# the Explorer

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Free

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## Puzzles

Young folk are encouraged to complete the various puzzles in the magazine and send them in to:
**Miss Anne Macaulay**
30 Mackenzie Place,
Maryburgh IV7 8DY
Email: **macaulayanne@hotmail.co.uk**

Younger readers who find the questions too hard may like to do a drawing based on one of the articles and send it to the same address.

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*(Unattributed articles ought not to be considered the work of the Editor)*

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# SKIPPER GETS A HAIRCUT!

**How often do you go for a haircut? Maybe once a month or so? Well, Skipper is very fortunate; he only has to go once or twice a year! Mind you, it is quite expensive when he does go! Well, last month it was time for his summer haircut. We know he is really needing it because when the weather gets warm the long hair which covers his shoulders (and looks something like a lion's mane) starts to fall off. When this happens he gets irritated and rubs himself all over the rugs and carpets. It is astonishing the amount of hair the vacuum cleaner has to deal with and of course we have to vacuum several times a day. That of course is a big problem for Skipper who, as you know, barks and snaps at anything with a long pole or hose!**

This time we found a new dog 'hairdresser' who lives nearby so we took Skipper early one morning and wondered how he would react. Some dogs hate going and as soon as they go into the room with the bath and the grooming table they try to run away! Skipper isn't like that at all; I guess he loves all the attention and runs in quite happily. Although he had never met the lady before he seemed quite content and we left knowing he would be well looked after.

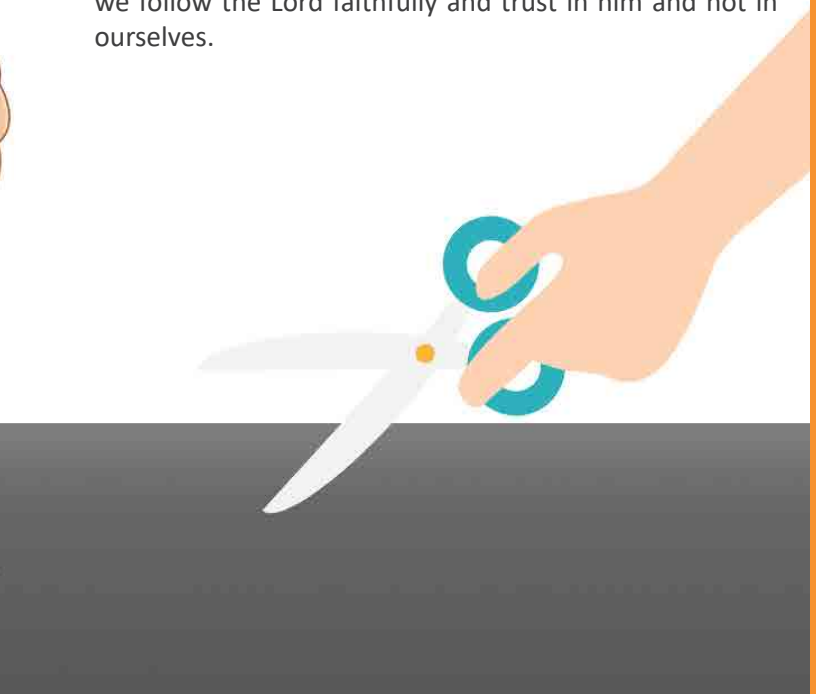
Sure enough, when we picked him up three hours later, he was quite happily playing in the garden and came home

# Skipper's Tales

with an air of expectancy; knowing he'd get a treat for being good and, of course, he did. When we picked him up, gone was the shaggy untidy dog we had left behind and he was looking very handsome, his coat was soft and shiny and he looked like a perfect example of a border terrier. We go to the hairdresser and hopefully we too come out looking better than when we went in.

Do you remember someone in the Bible who got his hair cut? Samson belonged to a special group of people in Israel called Nazarites and like other Nazarites he had long hair. Samson was a good man and is commended for his faith in Hebrews 11. Like us all he was not perfect and made some serious mistakes. One of these sinful errors led to his hair being cut and for a time the Lord left him. Before this God had given him extraordinary strength but during the time that he did not enjoy God's presence that strength was taken away. This meant that his enemies were able to capture him and took great delight in mocking and torturing him. However Samson sought the Lord again and in time his hair grew back. More importantly the Lord gave him back his astonishing strength and he was able to inflict one final act of judgement on the wicked.

Perhaps, like Skipper, you will also get your hair cut soon. Even if you don't it would be good to read a bit more about Samson and think about what lessons we can learn from him; lessons about following the Lord faithfully and not being tempted away; lessons too about the sadness and danger that always come from sinful disobedience. And no doubt lessons about the strength we can find when we follow the Lord faithfully and trust in him and not in ourselves.



# From the Editor

**Some people have hearing problems. They have difficulty hearing other people, especially if a few people are talking at the same time. This can be difficult and, at times, even dangerous. Different types of hearing aids can be a great help and it is a great blessing that much more can be done in our day than in years gone by. Other people sometimes have what we call 'selective deafness'. There is nothing the matter with their hearing but they choose to hear some things and ignore other things. At home and in school many people seem to have this problem. Perhaps some of you suffer from this!**

The Bible often reminds us of the importance of hearing God's voice. It is important to remember that every time we hear the Word of God the Lord is speaking to us. Whether we are sitting in church or reading the Bible by ourselves it is the Word of God which is coming to us. Some of you will attend Sabbath School and it is important to remember that your teachers are not just bringing their own thoughts but that the Lord is speaking through them.

Sadly we can all develop 'selective deafness' when it comes to God's voice. We can listen when it suits us and at other times, if we do not like what we are hearing, we can close our ears to his voice. There are many examples of this in the Bible and we repeat the same sin in our own lives. If we are honest we all have to admit to ignoring God's voice at times.

As I said earlier some people have difficulty in hearing when there are several others speaking at the same time. This also happens spiritually; God's voice is there but so are other voices. At times we can't hear the voice of God as clearly as we should because of all the other voices competing for our attention. In Psalm 85:8 the Psalmist says "I will hear what God the LORD will speak:". Can you say that? We all need to pray that the Lord would help us to listen to his voice and obey what he says.

*Murdo A N Macleod*

# DORES CONFERENCE

## Evidence for Creation in Humans and Animals

It was a joy to see young people from near and far gathering together at Dores last March. On arrival some wanted to have a kick-around outside with a football to stretch their legs, whilst others made a bee-line for the baked goods inside!

The morning talk began with reasons as to why the topic of evolution is such a big issue. Rev. Murdo A. N. MacLeod explained firstly that evolution is **unbiblical**. Genesis 1 tells us that the world and everything in it was created in six 24 hour days. The Bible is one unit, which means if we start having doubts about the truth of one part, it will affect how we read other parts. Secondly, he explained that evolution is an attack on God's power and authority, therefore it is **ungodly**. Evolution is thirdly a big issue because it is **unscientific** – it is simply a theory that dresses itself up as science. Unfortunately, the theory of evolution has become widespread and fashionable. This is because fallen, sinful man doesn't want to be confronted by the fact that there is a God who we will ALL have to answer to on the day of judgement.

In the remainder of the talk, Mr MacLeod looked at specific examples of evidence for creation in the human body, making particular reference to the brain, cells, blood, bones and eyes – all of which pointed clearly to the fact that we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139).

At lunch time, the authentic home-made Italian pizza was quickly devoured along with other goodies, and everyone enjoyed a bracing walk along the shores of Loch Ness.

In the afternoon Mr MacLeod gave examples of evidence for creation in birds and animals. It is interesting that, for many years, engineers have been studying creatures such as birds to try and copy what God made perfectly at the beginning! So many interesting facts were mentioned that there is not space to mention them here, but the talks will be available to listen to online at **http://www.bible-sermons.org.uk/**

The organisers are thankful to the Lord for his keeping hand, and for the many people who contributed in different ways before, during, and after the event. The next conference is on 31st August 2019 D.V.

# DORES CONFERENCE

# THE TABERNACLE (3)

**Readers of the *Explorer* will remember that recently we began a new Bible study in which we are looking at the Tabernacle. Last month we looked at the surroundings of the Tabernacle and the first of the two rooms inside the Tabernacle. We saw that the Tabernacle consisted of two separate rooms. The first was called The Holy Place and beyond that was The Holy of Holies.**

## A SPECIAL PLACE

The Holy of Holies or the 'Most Holy Place' was, as the name suggests, the most special and sacred part of the Tabernacle. It was separated by a veil and there were rules about this area which had to be obeyed with particular care. Only the High Priest could enter this part of the Tabernacle and he could only do this once a year; on the Day of Atonement. It was also most important that when he went in he had blood with him, which he was to sprinkle on the covering of the Ark of the Covenant which was placed in that part of the Tabernacle.

This room was designed in such a way as to emphasise how holy and separate it was from everything else in their daily lives. For instance there was no light inside this room except the light of God's presence. If you were to see inside this area you would notice that there was only one thing inside it: a very special box.

## A SPECIAL BOX

I have already mentioned that the Holy of Holies contained the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark was a gold-covered wooden box which measured just over a metre in length and about 70 centimetres (or 2.5 feet) in breadth and in depth. Different names are used in the Bible for the ark. Sometimes it is called the "ark of the Lord" (Joshua 3:13); at other times it is called the "ark of the testimony" or the "ark of the covenant" (Numbers 10:33). It contained the two tables of stone on which were written the ten commandments.

The ark had a lid of pure gold which covered it perfectly and, as we saw before this was called the Mercy Seat. On either side of the Mercy Seat were two golden cherubims (Exodus 25:18). They are often associated with God's justice. For example we read of them in Genesis 3:24 baring the sword of vengeance but here they are not hostile or armed: they are gazing down in wonder at the Mercy Seat.

## A SPECIAL SIGN

The Ark of the Covenant was a special sign for Israel. It symbolised some very important truths.

**1. It was a symbol of God's presence.** He was the Lord their God and he had promised to be with them and the ark was a reminder of this presence. In Psalm 99:1 it speaks of God as the one that "sitteth *between* the cherubims". In 1 Samuel 4:4 when the ark is brought out at a time of

great trouble it mentions again the Lord who "dwelleth *between* the cherubims". It was to lead them whenever they went forward (Numbers 10:34-36) and was closely associated with the parting of the River Jordan (Joshua 3) and the fall of the walls of Jericho (Joshua 6). As a sign of God's presence it brought joy and blessing to all those who treated it with the care and reverence it was due.

**2. It was where God manifested his glory in a special way.** God's glory was seen in many ways around the Tabernacle but nowhere was it so clear and special as in that room and in that ark. The holy majesty of God was seen there at its brightest. You might remember that idols fell down in its presence (1 Samuel 5:4) and men were cut down who handled it carelessly (2 Samuel 6:6ff). We mentioned the way in which the cherubims add to this sense of glory and holiness.

**3. It was where God met his people.** God had many ways of meeting with and speaking to his people but the ark had a special role in this relationship. In Numbers 7:89 we read of Moses hearing the voice of God "from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of testimony".

The ark is long gone and the Tabernacle and temple are no more. They are no longer required because the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Immanuel, God with us, is the one by whom we are to come "that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16) Just as the ark contained the ten commandments we discover that the Lord Jesus Christ had the law perfectly in his heart. He is the one who goes before his people and leads them through the wilderness of this world and on into heaven itself. He is the one through whom they defeat their foes and by whom the great walls of opposition and difficulty come down like those of Jericho. And he is the one to whom we owe reverence and who will bring joy and blessing to those who trust in him.

We noticed that the lid was sprinkled with blood once a year. Jesus also fulfils this part of the ark's symbolism. On the cross he shed his blood and having offered this perfect sacrifice he went in to the presence of God in heaven. The High Priest went in with the blood of an animal but Jesus went in having shed his own blood. He is our mercy seat: the golden, divine Son of God who shed his blood for sinners and who is the only way by whom we can come to God. If the golden cherubims looked down in wonder at the blood-sprinkled Mercy Seat the real ones gaze in constant wonder at the precious saving work of Christ, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.". (John 1:29)

None of these symbols would have been complete without the High Priest and our concluding article will look more closely at his remarkable work.

**The Ark of the Covenant passing the River Jordan, by American historical painter Benjamin West**

# SAMUEL

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**HANNAH**
**SAMUEL**
**PRAYING**
**TEASING**

**COAT**
**ELI**
**UNHAPPY**
**DRUNK**

**PENINNAH**
**TEMPLE**
**HIGH PRIEST**
**ELKANAH**

## WHAT DO ALL THE EXTRA LETTERS SPELL?

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Name: .....

Age: .....

Congregation: .....

Address: .....

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## Latest entries

**1st prize:** Emily Craig

**Runners up:**
Aberdeen - Ava Maclennan  Ness - Alastair Morrison
Stornoway - Thomas Craig, Sarah Craig
Shettleston - Hannah Keddie, Abigail Keddie
Partick - Kenny MacKinnon  Gateshead - Noah Richards
Culloden Baptist - Matthew MacDonald, Micah MacDonald

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10 entries prize: Jonathan Brooks
20 Entries Prize: Annie MacDonald

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