Free Church
# Witness

OCTOBER 2012 ISSUE

## Christ's Resurrection
### in the Old Testament

*Dr Jerry Bilkes*

Published by the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

Price: £2.00

# CONTENTS

**Editor**
Rev William Macleod
B.Sc Th.M

25 Branklyn Crescent
Academy Park
Glasgow
G13 1GJ
Tel 0141 959 0292
williammacleod@fccontinuing.org



**Design and Layout:** Alasdair Macleod
**Cover:** **Sunrise** (*JupiterImages, 2012*)


## Subscription Details

Subscription rates (including postage) for a year's issues of the two magazines mailed to one address are:

| | |
|---|---|
| *U.K.* | *£27.50* |
| *Europe (Airmail)* | *£30.00* |
| *Overseas (Airmail)* | *£35.00* |

The congregational rate is £24.00.
We would like to encourage churches to make bulk orders. The *Explorer* may be ordered separately for Sabbath Schools.
Cheques/Postal Orders should be made payable to: *"Free Church Witness"*
Subscriptions and orders should be sent to:
Mrs Isobel McQueer
The Manse, Tordarroch, Farr,
Inverness IV2 6XF.
Email: isobel@mcqueer.com

## Witness on Tape

The Free Church Witness magazine is available on two tapes which can be ordered at no cost.
Please order your tapes from:
Mr D Grant
4E Belmar Court
Linwood PA3 3EE

## FCC Audio Ministry

Sermons by ministers of the Free Church (Continuing) are available on CD and a catalogue listing the sermons may be obtained. The cost of each CD (including postage) is £1.00.
Cheques/Postal Orders should be made payable to: "Free Church (Continuing) Tape Ministry"
Please order your catalogue and CDs from:
Mr Bill McQueer
The Manse, Tordarroch, Farr,
Inverness IV2 6XF.
Email: bill@mcqueer.com

## Psalmody CDs

Available from Mrs Isobel Scott
Tel.01506 652168
www.sing-the-psalms.webs.com.

Page


The Christian's Service (2). . . . . 3
All Have Sinned. . . . . 5
Christ's Resurrection in the Old Testament . . . . 7
The Unequal Yoke . . . . . 8
News Desk . . . . . 10
Introduction to the Septuagint . . . . . 13
Books . . . . . 14
Revival in Carrickfergus . . . . . 16
Remittances - August 2012 . . . . . 17
Visit to Zambia . . . . . 18


Church Website at www.fccontinuing.org

## Gifts and Donations

All donations and gifts for the Church should be sent to the Financial Administrator:
Mrs Muriel Smith
1a Stewartfield
Stornoway
Isle of Lewis
HS1 2UW
from whom further information may be obtained. Cheques should be made payable to "Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)".
The Church is a recognised Scottish Charity (No. 030976).

## General Treasurer

The General Treasurer is:
Angus Macmillan, 46a Newmarket, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0DU
Tel: 01851 703965 (Home)
Tel: 01851 700235 (Work)
Mobile: 07786 296931
Email: generaltreasurer@fccontinuing.org


## Published by

Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)
25 Branklyn Crescent
Academy Park
Glasgow G13 1GJ


## COMMUNIONS

**October:-**

| | |
|---|---|
| 14 | Ness |
| 21 | Smith Falls |
| 28 | Atlanta, Knock & Point, Partick |

**November:-**

| | |
|---|---|
| 4 | Arran, Edinburgh, Beauly, Aultbea |
| 11 | Aberdeen, Tarbat |


## Printed by

MMS-Almac Ltd.
Unit F Isla Bank Mills, Keith AB55 5DD
Tel: 01542 886409

# The Christian's Service (2)

*Last month we looked at the motive, rule, attitude, and example which Christians have as they seek to render service to God and to man. We saw that our primary service to God is worship. It was for this purpose that we were created. We noted that in our public worship of God men are to take the lead. In this article we will consider the service we are to render to our fellow men.*

**Whom we serve**

As Christians we are to serve one another and indeed the world around us. But the world is not our master. We are servants of the Lord, serving our heavenly Master in this world. We might be wealthier, better educated or more powerful in society than other Christians but in the church we are essentially equal. Indeed a worker may be an elder while his boss is simply a member. 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus' (Gal.3:28). Now the office-bearers in the church are appointed by the church (ordained) in the name of Christ – pastors, elders and deacons. They have rule and are to be respected. But they are also ministers and servants and must remember that. Jesus lays down the law: 'There was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve' (Luke 22:24-26). Let us, pastors and elders, be servants in the church looking for every opportunity to serve, to help and to do good. Let us count no task too menial. Yes, church members are to respect their pastors and elders, but the humbler the office-bearers are, the more they should be respected and the easier it should be to do that. Peter warns the elders to whom he writes: 'Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock' (1Pet.5:2-3). Ministers should shepherd the flock not for money, or because they are pressurised into it, but out of love. They must not be proud or arrogant, lording it over others, but gentle. Individual members too are servants within the church and so must seek opportunities to serve one another.

**Serving in the world**

However it is not simply in the church that service is to be rendered. We are to be looking for opportunities to do good to all, to show kindness and love to all with whom we come in contact. Christ went about doing good and we are to follow His example. He showed love and care to the poor and the sick. From the gifts He received for His support (the bag) He gave donations to the poor. He comforted the sorrowing. We too should care for the sick and suffering, visiting them and doing what we can to alleviate their discomfort. We should be known by those around as people who care.

**Good Works and the Christian**

Paul seems at times very negative about good works. Over and over again it is stressed that works will not save. The reason for this is that it is natural for a man to think that his good deeds will balance out the bad. But Jesus warns against trusting in works for salvation and acceptance with God. He says that when you have done all you are to call yourself an unprofitable servant (Luke 17:10). Sadly, even the best works we do are spoiled by sinful attitudes. We need the blood of Christ to be applied to them to purify them and make them acceptable to God.

Yet good works are precious as an expression of our thankfulness to God for having saved us. When Paul received a gift from the Philippian church while he was in prison he said: 'Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God' (Phil.4:17-18). He appreciated the gift particularly as an evidence of grace in their lives. He counsels Titus: 'And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful' (Titus 3:14). Good works will not save but they are an evidence of us being in a state of grace. If we have no good works how can we say that we have been converted? New men and women will do new deeds. James tells us, 'For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also' (James 2:26).

**Service in the home**

In their home, husbands and wives should be a team working together, helping each other. We are to show love by the kind deeds we do for each other. Similarly children are to be loving helpers. If a husband or wife is unconverted they can be won by the loving helpfulness and kindness of the Christian spouse. Loving, caring parents are a great witness to the children. If children see unkindness and selfishness it can easily turn them off the gospel for life.

**Service in the Church**

I have some in my congregation in Glasgow who are always looking for ways to help. They do not need anyone to tell them to do this or that. They are always seeking opportunities for service. Much is done and no one is told about it. It is done for the Lord. Some, for example, do a cleaning job or a repairing of the church building without seeking praise. Also when new people come to church some show great friendliness to them and welcome them and make them feel as comfortable as possible. If they see any of the members of the church needy they will visit them and help them. This, surely, is what we are to aim at as Christians.

**Service to Society**

We all live in neighbourhoods. There are people around us.

'Make sure you get to heaven. Many will be disappointed on the last day. They were never born again. They never truly repented of their sin. They spent their lives in self-serving rather than serving God. They did not persevere unto the end along the Christian road.'

They may follow a false religion. How are we to reach them with the gospel? One thing we can do is try to help them when they are in any need. If we do help them they are more likely to listen when we tell them about Christ and what He has done for us. Witnessing is important. Jesus said: 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven' (Mt.5:16). By seeing your good works and your kind and helpful lives they will be led to conversion and to glorify God whom up till then they hated. Witnessing is so important! Our deeds should be accompanied by our words. 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel' (Mk.16:15). Be like a city set on a hill. Be like a candle on a candlestick. Do not hide your light under a bed.

**The Reward**

The Bible states that there are rewards for good works. In one sense we deserve nothing and feel as Christians that we do nothing of any value. It is all of grace and without God's help we would achieve nothing. Yet one day Christ will say to some, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord' (Matt.25:23). From the parable of the talents we learn that the more we do the greater will be our reward. We are to be judged according to our works: 'Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire' (1Cor.3:13-15). This should encourage us to labour away for the Lord. We feel ashamed of how little we do, yet He sees and values every feeble attempt.

**The Rest of Heaven**

We are to keep on going as servants in the world, and to encourage us we are told that there is a wonderful and eternal rest awaiting us (Heb.4). We are to run the race and we will obtain the prize. We are to fight the good fight and will inherit the kingdom. We are to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven: 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal' (Mt.6:19-20). Jesus said 'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work' (John 9:4). Here He sets an example before us. Our short lives will soon be over. Let us diligently prepare for death and eternity.

What a wonderful future lies before us! We will live with God: 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away' (Rev.21:3-4). In the last chapter of Revelation we have a fuller description of heaven: 'And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever' (Rev.22:3-5). How wonderful that there will be no more sin! Pride will never tempt us again.

Make sure you get to heaven. Many will be disappointed on the last day. They were never born again. They never truly repented of their sin. They spent their lives in self-serving rather than serving God. Whatever faith they had it was dead because it did not express itself in service. They did not persevere unto the end along the Christian road.

# All Have Sinned

***Rev Kenneth Smith (Late of Knock)***

The majority of men and women today imagine that man is essentially good. They will perhaps consider some obvious evil, such as murder or stealing as sin, but not our whole attitude towards God as sinful. Most think that sin consists exclusively of overt acts. When we attempt to trace the origin of sin in this world, we must go back to the Fall of man as described in Genesis 3.

**The Fall**

The *Westminster Confession of Faith* describes the result of the Fall of man (Chapter 6): *Our first parents being seduced by the subtilty and the temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory.*

*By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.*

*From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.*

*This corruption of nature, during this life doth remain in those that are regenerated: and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself, and all the motions thereof are truly and properly sin.*

*Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.*

Our Lord speaks of the Devil as a murderer (Jn.8:44). God is not the author of sin. When He created man, He created him good, and in His own image. 'Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity' (Job 34:10). God is Holy and there is absolutely no unrighteousness in Him. He cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no man. He positively hates sin. However in His loving kindness He made provision in Christ for man's deliverance from sin.

**The Fall of Angels**

It appears that sin began in the angelic world; that the angels that fell were not satisfied with their lot nor with the power and authority entrusted to them, 'they kept not their first estate … but left their own habitation'. The Devil's sin was that of pride, aspiring to be as God in power and authority. Legions of angels fell with him.

The tempter came from the spirit world to tempt man. Adam listened to Satan and disobeyed God's command. Because of the solidarity of the human race Adam dragged all mankind down with him when he fell. As a result of the fall the father of the human race could only pass on a depraved human nature to his offspring. If the fountain is polluted, all the streams that flow from it will be unclean (Job 14:4).

Adam sinned not only as the father of the human race, but also as our representative. He passed on not only the pollution of sin, but also the guilt, making us all liable to the punishment of death. 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned' (Rom.5:12).

The contagion of sin spread through the whole nature of man, leaving no part untouched. Every faculty, every power of body and soul was polluted by original sin. What is sin? It is antagonism to God. It is the violation of God's law. It would overthrow His omnipotent throne. It is the abominable thing which God hates, and for the sake of which He takes vengeance on the work of His own hands.

The seat of sin is the heart. It influences the will, the intellect, the affections, indeed the whole man.

The presence of actual sin is generally admitted by man; the presence of original sin is usually denied. The fountain of actual sins, however, is our fallen nature. When our Lord confronted the woman at the Well of Samaria with one sin, it was as though He raised a mirror and in seeing that one spot in her character, that actual sin, she saw the whole picture, that her whole nature was corrupt, 'Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did'.

One sin called little, and often turned into a joke by unthinking men, has ruined our race and our world. This disaster is often repeated in miniature among the sons of men when a wicked father leaves a heritage of misery, shame and wretchedness to his offspring.

Such is the result of the first sin. It is a fact that all human beings (with one memorable exception) were or are sinners. Even the little baby we call 'innocent' comes into the world with a fallen nature and has the potential of every kind of sin. The adder's young may not have the strength of poison which the full grown adder has but the potential is there and the poison will develop.

**Consequences of the Fall**

We belong to a condemned race. As Adam's descendants we inherit the guilt of a broken covenant. We are charged with his transgression. In God's sight Adam's sin was the sin of all his descendants. It seems that all of the Ten Commandments were violated in that first sin. The guilt and stain of it have descended through all the generations of the sons of men. All the powers of our nature are corrupted and depraved; the heart and affections are alienated from God, the understanding is darkened. Adam became so ignorant of God immediately after the fall, as to think he could hide from Him. Communion and fellowship was broken. Adam tried to make excuses but he had to face the fact of sin.

By nature our hearts are alienated from God so that we have now no delight in Him. Communion with God is no longer sought, His service is irksome and a bondage. His holiness is

regarded as extreme and offensive, and His sovereign will is challenged.

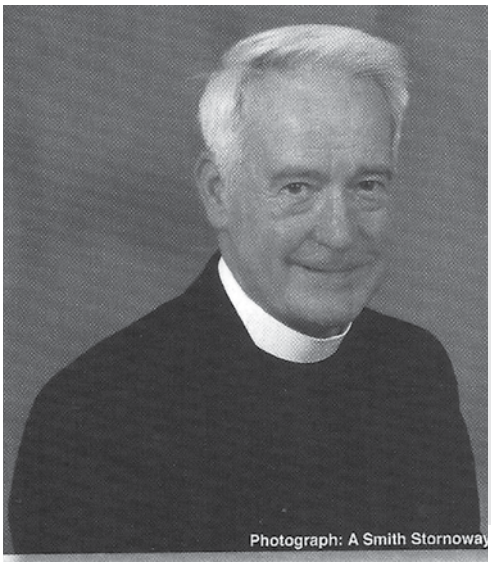
That all have sinned is presented to us in the Scriptures as a fact, not that some are sinners, but that all are. There are numberless things that testify that man has a fallen nature; every history book, every newspaper, every famine, every disease, every war, every disaster proclaims that man has sinned, and that there is no peace between God and man in his fallen state. The warning God gave Adam if he disobeyed, 'Dying thou shalt die', is seen in every family, every community and every nation throughout the whole world and in every cemetery as each generation passes away.

**The Remedy**

How dark this world would be without the Gospel! Through the Scriptures God reveals His infinite love and wisdom in having prepared another covenant, usually called the covenant of grace. In this covenant God the Son undertook that He would take a human nature without the stain of fallen nature, and that He would represent all the elect as the Last Adam. He would render perfect obedience on their behalf, and also bear the penalty of their sin, original and actual.

It seems that Satan personally tempted our Lord the last Adam. He found nothing in Christ on which he could lay hold; he was baffled. Through Peter He tried to undermine the Lord's saving work but he was rebuked, 'Get thee behind me, Satan!' Later, he personally entered Judas Iscariot leading him to betray Christ. The Evil One stirred up the hatred in the human heart to make the multitude cry with rage, 'Crucify Him'. It may be that Satan was beginning to realise that the Scriptures were being fulfilled when he saw Christ on the cross so that he now used men to call on the Lord Jesus to come down from the Cross, 'If thou be the Son of God, come down'.

Christ had to satisfy the law on their behalf, He had to pay the penalty for them. Christ had to suffer a sinner's death, though He never sinned. At the cross, God and man meet, not in communion, but in opposition. God comes in love, man in hatred; God speaks in mercy, man answers in enmity. 'While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us'. At the cross we see the Son of God in sinless human nature going through unspeakable agony. Why? Because 'God so loved the world' that He sent His only begotten Son not only to be the King, Prophet, and Priest, but also the only Lamb that could by sacrifice satisfy divine justice.


Photograph: A Smith Stornoway

Why all these sufferings and groans? God, in mercy to the lost, permits the sword to smite the Son of His bosom. What restrained the angels from coming to rescue our Lord? The love of the Almighty alone holds them back. At the cross of Calvary we see the love of the Father in sending His Son to be the redeemer of a lost people. We see His hatred of sin, and love of righteousness. We see the burning hatred in man when they spat on our Lord, whipped Him, with wicked hands erected the cross and nailed Him to it, then with curled lips mocked Him while He suffered.

**Victory**

At the cross, love and hatred meet in mortal combat. Who is going to win? Which is going to prevail? The love of the Infinite prevails over the enmity of the finite. Our Lord by His obedience and sacrifice has taken away all the sin of His people and cast it into the sea of forgetfulness, never to be raised up against them again. His rising from the dead confirmed His complete victory! Satan has been defeated!

The Holy Spirit convinces men and women that they are sinners who deserve the curse and the wrath of God. He also shows them the suitableness of Christ as the Saviour. He taught us that unless we have a saving knowledge of Christ we will 'die in our sins'. It would be better to die an outcast, to die in rags, to die in a dungeon, to die of an awful disease than to die in our sins. A thousand times better to die in all the concentrated agonies of every human death, than to die in our sins. For if we die in our sins we will come into God's presence in our sins. We will go into the grave with our sins and we will rise from the grave in our sins. We will stand before the Throne of Judgment, the Great White Throne, in our sins. We shall be thrust into Hell forever with our sins.

Our Lord said, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God'. When a man or woman is born again they receive the gift of saving faith. They say, 'Whereas I was blind now I see'. The veil covering every object is removed and they are shown to us as they really are. It changes our estimates of the world, so that we no longer call evil good and good evil. The world hasn't changed but we have when the Holy Spirit has begun a good work in us.

Fellow sinner, we cannot save ourselves. If all the angels, all the churches, all the Christians that ever lived, got together they could not save one sinner in this world. The Son of God however can and will save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him!

'Our Lord by His obedience and sacrifice has taken away all the sin of His people and cast it into the sea of forgetfulness, never to be raised up against them again. His rising from the dead confirmed His complete victory! Satan has been defeated!'

# Christ's Resurrection in the Old Testament

***Dr Gerald Bilkes***
***(Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary)***

Where does the Old Testament teach the resurrection of Christ? You may have heard scholars say that the Old Testament teaches no expectation of life after death. This is absolute ignorance. Although the New Testament does add a lot of light to the Old Testament doctrine of the resurrection, nevertheless the Old Testament itself gives us much that foretells the resurrection of Christ, as Paul himself says: 'He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures' (1Cor.15:4). Let's look at a few notable instances.

### Abraham's receiving Isaac back

When Abraham 'stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son' (Gen.22:10), he gave up his son in sacrifice unto God, as God had commanded. The Lord proved this when He said by the angel: 'Thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me' (Gen.22:12). What a picture of the resurrection, then, when Abraham untied the ropes that bound Isaac to the altar! The epistle to the Hebrews confirms this, when it says of Abraham that he accounted 'that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure' (Heb.11:19).

### Aaron's rod that budded

When the children of Israel challenged the uniqueness of the priesthood of Aaron, the Lord ordered that each tribe should produce a rod and place it before the tabernacle of the congregation (Num.17:1-3). Each of these rods was a dead piece of wood, but after a night in the tabernacle before the Lord, a miracle of new life is apparent in the rod of Aaron: 'And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds' (Num.17:8).

Just as the Lord vindicated the priesthood of Aaron in this remarkable miracle, so the Father displayed the righteousness of Christ, the Mediator, before the world by raising Him from the dead.

### Job's Redeemer lives

While Job's body was close to being swallowed up by the forces of death, the Lord lifted the eyes of his soul beyond this life and beyond himself to his Redeemer (Job 19:25-27). This is by all accounts a remarkable prophecy. Job was able to see and confess that his Redeemer would come in the fullness of time, face death, but also rise from the dead. By faith he was convinced that the Redeemer would stand on the earth in the glorious general resurrection and that he himself would see Him.

### David's hope

David frequently faced death, but in the midst of these threats, he hoped in the resurrection. He knew by faith that his great descendant, Christ, would secure this for him. As Peter testified in Acts 2:26-31, David prophesied of Christ's resurrection in Psalm 16:10: 'For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell: neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption'.

### Jonah's resurrection

As a type of the substitutionary death of Christ, Jonah was thrown overboard in order that the wrath of God evident in the storm might be pacified. However, by the great fish God sent (Jonah 1:17), Jonah's three days and three nights in his watery grave became an emblem of Christ's death and resurrection, as Christ Himself said (Mt.12:40).

### Hosea's song

Much of Hosea's prophecy is devoted to uncovering Israel's sin. By her idolatry, she had proved that she loved death and destroyed herself (Hos.13:9). Nevertheless, the Hope of Israel comes and promises that He will deal with her sin and death, especially when the Lord says in Hosea 13:14: 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction'. Paul makes abundantly clear that Christ has fulfilled this prophecy by rising from the dead (1Cor.15:54-55).

### Ezekiel's vision of the dead bones rising

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is a potent prophecy of the spiritual resurrection of God's people. However, it is rooted in and based upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, for the Lord says: 'I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of yourgraves' (Ezek.37:13). This was accomplished when Jesus died on the cross, entered into the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and rose again, quickening His people together with Himself (Eph.2:1, 5).

### Application

In this light, we see two things that should challenge us today.

1. God mercifully decreed Christ's resurrection from eternity and gave insight into it from early days on. Should we not esteem the resurrection of Christ all the more, living after it, as we do?

2. Scripture announces the resurrection of Christ as God's answer to the death we chose by our disobedience to the covenant of works. If this resurrection is not ours by faith, what means do we have to escape eternal death?

*The Banner of Sovereign Grace Truth* April 2012

# The Unequal Yoke

***Rev Malcolm H Watts, Salisbury***

The Bible alone establishes the rules for marriage and one of the most important is that a *believer must not marry an unbeliever*.

To Israel, in Old Testament times, the following command was given with respect to the unconverted nations: 'Neither shalt thou make marriages with them: thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son' (Deut.7:3, cf. Gen.24:3; 28:1,2; Josh.23:12,13). This is a definite prohibition of mixed marriages. However, if foreigners were converted to the worship of the true God, it would seem that marriage was allowed. The law of Moses permitted an Israelite to marry a female prisoner of war, provided that she became a Jewish convert and submitted to the customary purification rites (Deut.21:10-13; cf. Lev.14:8; Num.8:7). We also have, of course, the example of Rahab the Canaanite and Ruth the Moabitess, both of whom were converted and subsequently married to Israelites (Josh.2:9,11; 6:25; Ruth 2:11,12; 4:9,11; Mt.1:5). The prohibition was therefore not so much against marrying Gentiles as against marrying unbelieving Gentiles.

In the New Testament the commands concerning marriage are just as explicit. Paul lays down the basic principle in 2 Corinthians 6:14,15: 'Be ye not (or, 'Become ye not') unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?' The reference is to Deuteronomy 22:10 which forbids any ploughing with an ox and an ass together. These animals were not only different in size and strength, but according to the law given in Deuteronomy 14:1-8, the ox was 'clean' but the ass was 'unclean'. Paul applies this Mosaic law to human life. It is quite wrong, he says, to enter into close relationships with unbelieving people. It will prove 'an unequal yoke' and can only lead to friction and distress, a pulling in different and even opposite directions, and at the end of the day nothing really worthwhile will have been accomplished. In another place, Paul deals with the matter somewhat more positively. He gives some basic teaching on marriage and asserts that marriage should last until death. He then says that when one party dies, the other is free to marry anyone he or she chooses – 'only in the Lord'. (1Cor.7:39) In other words, the person must be in fellowship with Jesus Christ. Paul is insisting that believers marry believers, and none but believers.

There are some further considerations:

### 1. The Unity of Marriage

***First of all,*** God's ideal for marriage is a close and intimate union which is expressed physically, but actually involves oneness of thought, desire and purpose (Gen.2:23,24). Quite obviously, if the two people getting married have nothing spiritually in common, they cannot achieve total union and complete oneness. As Paul says, 'What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?' (2Cor.6:14). To marry an unbeliever is to forfeit God's best.

### 2. The Compromise of Intermarriage

***Secondly,*** intermarriage with unconverted people invariably results in a life of sinful compromise. 'Be not deceived: evil communications (or, bad companionships) corrupt good manners' (1Cor.15:33; cf. Prov.13:20). God repeatedly warned the Israelites about this (e.g. Ex.34:16) and, in Scripture, Solomon is set forth as a terrible warning to us. 'King Solomon loved many strange [i.e. foreign] women … and his wives turned away his heart … and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father' (1Kgs.11:1-4; cf. 21:25; 2Kgs.8:18; and Judg.3:5-7; Ps.106:35). Such marriages are slippery slopes to sin and, in some cases, even to apostasy.

### 3. The Impact on Children

***Thirdly,*** mixed marriages are also sources of evil to the children. When one parent is utterly estranged from God and ignorant of his Word, there cannot be proper family government and worship, and so we cannot really expect to find 'a godly seed' (Mal.2:15). Genesis 6 describes how, early in history, 'the sons of God (believers, Hos.1:10, Jn.1:12, the descendants of Seth) began to marry 'the daughters of men' (unbelievers, Ps.4:2, 57:4, Jn.3:6, of the Cainite line). The result was a whole generation of ungodly people. 'There were giants in the earth in those days' (v.4). 'The word translated "giants", as Dr. Henry Cooke observes, 'is derived from a root that signifies to 'fall' or 'fall upon'; and conveys the idea of apostasy from true religion, and violent invasion of others' rights and properties – apostate persecutors and tyrants'. Those tempted to be disobedient should take account of these things, and think of the effect their contemplated action will have upon their unborn children.

### 4. The Impact on the Church

***Fourthly,*** we must understand too that mixed marriages greatly hinder the professing church. In appointing marriage, God intended that man should have 'an help meet for him' or, as more literally translated, 'an help before him' i.e. one corresponding to him and very much like him (Gen.2:18). Notice that the woman was not only to be perfectly suitable but also a helper with him in the fulfilling of God's will (cf. 1:28). A real Christian marriage makes that a wonderful possibility. We may think, for example, of Priscilla and Aquila whom Paul once described as 'my helpers in Christ Jesus' (Rom.16:3; cf. Acts 18:26; 1Cor.16:19). In a mixed marriage, on the other hand, even if the believing partner continues in the faith, without sympathy and support in the home, he or she will find it very difficult, and at times quite impossible, to help forward the Lord's work in the church. It is a dreadful thing to be like David and have a Michal at our side who seeks to

dampen our zeal and hinder our service to the house of God (2Sam.6:16).

**5. The Damage to the Testimony**

***Fifthly,*** marriage to the unconverted tends only to destroy the Christian's testimony. Whatever the witness in the past, this blatant disregard of God's Word can only bring reproach upon the Lord's name and cause (cf. Rom.2:24; Titus 2:5; 2Pet.2:2). The Bible declares how, centuries after his death, Solomon is remembered not so much for his religious profession as for his sin in contracting marriages with ungodly women. 'Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women [i.e. of another country, nation and religion] cause to sin' (Neh.13:26).

**6. The Grief to God's People**

***Sixthly,*** in marrying outside the faith a Christian brings grief to godly parents and indeed to all the Lord's people. When Esau, at the age of forty, took as wives two unconverted Canaanite women, Scripture says it was 'a grief of mind [or, more literally, 'a bitterness of spirit'] unto Isaac and Rebekah' (Gen.26:35; cf. 27:46). Similarly, Ezra, the priest and scribe, demonstrated intense concern on discovering that certain Jews had been unfaithful in this matter. 'When I heard this thing', he says, 'I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonied (i.e. horrified)' (Ezra 9:3). Believing Jews understood what it meant. Godly lives were being ruined. Dreadful examples were being set to others. The Lord was being denied the glory due to His holy name.

**7. The Sin Involved**

***Seventhly,*** contracting such marriages is sin and, according to the Bible, great sin, because it is committed in the face of emphatic prohibition (Ezra 9:14, 15; Neh.13:26,27). And the greater the sin, the greater will be the judgment. Ezra felt this keenly as, on behalf of his people, he acknowledged their guilt and implored God for pardon. 'Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?' (Ezra 9:14). His question was never answered. In this way God impresses upon us how evil a thing it is. Let his people therefore resolve never to transgress this holy commandment.

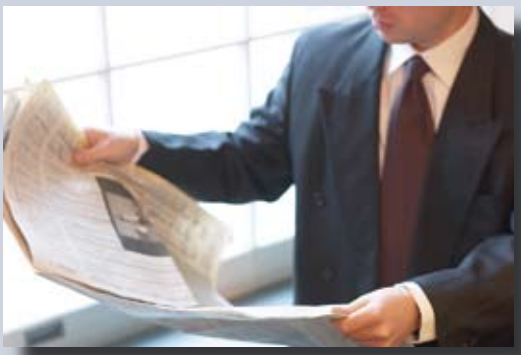
This teaching has always been accepted as biblical and true among evangelical and reformed Christians. John Calvin was in no doubt about it and referred to mixed marriage as 'a snare by which both men and women are entangled into an agreement with impiety'. In a letter to a friend, he asked: 'How can you expect a good wife from Him whom you will not hear while strictly prohibiting you from being "yoked with unbelievers"?' The Puritans agreed. Thomas Adams said in one of his sermons: 'No man can choose a worse friend than one whom God holds his enemy'. Henry Smith issued a similar warning, and then exclaimed: 'What a monstrous thing it is for believers and unbelievers to match together!' The early Non-Conformists were militant in their opposition. When the subject was raised at the General Assembly of Baptists in 1689, it was discussed at some length, and then this statement was issued: 'It is *unlawful* for a believer to marry with a non-believer'. And the same holds good for all professors, whatever their denomination may be.

This article, of course, is mainly intended for the single and the unmarried. If Christians, for some reason, find themselves already in marriages with non-Christians, they should remain with their partners, doing all they can to help them to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor.7:12-16; 1Pet.3:1,2). God honours consistent testimony and answers sincere and fervent prayer. But for the others, in the matter of 'the unequal yoke', the Lord grant his people the grace both to honour and to obey him!

*The Messenger January-February 2012*

'Marriage to the unconverted tends only to destroy the Christian's testimony. Whatever the witness in the past, this blatant disregard of God's Word can only bring reproach upon the Lord's name and cause (cf. Rom.2:24; Titus 2:5; 2Pet.2:2). The Bible declares how, centuries after his death, Solomon is remembered not so much for his religious profession as for his sin in contracting marriages with ungodly women.'

Rev Malcolm & Mrs Gillian Watts



# News

## Olympics

In July this year thousands of athletes and hundreds of thousands of spectators gathered in London for the Olympics. Vast sums of money were expended in preparation for the games. The athletes themselves devoted enormous amounts of time and energy to preparing themselves. Their achievements were impressive. Records were broken. However, there are some things which give us serious concern as Christians – the worship of sport, the idolising of success and display of the pride of man. It is particularly sad in a professedly Christian nation like our own to have the Sabbath day so openly desecrated. The Lord's Day is to be kept holy and given to God. He makes plain that He is displeased with those who do their own thing and find their own pleasure on His holy day (Is.58:13). We should be quite clear that engaging in sport, or watching sport on the Sabbath, is a breach of the Fourth Commandment. I came across a blog which claimed that Usain Bolt, who won the 100m race on the Lord's Day, is a born-again Christian of the Protestant variety (despite his crossing himself before his races). It complained that the BBC ignored in its commentary his getting down on his knees to pray at the end of the race and his attempts to give the glory to God and his assertion that it was God who enabled him to win. Public life in Britain is embarrassed by religion and wishes to pretend it is not there. At the same time, Usain Bolt's running on the Sabbath is a denial of biblical Christianity. Jesus said, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments' (Jn.14:15).

## New Psalmody CD

Volume 8 of the Church's *Worthy to be Praised* CDs has now been released. Of the twelve tunes featured, many are old favourites such as Stracathro, Crimond and Martyrs while some, like Shere and St James, may be an inspiration to learn new tunes for praise. It is our prayer that listening to the CDs will not only improve our family and congregational singing, but also prove a blessing as we hear the precious words of the Psalms sung clearly and with expression.

The CDs are available from Mrs Isobel Scott (Tel 01506 652168 Email isobel.scott@bible-sermons.org) at £8 + p&p or from www.sing-the-psalms.web.com.

## Cees Molenaar, now in Malawi, writes:

We are happy to inform you that our sending to Malawi is now definite and that our Mission Board (of the Heritage Reformed Congregations) has approved work for us here. This concluded quite a process, starting when we realized in 2010 that it was difficult to provide well for the educational and social needs of our kids at Covenant College in Zambia. Believing that our calling to work in the training of African church leaders was not fulfilled yet, we started orienting ourselves at similar mission work in a setup fitting our changing family situation. In 2011, we felt led to consider Malawi as a new place of labour.

We do look back at a good first year in Malawi; Joash and Rhoda enrolled at ABC Christian Academy and have

# Desk

since adjusted well. We investigated the situation and needs of the churches and examined opportunities for us as HRC missionaries to take our responsibility of preaching and teaching the Word of God. Careful not to repeat or duplicate what others are doing, we entered communication with several organisations to find out exactly what they were doing and whether there was need and room for us to join. Our mission stayed in close contact and reviewed various possibilities with us.
In the last months, a process developed that led to the decision of the Mission board to appoint us to work with Logos Ministries in Malawi, thus making our transition to Malawi definite for the years to come, the Lord sparing us. The HRC Mission lends us as missionaries to Logos Ministries, so that we may assist Logos in different areas of training: Cees in theological training, and Mirjam in the development of Women and Children Ministry.

## Christian B & B Owners Allowed to Appeal

*Christian Institute*

The Christian owners of a Cornish guesthouse who were sued over their policy of restricting double rooms to married couples have won permission to take their case to the Supreme Court. Peter and Hazelmary Bull's double room policy has been in place since they opened the Chymorvah guesthouse in 1986. The policy, which stems from their deep-rooted Christian faith, has been consistently applied to all unmarried couples whether homosexual or heterosexual. The Bulls were sued by Martyn Hall and Steven Preddy, a gay couple in a civil partnership. Mr Hall and Mr Preddy were denied double bed accommodation at the guesthouse in

*B&B Owners: Peter & Hazelmary Bull*

September 2008, and brought a claim of sexual orientation discrimination. Their legal case against the Bulls was paid for by the taxpayer-funded Equality and Human Rights Commission. The Bulls' legal defence was funded by The Christian Institute.

## American Conference

*Rev Gavin Beers*

The Free Church (Continuing) Presbytery of the United States held their eigth family conference at Highland Retreat, Rockingham County, Virginia from 6th to 10th of August. Over 120 people gathered from many different parts of the US to enjoy, and in many cases renew fellowship around God's Word. Two visiting preachers from Scotland were present: Rev James Gracie and Rev Gavin Beers. Mr Gracie spoke in the evening sessions from John 9-10 on Christ addressing various aspects of our spiritual condition - 'Christ and our Darkness', 'Christ and our Homelessness', 'Christ and our Needs' and 'Christ and our Future'. Mr Beers spoke in the mornings and his subject was a four part study on 'National Religion and the Establishment Principle'. Rev Rob McCurley also gave two addresses on 'Taming and Training the Tongue'. All addresses are available to download from Sermonaudio. It is the continued prayer of the Presbytery that the Conference would be an ongoing means of furthering the witness and principles of the historic Free Church throughout the USA.

## Sri Lanka Persecution

*Barnabas*

Buddhist monks and a mob of supporters attacked a church in Colombo, Sri Lanka in July 2008, hospitalising the pastor. The police were reluctant to prosecute the attackers, and believers were threatened with having acid thrown on them if they tried to go to church. The Sri Lankan constitution upholds freedom of religion, although it gives Buddhism 'the foremost place'. The powerful Sinhalese Buddhist lobby demands privileges for itself at the expense of the Christian minority, and campaigns for legislation to control religious conversion. There is observable discrimination against minority religions in taxation, employment and education. Small churches in rural areas are often the targets of organised opposition by Buddhists, which sometimes includes violence. Certain areas are viewed as Buddhist preserves where no Christian places of worship will be tolerated.

Sometimes churches are burned and pastors threatened, assaulted or even killed. Christians also suffer some persecution from Hindus, and converts from Islam are at risk from the Muslim population. The proportion of Christians in Sri Lanka has declined steadily since the end of colonial rule, owing not to numerical decline, but to a faster expansion of the non-Christian population. Buddhism is practised by about 70% of the people, and Hinduism by about 14%. Christians now make up only some 8%, and are concentrated in the south-west. Muslims also comprise around 8%. Christian tradition claims that Sri Lanka was first evangelised by the apostle Thomas. Small Christian communities existed on the coasts of Sri Lanka during the succeeding centuries, but Christianity made significant progress only from the sixteenth century. Christianity is perceived by many Sri Lankans as a product of Western colonialism.

## Niger Famine

*Barnabas*

Over 1,000 Christians in a famine-stricken village in Niger are in urgent need of aid; they are resorting to eating boiled leaves, while some of the young people have been forced to beg for food elsewhere. The remote, entirely Christian village of Tasha Ibrahim has been hit extremely hard by the food crisis that has engulfed the Sahel region, affecting 18 million people. Crop shortages as a result of drought have caused food prices to soar; many people can neither grow nor afford to buy food. A village elder has told a visiting Barnabas Fund staff member that 2012 was turning out to be the worst year for famine that Tasha Ibrahim had ever experienced.

## Syrian Family's Suffering *Barnabas*

The story of this family of five from Homs is all too typical of what has happened to the Christian community during the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad. Their home is now occupied by opposition fighters, who have either looted or destroyed most of their furniture, forcing them to rent an unfurnished two-bedroom apartment in a Christian village in the suburbs of Homs. They are struggling to make ends meet: the father lost his job in Homs and went to Damascus for work but after two months was laid off again; the mother ran a small ladies' accessories shop in Homs but had to leave this behind when the family was driven out of the city; their oldest daughter works two days a week, travelling to an office in Tartus, but her wages do not even cover her transport costs. The youngest daughter is a student, but her education has been curtailed because none of the colleges in Homs is still functioning. The middle daughter is recovering after being shot in the arm by the opposition fighters; the wound is expected to leave a major scar. Barnabas Fund is helping Christian families like this one, whose lives have been destroyed by the conflict in Syria, with food parcels, medicine, money for rent, and other essentials.

## Euthanasia not allowed

*Christian Institute*

High Court judges have ruled (16th August) that doctors cannot kill a severely paralysed man, in a landmark euthanasia case. The ruling has been welcomed by pro-lifers, who say legalising euthanasia would put vulnerable people at risk. Tony Nicklinson's 'locked-in' condition means his mind is active but he cannot move most of his body. He communicates by blinking. Mr Nicklinson was seeking euthanasia, and not assisted suicide. The High Court also ruled against a second man, known only as 'Martin', who asked for the right to call on others to help him die. Lord Justice Toulson, who was sitting with two other judges, noted that the cases of Mr Nicklinson and Martin were 'deeply moving', but it was not for the court to change the law in this area. The judge also said: 'A decision to allow their claims would have consequences far beyond the present cases'. Mr Nicklinson said he would appeal. The British Medical Association commented that the court had made 'the right decision'.

*We are thankful for the protection of life. We have since heard of the passing of Mr Nicklinson. We have no pleasure in seeing anyone suffer but God gave us life and He alone has the right to take it away. We must remember that there is an eternity following this life and we are given our life here to prepare for the Judgment Day.*

## Gore Vidal Dies

*Christian Institute*

Gore Vidal, the literary giant who said there is 'no such thing as a homosexual or heterosexual person', has died. Mr Vidal was open about his homosexual encounters and relationships. But he insisted: 'There is no such thing as a homosexual or heterosexual person. There are only homosexual or heterosexual acts. Most people are a mixture of impulses if not practices'. Mr Vidal claimed to have had more than 1,000 sexual encounters with both men and women before the age of 25. Early in his career he wrote a novel, *The City and the Pillar*, celebrating homosexuality.

*In today's society which portrays homosexuality as the way someone is made it is interesting to have an honest comment from a leading homosexual. Scripture portrays homosexual behaviour as an immoral choice.*

## Few Abortions are to Save the Mother's Life

*Christian Institute*

Less than 150 of the six million plus abortions carried out since abortion became legal were performed to save the life of the mother, Government figures show. According to the figures 6.4 million abortions were performed on residents of England and Wales between 1968 and 2011. Of these just 143 (0.006 per cent) were performed to save the life of the mother or to prevent serious permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the mother.

*This shows the hypocrisy of those who argued for abortion to save the life of the mother.*

## Zambia – Accident

*Rev David Lachman*

Please be praying for Covenant College staff and students. On the afternoon of 29th August our part-time local lecturer, Pastor Joshua Kondowe, was killed in a horrific accident. He was on a bicycle with one of our students, Webyson Phiri, and they were struck from behind by an allegedly speeding Toyota Hilux 4x4 truck. Pastor Kondowe, who was sitting on the back

of the bike, must have been killed almost instantly. His body was thrown a horrific distance by the impact. Webyson was thrown onto the side of the road and suffered a concussion and lots of scrapes and bruises but his life was spared. He was cushioned by Pastor Kondowe. Webyson is undergoing treatment at Petauke hospital and is expected to recover. The driver of the Toyota has been charged.

## Sri Lanka

On Friday and Saturday 24th and 25th August a conference was organized by Parthee in Vavuiya. He hoped for around 35 to attend. The actual attendance was 70 which was a great encouragement to him. He meets in prayer each week with a couple of pastors from Charismatic churches. They encouraged their folk to attend. Pastor Bala, a Sri Lankan Tamil who now lives in New Zealand, was the main speaker. He is a Reformed Baptist and has a real concern for the work of God in Sri Lanka. Parthee's brother Vijay who is minister of Trinity RPC in Colombo spoke on 'Marks of Grace' and his address was convicting. Pastor Kerey gave a devotional address. All seemed to enjoy the teaching and several spoke of having been specially challenged. On the following Sabbath they had 18 attending their regular service with several new local people there. Give thanks for the encouragement and remember our brother Parthee in prayer.

# A Brief Introduction to The Septuagint

***Rev James Clark***

The *Septuagint* is the name given to the earliest and most popular Greek translation (there were at least two others done around 150 BC) of the Hebrew Scriptures (including the Apocrypha – uninspired books written in the inter-testamental period). It was a translation produced around 250 BC in Egypt and was desirable by the many Jews of the dispersion whose first language in the years following 330 BC was no longer Hebrew but Greek, the legacy of Alexander the Great's conquests. Greek was the language of the Empire. This version was called the 'Septuagint' (from the Latin word for 'seventy') because of the legend that seventy men were involved in the translation. It is thought to have been produced in Alexandria, Egypt. The Septuagint is often represented by the abbreviation LXX. Some fragments of the LXX were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran. Early Christians used this Greek translation of the Old Testament in NT times.

The accuracy of this translation varies from book to book. For example, the translations of Deuteronomy and Psalms are nearer the Hebrew original than those of Exodus and Chronicles. This suggests that different translators were assigned to translating different books of the Bible.

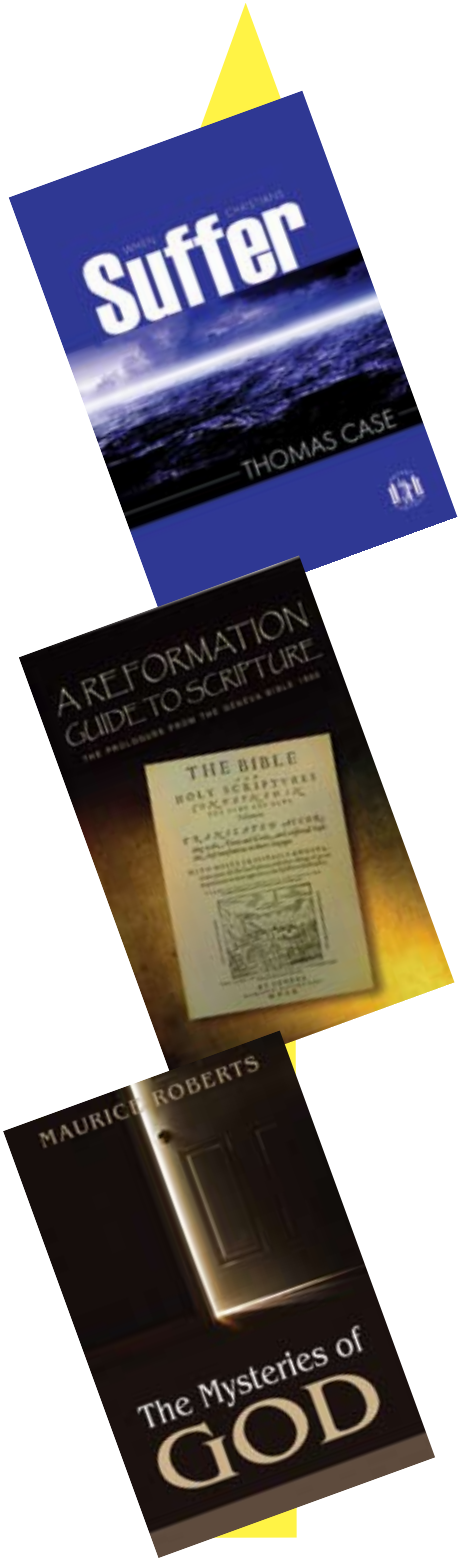
The Greek of the LXX was *koine* (or common) Greek and similar to that used when the New Testament was written. This was the type of Greek which predominated after Alexander conquered the Mediterranean world. J M Dines states: 'The Greek translations [of the OT] were intended to be subservient to their Hebrew parent, a means to an end... The translators' aim was to make the Hebrew text intelligible [to Greek-speaking Jews]'. The LXX was widely used by these Greek-speaking Jews (eg Philo) for theological discussions, but the Hebrew Scriptures continued to be read in the synagogue wherever the reader could, which was not universally practised outside Palestine. For many of the early Christians, not being Jewish, it was their only way of accessing the Old Testament Scriptures. D W Gording writes, 'It served as "Bible" to generations of Greek-speaking Jews in many countries, and it is often quoted in the New Testament... Moreover it was taken everywhere by Christian missionaries'. It is still used today by the Greek Orthodox Church.

The Reformers emphasised (with Jerome, the translator of the Latin Vulgate in the early 5th century AD) that only the Hebrew Scriptures of the Canon were inspired. They also rejected the Apocrypha. The Papacy however disagreed, needing the Apocrypha to support their inventions, eg purgatory, and the 16th century Council of Trent solidified this position to the present day, including it in their versions of the Bible.

The syntax of the LXX abounds with Hebrew constructions and the LXX also established the theological meaning of several Greek words which are significant in the NT, eg. *reckoned, glory, covenant, Gospel.* R T McLay states, 'What is remarkable is that there are many scholars and students who expound a great deal of energy in their study of the NT who have so little regard for the LXX as a means for helping to interpret the NT text'. While we may not agree with the strength of this assertion, it does remind us that the word-meanings of the NT have a history behind them. As H B Swete comments, 'The careful student of the Gospels and of St Paul is met at every turn by words and phrases which cannot be fully understood without reference to their earlier use in the Greek Old Testament'. Bauer, Arndt & Gingrich in the Preface to their excellent Greek Lexicon comment, 'As for the influence of the LXX, every page of this Lexicon shows that it outweighs all other influences on our literature'.

Finally, what about the quotations in the NT from the Septuagint? Students of the NT will find the following quote from Gleason L Archer helpful: 'For the most part, the LXX translation is quite faithful to the Hebrew wording in the Old Testament, but in a small number of instances there are noticeable deviations in the mode of expressing the thought, even though there may be no essential difference in the thought itself... The New Testament use of the LXX implies nothing against verbal inspiration or Scriptural inerrancy'.

# Books




## When Christians Suffer

*Thomas Case*
Banner of Truth Trust
pbk, 122pp, £3.25

The author believed that writing 'on affliction can never be out of season'. The title of the book points to the relevance of this subject by referring to 'When Christians Suffer', and not, if Christians suffer.

This is one of the Pocket Puritan books by the Banner of Truth, and for its size it punches well above its weight. The author takes a general definition for affliction, looking together at both trials and chastisement.

The author shows how affliction teaches the believer. In the first major chapter he looks at what God teaches us. He then proceeds to look at the particular blessing of being taught of God in affliction, as opposed to simply being taught through experiences. The third chapter looks at why affliction is used as a tool to learn of God, and its particular strengths in working on our heart to make us humble and receptive. The fourth chapter addresses wrong ideas regarding affliction, for example, the blessing of affliction is not in being delivered from the affliction but rather in the instruction which it gives.

Having laid out what and where the blessings of affliction are, the author ends with very practical advice in a section entitled 'Exhortation'. He addresses in turn those who are not presently afflicted, those who are afflicted, and those who have been afflicted.

This book is one that has been of real good to my soul. It portrays a Biblical view of the believer's affliction by connecting it to God's love and how it is to our benefit. I think this right view helps make affliction bearable, understandable, and perhaps, dare I say it, desirable – not that we specifically desire affliction, but that we desire the blessings which affliction brings when we understand them.

*James Boyd (Glasgow)*

## A Reformation Guide To Scripture

Banner of Truth Trust
pbk, 128pp, £5.50

This book is a collection of prologues to the books of the Bible, taken from the 1560 Geneva Bible. For each Bible book there is anything from a paragraph to a number of pages. The subjects covered vary depending on the book of the Bible looked at: sometimes the author is addressed; other times there is an examination of a few of the themes of the book; and other times it addresses what we will get out of the book depending on how we read it. Lamentations is a single paragraph added on to the end of the chapter on Jeremiah. Unexpectedly this is one of the best introductions to the book as it is extremely concise, yet helpful. There are only three sentences – the first summarising the book, the second and third explaining the style in which it was written.

This book must be read alongside the book of the Bible it is describing. There are no references to chapters or verses to explain where the item under discussion is in the Bible. I was looking for an introduction to the various books of the Bible and so did not find it very helpful. A sound modern commentary would be better for that. This book is of a more historical interest, giving an insight into how these early reformers thought.

*James Boyd (Glasgow)*

## The Mysteries of God

*Maurice Roberts*
Reformation Heritage Books
pbk, 102pp, $10.00

Rev Maurice Roberts is a born teacher who delights in making difficult things plain. The title,
'The Mysteries of God', might put some

people off, thinking that this will be a very deep work of theology. Actually it is a very readable little book which presents to us the great teachings of the Bible in a way which we can all understand. In his first chapter Mr Roberts explains what a mystery is in the New Testament – 'a truth that God has revealed to us in the Bible and that could not be known by the unaided mind of man'. In subsequent chapters he deals with the actual mysteries: the Trinity, God's covenant, the incarnation, the gospel, the new birth, Christ's indwelling, the Gospel offer, the Gentiles incorporated into the church, the conversion of the Jews etc. The chapters are short, six or seven pages with large print. They could be read as a daily devotional over the period of a fortnight. The chapter on the Trinity is the deepest, the one on the conversion of the Jews the most encouraging. The chapter on the mystery of iniquity (the pope and the Roman Catholic Church) is necessary in this day of ecumenical confusion. The prospect of heaven when we shall no longer see through a glass darkly gives us the hope to press on. Highly recommended!

*William Macleod*

## Born of God
## Sermons from John 1

*D Martyn Lloyd-Jones*
Banner of Truth Trust
hbk, 488pp, £17.50

Here are 32 sermons preached at Westminster Chapel, London between October 1962 and June 1963. All the sermons are models of exposition and application. As you read them, those who have had the privilege of hearing the Doctor preach can easily visualise him with his Welsh eloquence and godly passion proclaiming Christ. Because they are sermons the language is not difficult to read. There are two particular blocks of teaching.

Ten sermons are on John 1:17: 'For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ'. We have here an excellent treatment of the relationship of the law and the gospel to one another. Moses and Christ are contrasted. The law is seen as permanently binding and as that by which we all will be judged. It is also presented as that which convicts of sin and thus leads the sinner by the working of the Holy Spirit to see his need of Christ and salvation. Dr Lloyd-Jones is also careful to show that the law is vital for the Christian as the rule of life. Today there is much confusion over the role of the law and many appear to be swallowing the false 'New Covenant' teaching so it is good to have this solid Reformed treatment of the law.

The other major section is eighteen sermons preached on John 1:12-13: 'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God'. How can a man preach so many sermons on one verse without repeating himself? It is really not quite that difficult. It is just a matter of taking other verses of Scripture which illustrate the truths found in John 1:12-13 and preaching on these verses. So under this heading we find for example sermons on the 'Leading of the Spirit' based on Romans 8:14, 'Grieving the Spirit' based on Ephesians 4:30 and several on the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Most of the sermons in this section deal with marks of grace and the problem of assurance. For those struggling with assurance you will find here one of the best treatments of the subject to be found anywhere. He is both searching and comforting.

It is hard to think of any work since the Puritans which will give you a better exposition of experimental Calvinism. Highly recommended!

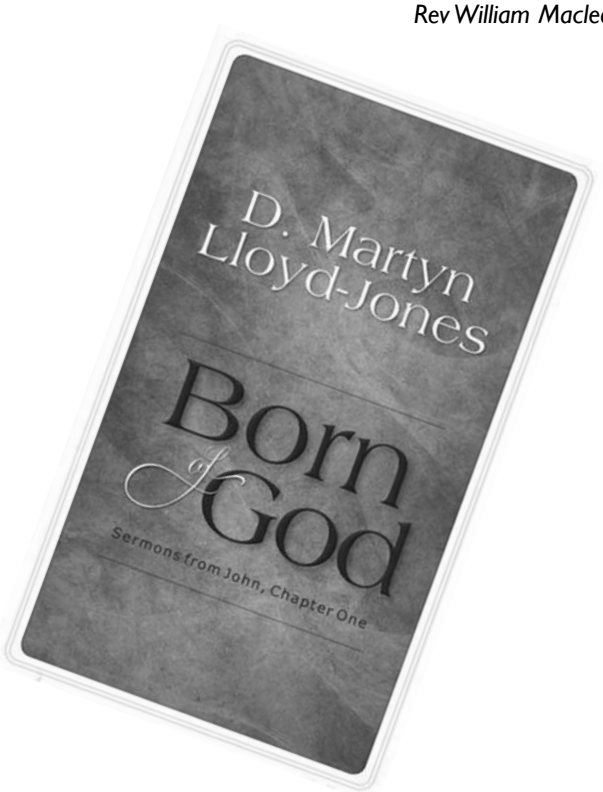
*William Macleod*

## Trophies of Grace
## Amazing Conversions from the Highlands of Scotland

Roundwood Trust, bklt, 24pp,
Stephen Sharp, Arisaig, Crowborough Hill,
Crowborough, TN6 2EA. Tel: 01892 655222
(free but donation appreciated)

This booklet tells the conversion story of Muckle Kate who was the greatest sinner in Lochcarron in the days of Rev Lachlan Mackenzie (late 18th century). The minister composed a song which listed her sins. It was sung in her hearing and led to her deep conviction of sin. Accounts are given of two other conversions from the same period in both of which the Rev Hector M'Phail, Resolis, was instrumental. Luke Heywood was a rough blaspheming English soldier at Fort George, and the 'Highland Kitchen Maid' was a despised, scullery girl in an inn south of Inverness. The final story is of Yeddie, a young lad with learning difficulties, who was accepted to the Lord's table, had a wonderful experience of 'Yon Lovely Man', passed on to glory that very night and was found the next morning dead on his knees.

*Rev William Macleod*



# Revival in Carrickfergus

***Rev James Warwick***

*This is an account of the revival in 1859-60 written by the then minister of Joymount Presbyterian Church, Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland. The town had a population of more than 9,000 and 500 families were attached to this congregation.*

As the operations of the blessed Spirit have been felt very extensively in Carrickfergus; both in awakening sinners and reviving many of God's children who had become lukewarm, I will confine myself to the revival work in this parish, and chiefly to that aspect of it which affects the members of my own congregation. In order that this paper may be more intelligible, I will arrange it under different heads:

**Special services**

Lieutenant W R Aikman, a devoted servant of the Lord, who has devoted himself to the service of Christ, and preached the gospel in various places in England and Scotland, visited Ireland in 1858. He came to Carrickfergus in November 1858 and from that time continued to visit us frequently until the spring of 1859. At each visit he had special services for four or five evenings in succession, and on the Sabbath had three services. These services, in conjunction with the stated preaching of the gospel, impressed the mind of the people with serious religious feelings. Mrs Colville, a sister in Christ, who also labours along with Lieutenant Aikman, held meetings for prayer among the women. She came to Carrickfergus on several occasions. Her meetings were also well attended, and some came to my house to converse with her about the state of their souls. These special meetings, which had been held to pray for the outpouring of God's Spirit, were continued after they left. The female prayer meeting continued to be held weekly, in the vestry of my church, from January 1859 until the revival burst forth in June.

Thus in the autumn of 1858, and beginning of 1859, a few of God's children in Carrickfergus were looking, praying, and waiting for a revival.

Towards May 1859 more excitement on the subject began to prevail, in consequence of reports of the work the Lord was doing at Connor. And on the first Sabbath of May, on the occasion of the administration of the Lord's Supper, a solemn feeling was visible over the worshippers, and deep anxiety seemed to pervade the people. We had not, however, any bodily manifestation accompanying the work until about the 5th June, when the first of the striking cases, as they were called, occurred. On that Sabbath I preached from Joel 3:14: 'Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision'. There was a very large congregation present. There was great religious excitement in the parish, as some converts from Ballymena and Connor were to address a public meeting in the open air.

The good work of the Lord being thus commenced, meetings were held every evening. Elders, Sabbath school teachers, converts, and others threw themselves into the work.

The presbytery of Carrickfergus did not remain inactive when the Lord's gracious work required their extra labours. They held three revival meetings within their bounds. The first was held in Carrickfergus on the 9th August. The good work of the revival, under the Divine blessing, was thus fostered by these services, and at the same time kept clear of anything to prejudice any against it.

**Doctrines Preached**

The doctrines faithfully preached among my people were those that are termed Calvinistic. Indeed the doctrines preached by all our ministers generally are the doctrines of God's Word, as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. They are thus the great doctrines of the sovereignty of Divine grace which God has so manifestly blessed in the recent revival. Lieutenant W R Aikman in his discourses preached almost exclusively the doctrines of free grace. He exalted God in man's redemption. He spoke in very severe terms against a fleshly religion. His whole preaching was directed to the casting down of any hope which the flesh might place in works, and holding forth Jesus Christ as the all in all of a sinner's salvation. God has therefore honoured and glorified His Son Jesus in blessing such preaching to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan.

**Bodily Manifestations**

In many instances bodily agony and suffering accompanied the conviction and conversion of the sinner. These bodily affections were very slight in some, but in others so severe as to weaken the person for some days, and in a few cases even affected the health. There were about four hundred awakened or revived in my congregation of whom I was cognisant, and of these, about two hundred were accompanied with bodily symptoms and prostration. In some instances the individual would be smitten instantaneously with a sense of conviction of sin, would fall prostrate, and in some cases nearly powerless, screaming for mercy and pardon, would writhe in the agony of despair, in fear of the Divine wrath, and continue in this state for a day or two. And in one or two cases the persons continued so for more than a week. One person was nineteen days under conviction of sin before finding peace, but the most of them found peace in a day or two. Some few, but they were very few, had these bodily manifestations more than once. It was very touching, when they were stricken with the conviction of sin, to hear them cry for mercy. The eyes of the understanding, that had been formerly closed, were then opened. They saw as it were

the gulf into which they were falling. They felt the burden of sin very weighty upon their soul. All their sins appeared before them black and terrible. The fear of the wrath of God, and of the torment of hell was excruciating. It was then you would have heard them pray fervently and exclaim, 'Oh, my sins, my sins, how great! Oh Jesus, have mercy on me! Pardon my sins. Oh, this heart, this hard heart! Oh Saviour of sinners, give me a new heart!'

One man, who had been leading an atheist life, was stricken and cried out, 'Oh, wretch that I am! Oh, this cursed unbelief! Lord Jesus, take it away, and give me faith to believe'.

When the heart was thus melted, and a desire for holiness implanted, God dropped His grace into the wounded soul, and healed it. He bestowed faith, and enabled them to see Jesus as a loving and kind Saviour, speaking peace and pardon. Oh, the joy they then felt!

**Extraordinary cases**

There were some extraordinary cases of conversion in my congregation. I may recite a few of the particulars in reference to one or two of these. One was that of a deaf and dumb boy of about fifteen or sixteen years of age. He is a pupil of the Belfast Deaf and Dumb Institution. He was then at home for the midsummer vacation, and came with his parents to public worship on the Sabbath. It was the last Sabbath of July. Part of the service was over when he was smitten. The first Psalm had been sung, and morning prayer offered. I had read the chapter. He was able to follow me in the reading by a friend pointing him in his Bible to the verses as I read them. When the reading of God's Word had been finished I gave out a Psalm to sing, the friend pointing it out also to him. It was during the singing of the second Psalm that he shouted out in that way peculiar to the dumb. His friends did not know what was the matter; but on his removal to the outside of the church, he told them what was wrong with him. A member of the congregation, who knew the deaf and dumb alphabet, and also his mother, told him of the invitations and promises of the gospel. Though he could not hear, yet an elder offered up prayer on his behalf to that God who can make the deaf to hear. He found peace in Christ, and now rejoices in his Saviour. This I think one of the most convincing proofs of the revival being the work of God's Spirit that we have. It establishes that it was not the result of exciting preaching, as no declamation could reach him, as he was both deaf and dumb; yet he is awakened, and, under a sense of sin, is led to call out for mercy, and finds peace from Christ's own words of grace.

The next case was that of an atheist. He is a man of upwards of thirty years of age, and had not been thirty times in God's house. He is one of some eight or ten persons who reside in the parish, and who frequently met together to discuss and propagate deistical views. He is a man of intelligence, and had often read the Bible that he might be able to prove that one part of it contradicted the other. He ridiculed the idea of a revival, when it began first to be talked of. A few days previous to his conversion, as one of my elders and he were reasoning on the subject, he said, 'that if there were such a thing, and if it were so great a blessing, God would not lose it by sending it on Carrickfergus, so that this place would be passed over'. An evening or two afterwards, his servant girl attended one of my meetings. After she went home from the meeting, she became affected, and cried for mercy. A Christian friend in the neighbourhood went to pray with her, and direct her mind to Jesus. He knelt down to pray with her, and just when the prayer was being offered up, the sceptic, who was present, was smitten with the arrow of conviction. He cried out, 'Oh, cursed unbelief!' He prayed for mercy, and he found peace in that Saviour he had formerly slighted. He is now a consistent follower of Jesus.

The only other extraordinary case of conversion that I will mention, is that of a Roman Catholic. She is a young woman of upwards of twenty. She is a quiet, well-conducted young woman, but had been brought up to attend the Roman Catholic chapel. She had regularly attended mass. She had attended some of my open-air preachings. At one of these, the Word of God brought conviction to her soul. When under conviction of sin, she requested that I should be sent for. I immediately went and spoke to her of Jesus - of His preciousness - of His willingness to forgive sins - that He was the only Saviour - that there was no other name given under heaven among men whereby we could be saved but that of Jesus Christ. She believed, and found peace. She prayed fervently to Jesus to enable her to believe on Him alone, and neither in the Virgin Mary nor in saints. She has joined my Bible class and attends my church.

**Results**

The effect of the revival on the morals and life of those who experienced it has been most blessed. In the public works the workers are quite changed in their conversation. In the public works at Woodburn and in Carrickfergus, in the former of which there are more than 400 employed, you very rarely hear now any profane or obscene language, which is not the case in many places where large numbers of workers are assembled. Immorality does not now exist to such an extent as formerly, as a number of the most immoral were led to see the awful wickedness of the lives they were leading, and to all appearance are changed.

At the Duncrue salt mines, a considerable number of men are engaged working at the bottom, some 500 or 600 feet below the surface. Their practice formerly at meal hours was to amuse themselves, and some of them occupied their time in gambling. Instead of this, they now occupy their spare time in religious exercises - in reading the Scriptures or tracts, in singing Psalms and prayer. Few of these men, if any, were stricken down. They passed through the change silently, without any bodily manifestation accompanying it. But they nevertheless evidence by their conduct that they have been renewed.

One gentleman, who employs upwards of 400 in his works, expressed to me his delight at the happy change in the behaviour of his workers since the revival; and now, when at their work, instead of profane songs they will join in singing the songs of Zion.

Some drunkards have been reclaimed as a consequence of the revival. Many who had been addicted to the use of ardent spirits have given it up since the revival. Another blessed result of the revival is the desire that now exists in this place for the Word of God. All seem desirous for a copy of the Scriptures, and scarcely a convert is to be found without it. A considerable number of family Bibles have been purchased by the people, and large numbers of smaller copies of the Scriptures.

A vast change has come over the congregation in reference

to family prayer. Previous to the awakening I was aware of only about twenty or thirty families of the congregation who kept up family worship. Now nearly every family offers up to Jehovah their morning and evening sacrifices. Attendance at public worship and the prayer meeting has greatly increased. The people love to hear the gospel preached and do not seem weary at the close of a service, even when protracted. I had 137 go forward to the Lord's table for the first time at our last sacrament in October. Sixty of these were married, and some were grandfathers. They had reared their families to be men and women, and were very seldom in God's house, and never at his table, until the Lord reached them with His grace.

# Congregational Remittances - August 2012

| | CENTRAL BUILDING FUND YTD | ORDINARY REMITTANCES 2012 Aug | 2012 Total | 2011 YTD Total to Aug |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Presbytery of Inverness** | | | | |
| Aberdeen | 0 | 1000 | 10,068 | 10,211 |
| Duthil-Dores | 0 | 1265 | 12,124 | 15,302 |
| Inverness | 0 | 2000 | 16,000 | 18,000 |
| Kilmorack & Strathglass | 0 | 1400 | 10,510 | 12,346 |
| **Total Inverness** | **0** | **5,665** | **48,702** | **55,859** |
| **Northern Presbytery** | | | | |
| Assynt & Scourie | 510 | 0 | 631 | 1,056 |
| Brora | 785 | 1400 | 13,536 | 15,886 |
| Kiltearn | 420 | 0 | 4,557 | 7,593 |
| Tarbat | 0 | 1000 | 9,940 | 8,603 |
| **Total Northern** | **1,715** | **2,400** | **28,664** | **33,138** |
| **Southern Presbytery** | | | | |
| Arran | 510 | 308 | 5,644 | 6,485 |
| Ayr | 5,000 | 943 | 7,127 | 2,128 |
| Dumfries | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Edinburgh | 0 | 0 | 17,026 | 23,265 |
| Glasgow - Partick | 1,300 | 2000 | 21,000 | 25,017 |
| Glasgow - Shettleston | 679 | 3500 | 15,718 | 17,684 |
| Glasgow - Knightswood | 626 | 2160 | 17,738 | 17,347 |
| Rothesay | 0 | 0 | 130 | 0 |
| **Total Southern** | **8,115** | **8,911** | **84,383** | **91,927** |
| **Outer Hebrides Presbytery** | | | | |
| Cross | 0 | 2046 | 16,093 | 15,560 |
| Harris - Leverburgh | 275 | 1200 | 10,921 | 11,842 |
| Harris - Scalpay | 500 | 1800 | 16,732 | 18,104 |
| Knock & Point | 0 | 1544 | 9,092 | 11,295 |
| North Uist | 1,210 | 1000 | 9,219 | 9,204 |
| Stornoway | 3,163 | 6480 | 57,678 | 61,053 |
| **Total Outer Hebrides** | **5,148** | **14,070** | **119,735** | **127,058** |
| **Presbytery of Skye & Lochcarron** | | | | |
| Bracadale | 75 | 1000 | 7,861 | 9,689 |
| Duirinish (Waternish) | 275 | 1000 | 4,500 | 4,215 |
| Kilmuir & Stenscholl | 695 | 1300 | 11,439 | 11,956 |
| Lochalsh | 305 | 950 | 7,899 | 7,199 |
| Poolewe & Aultbea | 350 | 870 | 7,701 | 7,799 |
| Ullapool | 0 | 0 | 51 | 81 |
| Portree | 0 | 1400 | 14,341 | 13,548 |
| Snizort | 0 | 2200 | 13,488 | 14,528 |
| Strath | 55 | 1500 | 5,630 | 875 |
| **Total Skye/Lochcarron** | **1,755** | **10,220** | **72,909** | 69,890 |
| **Total Congregations** | **16,733** | **41,266** | **354,393** | **377,871** |
| Other Donations | 3,357 | 1,648 | 19,298 | 20,354 |
| Legacy | | 0 | 8000 | 18,153 |
| **TOTAL** | **20,090** | **42,914** | **381,692** | **416,378** |
| Including Gift Aid | | | 45,171 | 77,559 |

# Visit to Zambia

***Rev Harry Woods***

In the summer of this year my wife and I were given the opportunity to serve the church in Zambia for a few weeks. I was to speak at a conference and then teach the Diploma class of Covenant College in Homiletics (i.e. preaching). We left home on Monday 18thJune, travelling via Dubai and arrived in Lusaka on Wednesday 20th. In all, the travel time was about eighteen hours and as you can imagine we were just about 'done' when we arrived. It took us about an hour and a half to get through immigration but, when we did, we were greeted by the familiar face of David Lachman who then took us on a four to five hour drive to the College. In view of the state of the roads and the terrible driving conditions in Eastern Province it is a cause for great thankfulness that we got there safely. Upon arrival we enjoyed two or three days of recuperation before the work began.

**Graduates' Coinference**

My first 'working' week at the College involved speaking at the Graduates' Conference which ran from the evening of the Monday to lunchtime on Friday. I began on the Tuesday and gave fourteen lectures (three on Pastoral Theology, five on the Mediatorial Work of Christ, six on God-centred Evangelism) and preached two sermons. The working day ran from 7.15 in the morning until 20.00 in the evening when there was an hour long Question and Answer session — the Graduates asking all the questions and me trying to answer them! There were eighteen men at the conference and it was a joy to get to know them and have fellowship with brother pastors during our time together.

**Lecturing**

After the Graduates' Conference there followed five weeks

of lecturing to the College Diploma Class on the subject of Homiletics. In all I had fifty six hours of lecturing and enjoyed every moment of it! Almost all of the men are active pastors in local congregations and the College provides them with 'in service' training in an area where there is little or no opportunity for advanced theological education. The College provides a way to serve these local pastors through theological training and we as a Church ought to be very thankful that we have been given this opening in Zambia.

During this time we had the opportunity to see the work on the Covenant College Farm as well as some of the pre-school work done in the local villages.

**Mairi**

Some folks have asked, 'And what did Mairi do in Zambia?' She did what she does so well at home. She looked after me, provided companionship and kept the house fit for habitation and all this despite having the company of a rat in the chalet for the first two nights, scorpions in the bath, the presence of spiders almost as big as the diameter of a tea cup, the friendly company of lizards and the constant watchfulness for snakes whenever out walking. I think that was quite a lot!

**Lusaka**

Our time at the College drew to a close and we left on Saturday 4th August on the long and dangerous drive to Lusaka where we stayed until our flight home on the following Wednesday. During our last few days in Lusaka we were able to relax although both Mairi and I took a sort of flu from which it has taken a long time to recover. David and Katie had arranged for us to spend our last nights at the Flying Missions just outside Lusaka and on the Monday we went to a game park and were able to see some of the native animals in their home territory. A big thanks to Katie for all her organising and to David for all his driving.

*Our Home!*

**Thanks**

We were shown great kindness and help during our time in Zambia — from those involved in Covenant College (both students and staff), the Farm and the children's work. We especially enjoyed fellowship with the Lachmans, Phil Bailey and Marjanne.. We were also very kindly treated by the MacDonalds of Old MacDonald's Farm in Lusaka who showed such kindness and generosity to us even though we had never met them before. We would also like to thank the Home and Foreign Missions Committee for affording us the opportunity to help in the work of Covenant College.

Our flight home was uneventful apart from losing our luggage for a day when we arrived in Inverness. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to making our time in Zambia memorable and would encourage all in the Church and beyond to lend prayerful and practical support to this work which is so needed and so blessed of the Lord.

*The Diploma Class, Covenant College*

"Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear;
forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;
so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty:
for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him."

**Psalm 45:10-11**

Published by the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)