account of what passed at her examination was prepared from information given by persons who were at that time residing at Exeter.

*Bishop* Thou foolish woman, I hear that thou hast certain words against the most blessed sacrament of the altar, the body of Christ. Fie, for shame! thou art an unlearned person, and a woman. Wilt thou meddle with such high matters, which all the doctors of the world cannot define? Wilt thou talk of such high mysteries? Keep to thy work; it is no woman's matter. And if it be as I am informed, thou art worthy to be burned.

*Woman* My lord, I trust your lordship will hear me speak.

*Bishop* Yea, marry, for that cause I sent for you.

*Woman* I am a poor woman, and live by my hands, getting a penny truly; and of what I get, I give part to the poor.

*Bishop* That is well done.

*Woman* Sir, I will rather die than I will do any worship to that idol, which in your mass you make a god.

*Bishop* What, heretic, will you say that the sacrament of the altar is a foul idol?

*Woman* Yes, truly, there never was such an idol as your sacrament is made by your priests, and commanded to be worshipped of all men, with many fond fantasies, where Christ did command it to be eaten and drunken in remembrance of His most blessed passion for our redemption.

*Bishop* See this prattling woman? Dost thou not hear that Christ did say over the bread, "This is My body," and over the cup, "This is My blood?"

*Woman* Yes, forsooth, He said so, but He meant that it is His body and blood, not carnally, but sacramentally.

*Bishop* Lo, she hath heard prating among these new preachers, or heard read some peevish book. Alas, poor woman, thou art deceived.

*Woman* No, my lord, what I have learned was of godly preachers, and of godly books which I have heard read. And with your leave, I will declare a reason why I will not worship the sacrament.

*Bishop* Marry, say on, I am sure it will be goodly gear.

*Woman* Truly such gear as I will lose this poor life of mine for.

*Bishop* Then you will be a martyr, good wife.

*Woman* Indeed, if the denying to worship that bready god be my martyrdom, I will suffer it with all my heart. You must bear with me, a poor woman.

*Bishop* So I will.

*Woman* I will demand of you, whether you can deny your own creed,

which doth say, That Christ doth perpetually sit at the right hand of His Father, both body and soul, until He come again; or whether He be there in heaven our Advocate, and to make prayer for us unto God, His Father? If it be so, He is not here on earth in a piece of bread. If He be not here, and if He do not dwell in temples made with hands, but in heaven; what, shall we seek Him here? If He did offer His body once for all, why make you a new offering? If He is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, why do you worship a piece of bread? Alas, I am a poor woman, but rather than do as you do, I would live no longer. I have said, sir.

*Bishop* I promise you, you are a jolly protestant. I pray you, in what schools have you been brought up?

*Woman* I have upon the Sundays visited the sermons, and have I learned such things as are so fixed in my breast, that death shall not separate them. God give me grace to go to the true church.

*Bishop* O foolish woman, who will waste his breath upon thee, or such as thou art? And the true church, what dost thou mean?

*Woman* Not your popish church, full of idols and abominations, but where two or three are gathered together in the name of God, to that church will I go as long as I live.

*Bishop* Belike then you have a church of your own. Well, let this mad woman be put down to prison till we send for her husband.

And so their communication, for that time, brake off. Blackston, the chancellor, persuaded the bishop that she was not in her right senses, (which is no new thing for the wisdom of God to appear foolishness to the carnal men of this world) and therefore they consulted together, that she should have liberty to go at large. So the keeper of the bishop's prison had her home to his house, where she spent her time spinning and carding, and did work as a servant in the said keeper's house, and she went about the city when and where she pleased, and many people took great delight in talking with her.

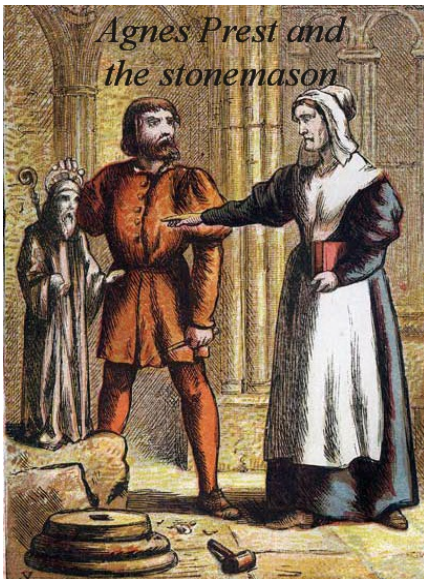
Then divers of the priests endeavoured to persuade her to leave her "wicked opinion" about the sacrament of the altar, and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ. But she made them answer, that it was



nothing but very bread and wine, and that they might be ashamed to say that a piece of bread should be turned by a man into the natural body of Christ, which bread doth corrupt, and mice oftentimes eat it, and it doth mould, and is burned. "God's body," said she, "will not be so handled, nor kept in prison or boxes. Let it be your god, it shall not be mine; for *my* Saviour sitteth on the right hand of God, and doth pray for me."

"Now truly," said they, "the devil hath deceived thee." "No," said she, "I trust the living God hath opened mine eyes, and caused me to understand the right use of the blessed sacrament, which the true church doth use, but the false church doth abuse."

Then stepped forth an old friar, and asked her what she said of the holy pope. "I say," said she, "that he is antichrist, and the devil." Then they all laughed. "Nay," said she, "you have more need to weep than to laugh, and to be sorry that ever you were born, to be the chaplains of that whore of Babylon. I defy him and all his falsehood; and get you away from me, you do but trouble my conscience. You would have me follow your doings; I will first lose my life. I pray you depart." "Why, thou foolish woman," said they, "we come to thee for thy profit and soul's health." "O Lord God!" said she, "what profit ariseth by you, when you preach nothing but damnable lies, and destroy souls. You teach the pope is God's vicar, and hath power to forgive sins, and that there is a purgatory, when God's Son hath by His passion purged all?"



In the month's liberty which was granted her by the bishop, as is before mentioned, she went into St. Peter's church, and there found a stonemason, a Dutchman, that had made new noses to certain fine images which were disfigured in King Edward's time; to whom she said, "What a madman art thou to make them new noses, which within a few days shall all lose their heads?" The Dutchman, offended, laid charges against her, and she was sent for, and clapped up fast, and from that time she had no liberty.

During the time of her imprisonment, divers resorted to visit her, some sent by the bishop, some of

their own voluntary will. There resorted to her a certain gentlewoman, the wife of one Walter Rauly, a woman of noble wit, and of a good and godly opinion; who, coming to the prison, and talking with her, Mrs. Prest said her creed to the gentlewoman; and when she came to "He ascended into heaven," there she paused, and bid the gentlewoman to seek His blessed body in heaven, not on earth. "The sacrament," said she, "is nothing else but a remembrance of His blessed passion." So that as soon as she came home to her husband, she declared to him, that in her life she never heard a woman (of such simplicity to look on) talk so godly, so perfectly, so sincerely, and so earnestly; insomuch, that if God were not with her, she could not speak such things.

Thus this good matron was much tried by her hard imprisonment, with threatenings, taunts, scorns, called an anabaptist, a mad woman, a drunkard, a runagate. She was tried by flattery, with many fair promises; but nothing could prevail; her heart was fixed, she had cast anchor, utterly contemning this wicked world. Although she was of such simplicity, and unskilled in the knowledge of this world, you could declare no place of scripture but she would tell you the chapter; yea, she would recite you the names of all the books of the Bible. For which cause one Gregory Basset, a rank papist, said she was out of her wits.

At last, when they could, neither by imprisonment nor liberty, by menaces nor flattery, win her to their vanities and superstitious doings, then they cried out, an anabaptist, an anabaptist! Then in one day they brought her from the bishop's prison to the Exeter Guildhall, and delivered her to the temporal power, according to their custom, where she was by the gentlemen of the country exhorted yet to call for grace. "Thou art an unlearned woman, thou art not able to answer such high matters," they said.

"I am not," said she; "yet with my death I am content to be a witness of Christ's death."

They at length condemned her, and delivered her over to the secular power. Then the sentence being given, that she should go to the prison from whence she came, and from thence to the place of execution, there to be burned with flames till she be consumed.

She lifted up her voice and thanked God, saying, "I thank Thee, my Lord, my God; this day have I found that which I have long sought." Yet even now, they promised that her life should be spared, if she would turn and recant. "Nay, that I will not," said she, "God forbid that I should lose the life eternal for this carnal and short life."

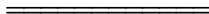
Then was she delivered to the sheriff, innumerable people beholding her, and led by the officers to the place of execution, without the walls of Exeter, called Southernhay, in front of the Chapel of St. Clarus, where again these superstitious priests assaulted her; and she prayed them to have no more talk with her, but cried still, “God be merciful to me, a sinner.”



*St. Clare's Chapel and garden, the place of her suffering*

And so while they were tying her to the stake, thus still she cried, and would give no answer to them, but with much patience took her cruel death, and was with flames of fire consumed; and so ended this mortal life, as constant a woman in the faith of Christ, as ever was upon the earth.

*A monument has been erected to the memory of both Thomas Benet and Agnes Prest which stands at the corner of Barnfield Road and Denmark Road, Exeter.*



## A REMARKABLE EVENT

by Peter Barnard

Some of you will no doubt remember Mr. Joe Lusted, who was a minister amongst our chapels. Here is a remarkable incident that he told me about.

On one occasion, he was preaching at Manchester and it was necessary to catch a coach as part of the journey. While at the coach station at Digbeth, waiting for the coach, a young lad was larking around beside him and kept bumping into him.

Joe's coach arrived, and he went on his journey, but when he arrived at the Deacon's house, he couldn't find his wallet anywhere. Joe borrowed the Deacon's phone and called his wife Ruth to see if his wallet was at home, but she looked everywhere and she could not find it either.

Joe travelled home after the service and was much troubled about his missing wallet, laying the matter prayerfully before the Lord.

A few weeks later the postman delivered a parcel, and in the parcel was Joe's wallet with all its contents; nothing was missing. There was also a note, which said, "Sorry I stole your wallet. I am now returning it with £5 interest. Please take more care of your wallet in future." The note was signed "*Light Fingers.*"

### Pader Agan Arluth

(The Lord's Prayer - Cornish translation)

Agan Tas-ny, us yn nef,

Benygys re bod dha Hanow,

Re dheffo dha wlascor,

Dha voth re bo gwres, y'n

nor kepar hag y'n nef.

Ro dhyn-ny hedhyu agan bara

pup deth-oll;

Ha gaf dhyn agan camwyth,

Kepar del aven-nyny dhe'n re-na us ow

camwul er agan pyn-ny;

Ha na wra agan gorra yn temptasyon,

Mes delyrf ny dyworth drok.

Rag dhyso-jy yu an wlascor, ha'n gallos,

ha'n gordhyans,

Bys vyken ha binary. Amen.

*Left:* The Lord's prayer in Cornish as displayed in Feock Church (see page 20). Cornish is one of the Brittonic languages, which constitute a section of the Celtic language family. Brittonic also includes Welsh, Breton and the Cumbric language (now extinct).

The only word that resembles English is '*temptasyon*', and possibly '*delyrf*' for deliver. Other words: Father - *Tas*  
name - *hanow* as it is - *kepar*  
heaven - *nef* bread - *bara*  
forgive - *gaf dhyn* glory - *gordhyans*

The number of fluent Cornish speakers is estimated at 2000, but 3000 including all who can carry out a simple conversation.



## BRITAIN'S CHURCH BUILDINGS

One of the saddest things encountered when visiting Britain's cities is the large number of magnificent churches that have been turned over to secular use. Some are now cafés, visitor centres, art galleries, concert halls, even cinemas. Other churches, whilst remaining open, are seeking to use their premises for worldly and ungodly purposes. There seems to be no real desire for the worship of a holy, holy, holy God.



Holy Trinity Church, Hull, (recently renamed Hull Minster) is embarking on a £4.5million scheme which involves removing what is claimed to be “the most magnificent Victorian church seating in the country.” The pews will make way for the hosting of performances, concerts, banquets and more. Pop concerts will be welcome, and we are promised that some of the ‘biggest names in pop’ will play in the church, which dates back to 1300. Lighting cables, a sound system and even a smoke machine are to be installed. What a solemn indictment of the times - and what a mockery that Sunday services are still to be held. “O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance; Thy holy temple have they defiled” (Psalm 79. 1).

## CViE 2018 NATIONAL EVENT

*We have been pleased to receive this report of the meeting held at Reigate in September 2018.*

With the title of *Battlegrounds* and a line-up of well-known and accomplished keynote speakers, it was perhaps little wonder that the Christian Values in Education National Event drew a capacity crowd this year at the Reigate Parish School.

The event - now held annually in response to feedback from CViE supporters - offered a richly packed agenda of talks and activities to suit parents and children of all ages, and indeed anyone who has an interest in the education of children and young people today.

The first guest speaker, Dr. Peter Saunders of the Christian Medical Fellowship, gave a highly informative presentation on the gritty but very necessary topic of Transgenderism. Pulling no punches, he clearly set out the current secular worldview against the Biblical perspective, and faithfully exhorted the enthralled audience to stand firm against this pervasive social cancer. As alarming and dumbfounding as the contemporary ideology is, Dr. Saunders more than restored balance with the reassurance that the God and Creator of everything remains completely and supremely in control. The hearty applause and audience questions that followed testified to just how well received the talk was.

After the very social lunch interlude and following a brief update on the work of the CViE by Chairman Michael Ridout, James Skelton and Graham Cottingham introduced a new freely available Screen Safety and Security Resource Pack. The pack, designed to be a hands-on aid for parents, is a collation of ten practical tools, useful tips and links to external information on a biblical-principled approach to today's digital lifestyle.

The day was crowned by an inspiring and uplifting talk given by the Head Teacher of Fulham Boys' School, Mr. Alun Ebenezer. In a disarmingly raw yet endearing delivery, Mr. Ebenezer outlined his seemingly unlikely path from his roots in the Welsh Valleys to leading the astonishing success of the state-funded Free School. His passion for the work was impossible to miss - but most wonderfully - his zeal for spreading a resoundingly clear Gospel message graced almost every engaging anecdote and surfaced all the way through his well-judged narrative. Mr. Ebenezer explained how the Boys' School is founded on an unashamedly and uncompromising bedrock of Christian principles,

where evolution is presented as a theory only alongside the Genesis Creation truths. He spoke about how the curriculum meets Ofsted's requirements by providing a true education - presenting an array of perspectives and allowing the students to resolve answers for themselves - rather than the single-perspective indoctrination of secular education.

Mr. Ebenezer went on to say that the success of the school has been so significant that the Government has approached him to set up more schools, and opportunities to do so are now being pursued in Cambridge and Haywards Heath. The talk was brought to an emotive conclusion as Mr. Ebenezer fittingly reminded the audience that all have to stand before our Maker and give an account of what we have done. A truly encouraging and heartening message.

Whilst the talks held in the main hall were targeted at adults, a range of age-appropriate sessions were provided concurrently for the large number of children attending, covering topics including Dinosaurs, Peer Pressure, and the Armistice.

In a drive to 'Cultivate a reading habit' and made possible by a very generous donation, CViE were able to offer a free book voucher to all children attending the event. These were to be used at either of the two book stalls, Christian Bookshop Ossett and the Gospel Standard Trust Publications, which evidently saw particularly good sales.

The event was well supported by a growing number of organisations providing excellent literature or resources: Truth in Science; the Valley Christian School Online; the Lovewise organisation; and the Hugh Latimer School also had a stand to provide further information about this new venture. CViE had its own stand to give away its free publications and materials, which this year featured the launch of the revised and updated booklet titled 'Relationships' which was intentionally complementary to the talk given by Dr. Saunders.

A retiring collection was taken, and all attendees were encouraged to participate in the online survey to enable CViE to continue to respond actively and dynamically to the voice of its supporters. Notably, the date for the National Event in 2019 was announced, if the Lord will, for the 28th September, returning to Caddington School in Bedfordshire.

*For more information, please visit the CViE website at [cvie.org.uk](http://cvie.org.uk).*

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## POISON

How attractive are these beautiful flowers. The bell-like blooms invite us to admire and touch those golden petals. And what a lovely name the plant has - “Angels’ trumpets.” Surely a plant with such an innocent name would make a desirable addition to our garden.



BEWARE. Don’t touch it! In spite of its outward attraction, the whole plant is deadly poisonous to us humans. We touch the plant at our peril.

How much life is like this plant. Things that *seem* attractive can in the end be our downfall. We may feel drawn to participate in things which outwardly seem pleasurable, and we think can surely do us no harm. But too late we find we have been enticed into a pathway from which there can be no easy escape. “The way of ruin thus begins, Down, down, like easy stairs,” says the children’s hymn speaking of sin.

\* \* \* \* \*

The way *towards* sin is a much easier route than the route *away* from sin. Emily, a 19 year old student (name changed) had recently settled into her new digs at university. Back home, her parents were sad to see her go, and felt the ‘empty nest’ very much; however, they were happy in the thought that her course would help her into a rewarding career.

What her parents could never have anticipated was that her arrival

at university was the beginning of a devastating fall into alcohol dependency. They could never have believed it would leave her deep in debt and vulnerable to advances from those who wished to take advantage of her sexually.

It all began with Freshers' Week. By the end of the term she had a serious drink problem. Her entire student loan had been spent on drink, and she was overdrawn at the bank. Her parents attempted to take control of her finances, allowing her £30 per week for food, but even this she spent on drink. By the end of the year she had spent £2,000 on alcohol. Lectures were missed, and in the end Emily dropped out of university altogether.

BEWARE. We may think we can withstand temptation, but sometimes we cannot. How much we need to pray, "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe."

Right from the beginning always say "No."

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## THE GREAT VINE AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman" (John 15. 1).*

The Great Vine, the largest in the world, this year marks its 250th



anniversary. It was planted in 1768 on the orders of King George by Lancelot "Capability" Brown, the head gardener at Hampton Court Palace. Some branches are 33m (108ft) long. Its fruit was used by the household of Queen Victoria. Up until 1920 the grapes were kept strictly for the royal family only, the vine keepers

guarding them closely and numbering each bunch.

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## **PEER PRESSURE - Not just a teenage problem**

*“My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not” (Proverbs 1.10).*

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### **What is a ‘peer’?**

A ‘peer’ is someone who is roughly your own age, or is in similar circumstances to yourself.

### **What is peer pressure?**

Peer pressure is the influence that your peers have on you.

### **Does peer pressure affect only children and young people?**

No, although it is often associated with children, particularly teenagers, and adults are also susceptible.

### **Where do we find peer pressure?**

It can be found among friendship groups, at school, at university, in the work place, amongst mums at the school gates, and even in family groups.

These days we have more pressure than ever before, due to the internet and social media being instantly accessible, with texting and ‘snapchatting’ day and night.

You may not even realise it, but your friends and peers are probably influencing many of your day to day decisions.

### **Is peer pressure a bad thing?**

Peer pressure is usually seen as a negative influence, where individuals are feeling pressured, compelled or coerced into behaving in the same way as their peers. They feel a measure of anxiety about being seen as different, or strange.

“I can’t do that, everyone will think I’m really weird,” is a refrain often heard in our house!

The pressure to act the same, wear the same, have the same, do the same, even sit or stand the same, as the others around you is a way that we seek to “fit in” with those around us. Not all of that is necessarily bad, not all influences are going to affect us negatively, as the Word of God says: *“He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed” (Proverbs 13. 20).*

### Why do we feel we must “fit in”?

It is very tempting to do everything you can to fit in with your friends. It's hard being the only one doing something different.

At school, I foolishly thought that I would fit in better if I spoke like the other ‘cool’ kids, using bad language, but it just left me looking rather silly, and left a horrid taste in the mouth. It didn't work. *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12. 2).*

With adults it may be more a case of “keeping up with the Jones's,” which is really envy or competitiveness.

Peer pressure can often come about from the fear of bullying. This isn't just the case at school. In the work place many people have experienced bullying and often the ‘bully’ is the centre of the peer group, who everybody is really a little afraid of, and wants to keep on the right side of, and avoid being sidelined or snubbed. *“Do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Galatians 1.10).*

At work it's tempting to join in with the gossip. Please forgive the generalisation, but a group of women can completely destroy another's reputation and character in a single coffee break, purely because they said something mildly offensive or irritating. Having the strength to change the subject or walk away, isn't always easy. We need to ask the Lord to help us, as the Bible says: *“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (Ephesians 4. 29).*

Some good questions to ask ourselves:

Do I love the Lord Jesus enough to desire to follow Him above all else? Do I just follow the crowd for the sake of it? Do I stand out against any bullying behaviour I witness? Do I look out for those who are being sidelined, or bullied? How do I even begin when I am secretly afraid to be seen as different, even when I know that things I am tempted to do or join in with are wrong?

*“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10. 13).*

### **Some advice for teenagers**

Choose your friends carefully. I would urge you to make it a matter of prayer that the Lord will help you find good, wise and helpful friends who will influence you for better rather than worse. I think particularly of when I started University and I prayed that the Lord would help me find a Christian friend and within the first week I had found one. She said to me, “God is so good to me; I’ve been praying for a good friend.”

Try to develop friendships with those who have the same values as you. Do your friends make you want to draw nearer to the Lord Jesus, or do they pull you away from Him? This doesn’t mean in any way that you should be unfriendly to those who think differently to you.

### **But how can I say “No”?**

It can be very hard to say no to your friends, especially when they are all joining in with things that are wrong or unwise.

- It can help to be prepared, and to think out what you want to say. Even write it down if this helps.
- Always ask the Lord to give you strength, wisdom, and boldness to say “No.”
- You may feel scared and alone. **BUT YOU ARE NOT ALONE.** *“For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”*
- Try to say “NO” with confidence. It’s your decision, not theirs.
- Act calmly, stand up straight, and don’t fidget.
- Make eye contact.
- Don’t feel you have to apologise.

### **What about more serious matters?**

You may be pressured to be thin or beautiful. This can cause you to obsess about your hair, or weight, trying to be ‘perfect’. Worrying about losing weight can lead to eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. It is important to recognise if this might be happening to you. Remember that a lot of people do not feel happy about parts of themselves. You are not unusual.

Really, in a way it is not the *people* who put this pressure on us, but rather because 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*” (Ephesians 6. 12).

Behind all of it is the Devil at work.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Daniel.** The life of Daniel tells us about extreme ‘peer pressure’, but he continued alone, to walk tenderly before God, and under the threat of a terrifying death in the lions’ den. And then there were his friends, facing the furnace for refusing to worship any other god. Thinking on this should make us consider, what is a bit of laughter behind our backs, or threat of non-promotion, in comparison to that?

*“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16. 26).*

“Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim  
In the light of His glory and grace.”

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## FUNERALS OF THE POOR

Paupers were often buried without a coffin, having only a shroud tied top and bottom. The shroud was made of sheeps’ wool to comply with the Burial in Wool Act of 1666. The law was intended to help the wool trade, and a penalty of £5 was imposed if wool was not used. The only exceptions were plague victims and the destitute. An affidavit had to be made at each burial before a Justice of the Peace that the law had been complied with. Burial entries in the parish registers were marked with the word ‘affidavit,’ or ‘naked’ for those too poor to afford the woollen shroud. The cost of wool for the shroud was two shillings (10p).

Accounts of the Overseers of the Poor in 1694 had the following entries:

Item pd for wool to berry James Tilcock wife in	2s. -
Item pd to 4 men for Carrying James Tilcock wife to the Grave	4s. -
Item pd for bering James Tilcock wife	1s. 4d
Item pd to Emanuel Clarkes wife for laying out Tilcockes wife	2s. -
Item pd for James Tilcock wife Coffin	7s. -
Item pd for making James Tilcock wife Grave	1s. 2d

*[In 1694 1s (one shilling) would be worth £6.50 today.]*

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Question 1:** “Why do some people believe that Jesus went into hell between His death and the resurrection?”

**Answer:** There are two reasons. The first reason is that in Psalm 16. 10, we read: “For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”

The second reason is that in the Apostles’ Creed, which is recited at most services held in the Church of England, it is stated that Jesus “was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead.”

In both cases the reference to “hell” does not mean the place of the damned. When the Lord Jesus died, He committed His soul to His Father, and was the same day found in Paradise, as He said to the dying thief, “Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.”

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word used to describe the realm of the dead is *sheol*. It simply means “the place of departed spirits.” The word can also mean simply the grave, as in Genesis 37. 35 when Jacob said, “I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning.” It is exactly the same word, *sheol*, in both Psalm 16. 10 and Genesis 37. 35.

Dr. Gill, the very learned Bible commentator, says: “It seems best to interpret it as *the grave*, as the word is rendered in Genesis 37. 35.”

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It was never the will of the Father that the soul of the Lord Jesus Christ should be left for long in a state of separation from His body. After three days, His sacred body and soul were re-united, and then “this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Hebrews 10. 12).

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**Question 2:** We hear of post-millennialism, pre-millennialism, and non-millennialism. Can you explain it simply?

**Answer:** ‘Millennium’ is Latin for ‘one thousand years’. The word ‘millennium’ does not appear in the Bible, but Revelation chapter 20 refers several times to ‘a thousand years’ - for example, “And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years” (Rev. 20. 4).

The New Testament teaches that one day the Lord Jesus Christ will



return to the earth. This is generally called ‘the second coming.’ “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). “They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24. 30).

A view held on the millennium is called ‘millennialism’, or sometimes ‘millenarianism’.

In general, millennialism is the belief that Christ will establish a kingdom on the earth for a duration of 1,000 years before (or after) the last judgment.

There are three main views held concerning the millennium:

- Post-millennialism is the view that the second coming of Christ will *follow* the millennium.
- Pre-millennialism is the view that the second coming of Christ will be immediately *before* the millennium.
- Non-millennialism is the view that the thousand years does not refer to a kingdom of a thousand years here below, but rather the millennium is, or will be, a heavenly kingdom. (Non-millennialism is sometimes called ‘amilennialism’.)

All three of these views have been held by godly men. There are many sub-divisions to each of these categories, e.g. catastrophic-millennialism, post-tribulational pre-millennialism, and so on.

There is disagreement, too, over whether the thousand years is a definite number, or whether it is a number representing just a long period of time. Those who believe it to be exactly a thousand years point out that no less than four times it is called either ‘the thousand years’ or ‘a thousand years.’

Some believe that the thousand years began at the birth of Christ. However, if this is so, there were no events in the 1000's or 1100's that point to the end of that period. The view that the thousand years is an indeterminate number has lead some non-millennialists to believe that we are living in the millennium now.

In view of all these different views, what are we to believe? John Bunyan had a different view to the great Dr. Gill. A wise man once said something like this: “This chapter is one of the darkest parts of all prophecy. It is very probable that the things contained in it are not yet accomplished; and therefore it is wiser to content ourselves with general

observations, rather than to be too positive and particular in our explanations of it.” To us this seems good advice.

Revelation chapter 20 is very solemn. It ends with this verse: “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Although there may be things we do not fully understand, there is clearly set forth the truth that the Lord will return to judge the world, and that at the day of judgment there will be a final separation of the just from the wicked. Our state will be settled for all eternity. May our chief concern be to be found written in the book of life.

“In thy fair book of life and grace,  
O may I find my name  
Recorded in some humble place,  
Beneath my Lord the Lamb.”

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## THE BEAR OF AMSTERDAM

A café with this rather unusual name is found as the visitor strolls through the delightful little seaside town of Aberdovey on the north side of the River Dyfi in Gwynedd, on the west coast of Wales.

The story is that during the Spanish Armada of 1588, a Spanish ship, the *Bear of Amsterdam*, lost her way and ended up in the Dyfi estuary. After escaping Sir Francis Drake’s fleet, the ship had staggered up the North sea and around Scotland through the Irish sea, and found safety anchored mid-river in front of where the café is now located.



With the prevailing winds on this coast being westerly it was difficult for the galleon to leave the estuary. The militia of Merionethshire and Cardiganshire assembled and waited for an opportunity to take or destroy the Spanish vessel. However, there were no boats available and they had no cannons to hole her. So there she swung at anchor with the militia helplessly standing by, unable to do more than fire the odd musket shot. After several days of waiting and watching the winds changed and the Spanish ship was able to sail away over the bar and into open sea. The ship did not get far - one of Drake’s ships was waiting to pounce and she was captured.

## CURRENT MATTERS

### God - He or She?

In *Perception* Spring 2018 we referred to the Church of Sweden which ordered its ministers no longer to refer to God as ‘the Lord’ or ‘He’ because it displayed a gender bias. Now the Church of England’s first female bishop has said that referring to God only as ‘He’ risks alienating the public from religion. The Right Reverend Rachel Treweek added: “I don’t want our young girls or young boys to hear us constantly refer to God as He.” A poll conducted by YouGov found that 37 per cent of Christians thought God was male, 19 per cent didn’t know, and three per cent thought God had a completely different gender, whilst 41 per cent thought that God did not have a gender at all. The infallible word of God says that unto us a ‘Son’ is given and that He is ‘The mighty God.’



On Monday, 11 November 1918 the Armistice was announced to the House of Commons by the Prime Minister, Mr David Lloyd George.

“At eleven o’clock this morning, came to an end the cruellest and most terrible war that has scourged mankind. This is no time for words. Our hearts are too full of gratitude to which no tongue can give adequate expression. I therefore move that the house adjourn until this time tomorrow, and forthwith proceed to St Margaret’s Church to give humble and reverent thanks for the deliverance of the world from the great peril which beset it.”

Mr Asquith rose to assent to this.

The House then adjourned in solemn procession to St Margaret’s church, therein to give thanks to the **Giver of All Victories**.

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As this historic year draws to a close, may we too give thanks to Almighty God for that time of great deliverance, and for His continuing mercies to our sinful land. Although in 1918 there was much rejoicing that the war was finally over, thousands of families would never forget that their bravest and best lay under the soil in France.

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## THE SEASONS

Though winter waste the earth awhile,  
Spring soon revives the verdant meads;  
The ripening fields in summer smile,  
And autumn with rich crops succeeds.

In this hymn (number 875 in Gadsby's) Joseph Hart mentions all four seasons. The Bible does not use the words spring and autumn to describe the seasons of the year. Old English used the phrase 'springing time' until it was contracted to 'spring'. Before the sixteenth century, harvest was the word used to refer to the season, as is common today in most West Germanic languages, such as the Dutch *herfst*, and German *Herbst*. As more people gradually moved from working the land to living in towns, the word harvest lost its reference to the time of year and came to refer only to the actual gathering in of the crops.

The changing seasons are reminders of God's faithful promise that there will always be seedtime and harvest, and summer and winter. However, the relevant verse in Genesis 8. 22 begins with solemn words: "While the earth remaineth." The earth will not last for ever - one day it will 'remain' no longer.

How often we live our lives as though we shall be here for ever! We forget that what is said of the earth, can equally truly be said of ourselves: "While our life remaineth." Paul refers to our bodies as a "tabernacle." A tabernacle is not a permanent structure, not very durable. King David was concerned that the ark of God rested only in curtains (a tabernacle), whilst he himself lived in "an house of cedar."

So as the seasons come and go, and another year is nearly over, may we have time to pause and reflect that soon we must change time for eternity. Paul had the sweet assurance that one day he would have a house "eternal in the heavens." Have we a hope of this, too? Paul was able to say, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5. 1).