

The Young People's Magazine

**Issued by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland
Reformed in Doctrine, Worship and Practice**

“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them” Ecclesiastes 12:1



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Volume 79

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Number 2

A Storm Is Coming

Many of us have experienced unusually stormy weather during the last few weeks. Almost every day at the end of 2013, high winds roared around us, and this went on into the early days of 2014. No fisherman would go out to sea in that kind of weather.

But think of a fisherman who takes his boat out of the harbour on a calm morning. After some time he looks around him. He sees signs that the weather is changing. It soon becomes obvious that a severe storm is coming. (I am assuming that a weather forecast is not available to him.) What will he do? Will he go on fishing in the hope that the storm will go away?

Not if he is sensible. He will start at once to get himself organised so that he can sail back to the safety of the harbour as quickly as possible. He knows that, if he stays out at sea, his boat may suffer damage; indeed he may be shipwrecked. That would almost certainly mean the complete loss of his boat. What is more serious still, he may well be drowned. It is highly important for him to return to port as soon as he possibly can.

That is just what the Book of Proverbs tells us: "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself" (Proverbs 22:3). The prudent man is the sensible man; he foresees that something bad is going to happen; so he takes action; he hides in a place of safety.

Let us think of ourselves as on a journey through life. Day by day we are travelling on towards eternity. If we are on what Jesus called the broad way, we should be able to foresee danger ahead, because the Bible tells us that the broad way ends in destruction. A godless life ends in a lost eternity.

So what will we do if we are prudent? Surely we will seek safety as soon as possible. And where is safety to be found? Who can we go to, so that we can be delivered from a lost eternity? And we should also ask, Who can we go to, so that we can be delivered from a godless life?

The answer should be obvious: we must go to Jesus Christ, who came into this world to save sinners. He came to save them, not only from the awfulness of hell, but also from the sin and the godlessness which will at last bring sinners down to hell. Christ is a perfect refuge for sinners from the fearful

storm of God's anger, because of sin – a storm that will meet us at death if we do not flee to Him before then.

Many people will claim that it is terrible to speak about God being angry and about Him punishing sin for ever in a lost eternity. What matters is that these are facts. The fisherman might have felt that it was very inconvenient for a storm to appear when he was catching a lot of fish. But the prudent fisherman realises at once that the only important matter for him, at this time, is to get safely back to land before the storm hits him. So the sinner, going on through life without Christ, should recognise what is ahead of him or her – and act at once.

What are *you* to do? You are to seek the Lord. You are not to try to please Him by making yourself better. You will never succeed. You can never keep God's law perfectly. Instead you must go at once to Christ; you must trust in Him. He has done all that is necessary for the salvation of sinners; He took their punishment and died in their place. So go to Him as the only refuge for sinners, who must otherwise face the storm of God's anger.

Make sure that you read your Bible, where Christ reveals Himself, where He shows you what He has done for sinners. Make sure too that you take every opportunity to attend public worship and hear God's Word preached. There, I hope, you will be pointed to Christ as the one Saviour whom God has appointed for needy sinners like you. And make sure that you pray, that you earnestly ask God to save your soul – to make you willing to leave your sins and cast yourself upon Jesus Christ as a Saviour who is completely suitable for you, even if you are still on your way to a lost eternity.

Yes, "a prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself". But there is another part to the verse: "The simple pass on, and are punished". The foolish person passes on and ignores all the signs of a coming storm; so at last he must face the terrible consequences of his foolishness. If the fisherman ignores the warning signs in the sky and continues at his work, he will soon have to face the consequences of his foolishness, which may include shipwreck. The person who continues in his ungodly way, and ignores the warnings about a lost eternity, will yet have to face the awful consequences of his foolish decision. But those who turn from sin and begin to walk in the narrow way – to live a godly life – will be safe for ever. Death will bring them into a place of eternal blessedness.

Just as the fisherman should make for the harbour as soon as possible, so sinners should flee to Christ *at once*. There is no room for delay. The Bible says, "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 4:7). So do not ignore the warning signs; flee to Christ now. You are called: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

The Bible's Teaching on Repentance

2. Confession of Sin

Charles Hodge

The first article in this series, in last month's Magazine, asked the question: What does repentance mean? It is a turning from sin to God; it involves conviction of sin and a sense of our unworthiness before God. The series is taken, with editing, from *The Way of Life*.

A consciousness of unworthiness also produces self-loathing; so it also enters into the nature of true repentance. In the strong language of suffering Job, the sinner abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes. In another passage, Job says, "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth" (Job 40:4). And Ezekiel describes the repentance of the people: "Ye shall remember your ways and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for all the evil that ye have committed" (Ezekiel 20:43).

It is not the strength of these feelings, but their nature, which proves the character of our repentance. Their nature is the same in all who truly repent, but their strength varies. But in them all, the sense of sin destroys that self-satisfaction with which sinners soothe themselves, thanking God they are not as other men. It humbles them before God, and places them in the position which He would have them occupy. Thus "saith the Lord . . . to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word" (Isaiah 66:2). With such a soul God condescends to take up His abode. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones (Isaiah 57:15).

This humbling sense of our unworthiness is essential to repentance. Most people are willing to acknowledge that they are sinners, but they want to make their guilt look small. They want to think that they are as good as could reasonably be expected, that God's law demands too much of beings as weak as man, and that it would be unjust to punish their shortcomings at all severely. The change which is repentance destroys this tendency to justify oneself. The soul bows down before God, conscious of being guilty and without excuse. Instead of looking on God as a hard master, the soul acknowledges that He is righteous in all His demands.

Such were David's feelings: "I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight, that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and

be clear when Thou judgest” (Psalm 51:4). Ezra expressed the same feeling, “O Lord God of Israel, Thou art righteous . . . behold, we are before Thee in our trespasses; for we cannot stand before Thee because of this” (Ezra 9:15). There can be no true repentance without this spirit of condemning oneself and taking a low place before God.

The Scriptures lay much stress on confession of sin; it is the outward expression of an inward sense of deserving punishment. It is not enough for us to condemn ourselves; God requires us to make a full and sincere confession of our sins to Him. Our own hearts will prompt us to do so. Those who repent will not want to hide their guilt. On the contrary, they are anxious to acknowledge everything and to feel shame.

So in many parts of the Bible we find the confessions of God’s people. “When I kept silence,” said David, “my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. . . . I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin” (Psalm 32:3-5). As long as he attempted to conceal his guilt, David found no relief; but when he acknowledged his transgressions he was forgiven. So Solomon says, “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

The New Testament is equally clear about this part of our duty. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8, 9). This confession must be made to the one we have sinned against. If we have sinned against other people, we must confess to them. If we have sinned against the Church, we must confess to the Church. If we have sinned against God, our confession must be made to God.

It is to God that confession is mainly to be made. Even when we sin against other people, we sin against God in a still higher sense. So our sense of guilt before God will be greater than our sense of acting unjustly to other people. Thus David, though he had sinned most seriously against Uriah, was so moved with the terrible nature of his sin as against God that he said, “Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight” (Psalm 51:4). In the Bible, we find that confession is constantly made to God. “Let Thine ear now”, said Nehemiah, “be attentive and Thine eyes open, that Thou mayest hear the prayer of Thy servant, which I pray before Thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel Thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against Thee; both I and my father’s

house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against Thee, and have not kept the commandments nor the statutes, nor the judgements which Thou commandedst Thy servant Moses” (Nehemiah 1:6,7).

Indeed the greater part of the remarkable prayers of Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah – these acts of true repentance recorded in the Bible – is taken up with confession of sin. This shows how necessary such confession is to proper repentance. So, unless our heart leads us freely, fully and humbly to acknowledge our sin before God, we cannot have any satisfactory evidence that we truly repent.

The Bible and the Musket Ball

It was the 1640s in England, and the Civil War had begun. A young man was working as an apprentice in London and decided to join one of the armies. He was appointed a Captain. He did not have much religion, but he did carry a Bible with him. So did many other soldiers, although they made very little use of the wonderful Book which would have told them how to get safely through this life and safely into heaven.

One might think that soldiers facing battles, in which they might be suddenly killed, would read their Bibles carefully, to learn about the way of salvation. But God’s power is necessary if sinners are to want to learn how to get to heaven; otherwise they will ignore the needs of their souls, no matter how dangerous their position in life might be.

At some stage in the War, this Captain was commanded to lead his company of men in storming a fort. As they did so, they were for a short time open to the heaviest of their enemies’ gunfire. Their action was successful. Afterwards the Captain noticed that a ball from a musket (a type of gun) had stuck in his Bible, which was in his pocket. Clearly the musket ball would have killed him if it had not struck his Bible instead.

He opened the Bible and saw that the musket ball had reached as far as the Book of Ecclesiastes. Looking at the first undamaged page, his eye fell on the words: “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgement” (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

What do these words mean? They are telling young men and women, in particular, that if they go on in the ways that they think best – in the ways that look best to them – there will be consequences. There is to be a day of judgement, when Jesus Christ, the Judge, will make public “all these things”

about those who continued to the end in their ungodly ways – thinking their own thoughts, not God's; looking at everything according to their own ideas, not God's. And from the judgement they will be sent away to a lost eternity.

But why does He so speak? It is so that those who hear the words of the Bible will give up their ungodly ways and find salvation, as they look by faith to Jesus Christ as the Saviour whom God has appointed. If they so turn from their sins, then the day of judgement will be a glorious day for them.

The young man could not argue with the words of the Bible; his conscience told him that they suited him exactly. So, by God's grace, he submitted to them; he could see that God was speaking to him; he felt God's authority. He sought the Lord and found Him. It is said that, from that time, the young man became "godly in earnest". He lived to be an old man and often said to people that his Bible had been the salvation of both his body and his soul.

Do you submit to the authority of God speaking to you through the Bible? As you read the Bible, or listen to it being read, ask Him to speak to you in such a way that you will not be able to resist the authority of His Word, but turn to Him in faith and repentance.

Golden Deeds or Gilded Sins?

Rev N M Ross

Madeleine Saunier lived in France about 200 years ago. Because her parents were very poor she helped them by earning money; her work was to herd cattle. She not only loved and supported her parents but she also delighted in helping poor, ill neighbours by giving them some of her own food or caring for them in other ways. As she grew up she helped others more and more.

For example, for 15 years she regularly gave food to a blind widow and her mentally-ill daughter, and also cleaned their house. For 18 months she also fed a poor girl and dressed her sores when her family had cruelly abandoned her because she had leprosy. At last she cradled the girl in her arms as she died.

One winter, Madeleine nursed a dying woman surnamed Mancel, who lived in a hovel. Late on a snowy night, as she lit a fire to warm the woman's hut she was alarmed by hearing the door being pushed open – it was kept shut by a big stone on the floor behind it. Imagine her terror when she saw a wolf trying to get in. The story continues: "All Madeleine could do was to spring to the door and hold it fast, pulling up everything she could to keep it shut, as the beast bounded against it". She shouted loudly in the hope of

scaring it away, but it kept trying to get in. At last, as daylight came, it went away, but Madeleine's strength was exhausted.

Madeleine stayed with the dying woman until she passed away a few hours later. She could not bear to leave the dead body of the woman to be torn by a wolf so she went to the nearest cottage, although she was afraid of the wolf. She asked permission to leave the body there till the burial could take place. When she got it securely placed in the cottage, "she fell on her knees and thanked God for her safety".

Madeleine's wonderful compassion came to the ears of the Queen of France, who sent her a present. She was also given the Monthyon Prize for Virtue – a sum of money that was left by a Baron Monthyon to be given every year to the poor person who performed the most virtuous action during the year in France. Madeleine's story is found in an old book called *A Book of Golden Deeds of All Times and All Lands*.

If Madeleine was a born-again believer in Jesus Christ (as she possibly was), she would know that all her own virtuous actions and "golden deeds", for which she was praised, could never earn her a place in heaven. This is a lesson we all must learn. It is not the good deeds we may do but only what Jesus Christ has done that will take us to heaven. When He died on the cross, He cried, "It is finished", for He had finished the work of obtaining salvation for His people. Therefore we must have Him as our Saviour so that we may say, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus 3:5).

But those who have Christ as their Saviour will certainly do good deeds, whether it is honouring their parents, helping others, being kind to the followers of Jesus, supporting the cause of Christ or giving to the poor. In these ways, believers are doers of the Word – not in order to gain entry to heaven but because they love the Lord. How good it is when sinners have Christ as their Saviour to save them from their sins, and as their Master to teach them to do what is right and to the glory of God. Otherwise what seem to be their golden deeds will be no more than gilded sins.

Gilded sins? What are these? Suppose someone helps the poor just to feel good or to get praise from others; then he is not doing it to the glory of God or from love to the Lord. Such selfish helping of others is really sin although it appears to be a "golden deed". It is like base metal covered with gild or a gold-coloured substance; it looks like solid gold, but it is still base metal.

May the Lord keep us from deceptive gilded sins, which may deceive other people but they cannot deceive Him. May He give us grace to do genuine "golden deeds" – good works that would be to His glory as well as for the good of others.

For Younger Readers

The Lost Calf

One day the farmer lost his calf. He could not find it anywhere. So at last he gave up searching and went home.

The next morning he went out to search again. It was a lovely summer morning as he walked across his fields looking for his calf. But again he could not find the calf anywhere.

Then suddenly he remembered something. He had not prayed about the calf. He had not asked God to help him find the animal.

So he went down on his knees in the middle of his field. He told God about the lost calf. He was sure that God knew exactly where the calf was. And God could help him find it.

He finished praying and got up. He started to walk towards some trees. Very soon he saw the lost calf lying in front of him.

God heard his prayer. How thankful the farmer was to God!

Do you pray to God every day? I hope you do. But do you pray about everything?

I think the farmer, day by day, prayed about many things. But he did not remember to pray about the calf on the day it went missing.

We should ask God to make us remember always to pray about everything we need.

For Junior Readers

The Minister Prayed Like an Angel

Edward Staunton was a good minister in England long ago. One day he was preaching in a place called Warborough, near Oxford. A man was so moved by his first prayer that he left the church and then ran home. But he went home for a good reason, and his house was not far away.

He told his wife that she should get ready and come to church. He explained that there was someone in the pulpit who prayed like an angel; he had never heard a prayer like that before. Of course, the minister was not an angel, but he must have prayed as someone who really knew the God to whom he was speaking.

The woman rushed away to church with her husband. She listened to the

sermon and, through this sermon, she was converted. How good God is! Perhaps she had been too careless to come to church that day, yet God was still good to her. And she showed that hers was a true conversion; for the rest of her life she lived as a godly person should.

How important it is to be converted – to be changed so that we begin wanting to live a holy life! It looks as if this woman had been careless about the worship of God. How could she go to heaven unless she enjoyed worshipping God? She needed to have her likes and dislikes changed. Before the day when she heard Edward Staunton preaching, she *disliked* the worship of God. But God, in His kindness, changed her heart as she listened to the sermon. Now she *liked* the worship of God. And she is now in heaven, worshipping God all the time.

Be sure that you take every chance to be in church to hear the Word of God. See that you pay attention to what is said. You may not understand everything that is said in the sermon, but listen for what is easiest to follow. Ask God to help you understand more. Ask Him to change your heart so that you would receive the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ and believe in Him as the Saviour. Ask God to convert you so that you would want to live a holy life, and be ready to go to heaven when you die.

Samuel Rutherford and Prayer

1. Beginning the Steep Ascent to Eternal Glory

Matthew Vogan

This is the first section of a paper given at the 2013 Youth Conference.

“**S**trive to make prayer and reading and holy company and holy conference [that is, conversation] your delight; and when delight comes in, you shall by little and little smell the sweetness of Christ, till at length your soul be over head and ears in Christ’s sweetness. Then shall you be taken up to the top of the mountain with the Lord, to know the ravishments [great delights] of spiritual love, and the glory and excellency of a seen, revealed, felt, and embraced Christ; and then you shall not be able to loose yourself off Christ, and to bind your soul to old lovers.”

These words express very well the chief emphasis found in Samuel Rutherford’s life: preaching, writing – and indeed, praying. This is a different language compared to the language of the world; it is the language of Canaan: a heavenly tongue. When the pilgrims came to Vanity Fair in *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, “few could understand what they said; they naturally spoke the language of Canaan, but they that kept the fair were the men of this world;

so that, from one end of the fair to the other, they seemed barbarians each to the other”.

To many these words spoken by Samuel Rutherford also sound like a foreign language: perhaps some of you are baffled by it as strangers to it; sadly some are repelled due to their love of worldly language and things; some of you may be intrigued by it and wish to learn the language of Canaan; others may have some ability to understand it and have a desire to experience the realities spoken of. “Five cities in the land of Egypt shall speak the language of Canaan” (Isaiah 19:18); those that are of the Egypt of this world – still in their original sinful condition and not changed by grace – must begin to speak the language of Scripture, of grace and of heaven. This is the nature of true prayer, which is a basic mark of grace, as the Lord said of Paul: “Behold, he prayeth”.

Beginning to Pray – Rutherford's Early Life. Samuel Rutherford was born around the year 1600 in Nisbet, a small village near Jedburgh in the Scottish Borders. Rutherford later reflected that it was a place where “Christ was scarce named, as touching any reality or power of godliness”. Evidently, while there was the fear of God, there were not many praying men or women who were eminent in godliness. This is somewhat surprising as the godly, resolutely-Presbyterian David Calderwood became minister of the neighbouring parish of Crailing in 1604. The two parishes became one in 1606.

Nisbet remained in Rutherford's prayers throughout his life; he said: “If my prayers and best desires to the Lord could contribute anything for promoting of His work, my soul's desire is that the wilderness, and that place to which I owe my first breathing, in which I fear Christ was scarce named, as touching any reality or power of godliness, may blossom as a rose”.

When about four years old, he was playing near his father's house, together with a sister who was slightly older. “Young Samuel fell into a well several fathoms deep, and not full, but faced about with hewn stone, so that it was not possible for anybody to get up almost, far less a child. When he fell in, his sister ran in to the house nearby, and told them that Samuel was fallen into the well. His father and mother ran out, and found him sitting on the grass beside the well; and when they asked him, ‘How he got out?’ he said, after he was once at the bottom, he came up to the top, and there was a bonny young man pulled him out by the hand. There was nobody nearby at the time; and so they concluded it was no doubt an angel.” The preserving hand of God was upon him, as Robert Wodrow, who records this story, remarks: “The Lord had much to do with him”.

At an older age he attended the grammar school in Jedburgh, about 5 miles away. This school was at that time in a tower of the Abbey called

Latimer's Alley. Here he would have learned Latin and other essential subjects and, no doubt, here he also showed the promise of outstanding ability of mind.

While, his fall into the well would, no doubt, have left its impression on the boy, it does not appear that it brought him to close in with Christ effectually. Christ alone could draw him out of the pit of sin and corruption, in which we are by nature, and set his feet upon a rock for eternity. Such deliverances and experiences are not to be looked to, expected or depended upon for salvation. It seems strange also that the faithful ministry of David Calderwood was not used to bring saving knowledge to Rutherford, but this again is due to the sovereignty of God's grace.

It appears instead that he was not converted until he had reached university in Edinburgh, but certainly by the time he had reached the age of 20. "Like a fool, as I was, I suffered my sun to be high in the heaven, and near afternoon, before ever I took the gate by the end." Perhaps it was after a period of conviction of sin, since he later writes, "I knew a man who wondered to see any in this life laugh or sport".

He was keenly aware of the distractions and temptations of the days of youth, writing later: "There is not such a glassy, icy and slippery piece of way betwixt you and heaven, as youth". A vain world, with its deceitful pleasures and fake riches, is ready to entice a young heart. The way to eternal life seems hard and narrow by contrast, and there is great temptation to put off the most important things of the soul until a more convenient season. "It is a steep ascent to eternal glory", said Rutherford; "many are lying dead by the way, slain with security."

Yet Christ took hold of him. "O but Christ hath a saving eye! Salvation is in His eyelids! When He first looked on me, I was saved; it cost Him but a look to make hell quit of me!" He speaks of having prayed for the honour of suffering for Christ's name since the age of 20. It was a time when those who refused to conform to Episcopalian forms of worship began to be punished and it is likely Rutherford then came to identify with such men. Evidently, there was a time around this period when he began truly to pray. We read in Scripture: "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord". While this refers to a time when prayer and worship began to be offered publicly, it also gives a mark of those who were of the seed of Christ.

It is a solemn question for you yourself to consider: Have I begun to call upon the name of the Lord? I have every encouragement needed in the precious promise offered to me, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved", and the urgent command, "Call upon Him while He is near".

By the age of 25 he had been a successful university teacher for some years. He is described as having “eminent abilities of mind, and virtuous disposition”. But he was to be called to affliction and to suffer reproach for the sake of Christ. There was conflict among the academic staff in a time when appointments were being made by those who favoured Episcopalianism rather than Presbyterianism. When Rutherford married, some feature of this (perhaps he did not first obtain the permission of the Principal or have the marriage publicly notified in the Episcopalian way) was used against him and he decided to resign his post. There were also groundless allegations that the first child of the marriage was conceived out of wedlock. In the providence of God, these trials would open the way for him to enter the ministry.

Looking Around Us

Bible Translations

At present the Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS) publishes the Bible, or parts of the Bible, in a number of languages besides English. TBS are rightly anxious that the Bible should always be accurately translated into the various languages, keeping as close as possible to the way that it was written in the original languages of Hebrew (for the Old Testament) and Greek (for the New). They are also anxious that the translation should be made from the most accurate copies of the Scriptures in the original languages.

During the last six months, they have published the Gospel according to John in three languages, although only one of them is a new translation; in the others some improvements have been made, including the way the text of the Gospel has been laid out. One of these new publications is in the Armenian language, for the people of Armenia, a country in Western Asia, just to the east of Turkey. About 93 000 copies of the new edition of the Armenian Gospel of John were sent from America in September.

Another new edition of John's Gospel is for the people of Nepal. The new translation is in the Catalan language, spoken in Catalonia, a region of Spain.

Last year around 20 000 Armenian Bibles were printed and these are being distributed throughout the country. Representatives of the police force have come asking for boxes and boxes of Bibles to hand out to officers. Other boxes have been brought to the soldiers manning border posts around the country's borders. An American organisation is due to print 10 000 more of these Armenian Bibles this year and some minor corrections are being made before then. Work was in progress to convert the text of the Armenian Bible so that it could be used on mobile phone applications, but this work

has run into technical problems. Efforts are being made to overcome these problems and then, God willing, the work will continue.

What may be of most interest to readers of this Magazine is the translation of the Bible for the Ndebele and Shona peoples in Zimbabwe. Work on translating the Scriptures into Ndebele has already been completed; it was carried out by a group of people working on the Free Presbyterian mission in that country, with the support of the TBS. Almost all the Bibles already printed have been given out, but the Society reports that “there is definite demand for further Bibles”. They expect to make some minor corrections before printing more copies.

When work on the Ndebele Bible was already well underway, attention turned to the Shona Bible and “in January 2009 intensive work began on a major revision of the Shona New Testament”, again by a team working on the Free Presbyterian mission. In early September 2013, the revised Shona New Testament was passed to the TBS. Their editorial department examined it thoroughly and “found it to be a faithful and accurate translation”. The Society has now decided to publish the Shona New Testament, and it will no doubt be eagerly awaited in Zimbabwe. They hope that it will be available by August 2014, the Lord willing.

China is the largest country on earth. It is important that the 1350 million people living there should have a reliable translation of God’s Word. A second person revising a previous translation for the TBS is now able to work full-time. The two revisers hope to finish work on the Gospel of John by March this year. Then it is hoped to place the Gospel on the TBS website and “to invite feedback in preparation for both the publication of the Gospel for wider circulation and further translation work on the Bible”.

We would wish all the translators and revisers God’s blessing in the vital work that they are undertaking, so that more of the peoples of the world would have access to accurate translations of the Scriptures. Let us also remember how important it is that the Lord would bless the Scriptures as they are circulated, so that large numbers of people would believe in the Saviour. May He do so on a very large scale!

Scripture and Catechism Exercises 2013-14

Exercise 2

All answers from overseas should be sent to *Miss C E Dickie, c/o Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE, UK*. The correctors should have your answers before the end of March. These exercises are based on Psalm 129 to Isaiah 40, and John 7 to Acts 19.

Senior Section (15 years old and over)

UK answers to *Miss S M Gillies, 5 Balnabeen Drive, Dingwall, Ross-shire, IV15 9LY.*

Old Testament

- From Proverbs chapters 3 and 16 give the promises made to those who:
 - acknowledge the Lord (ch 3)
 - honour the Lord with their substance (ch 3)
 - commit their works unto the Lord (ch 16)
 - fear the Lord (ch 16)
 - trust in the Lord (ch 16). (5)
- In Proverbs chapter 10, what does Solomon tell us about:
 - the blessing of the Lord
 - the fear of the Lord
 - the way of the Lord? (3)
- Read Isaiah 5:1-7.
 - What does the vineyard represent? (1)
 - Who was the owner of this vineyard? (1)
 - Give details of the care he took of the vineyard. (3)
 - What did he expect to find? (1)
 - Why was he displeased? (2)
 - What was to happen to the vineyard as a result? (3)
 - Now read Matthew 21:33-44 and then state in your own words what lessons you think your own nation should learn from these two parables. (4)

New Testament

- The following descriptions are found in the Acts of the Apostles, chapters 6-18. In each case say who is being described, and then give a brief account of what happened to each of them.
 - "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost"
 - "this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds"
 - "a devout man and one that feared God with all his house"
 - "an eloquent man and mighty in the scriptures". (12)
- The preaching of the Apostles was received in different ways in the different places they visited. Describe how it was received in each of the following places and with what result:
 - Antioch (ch 13)
 - Lystra (ch 14)
 - Thessalonica (ch 17). (9)
- Name one person who was converted in each of the following places:
 - Philippi (ch 16)
 - Athens (ch 17)
 - Corinth (ch 18). (3)

Memory Exercise

The success of the Apostles' preaching, about which you have been reading in the Acts of the Apostles, was of course wholly dependent on the Word preached being accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit. Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 89 in the Shorter Catechism: How is the word made effectual to salvation? (3)

Intermediate Section (13 and 14 years old)

UK answers to *Mrs E Couper, 17 Duncan Street, Thurso, Caithness, KW14 7HU.*

Old Testament

- From your reading of the book of Proverbs, write down what you learn about:
 - a happy man (chapters 14 and 16) (2)
 - a foolish man (chapter 15) (1)
 - a just man (chapters 9 and 20) (2)
 - a wise son (chapters 10 and 13) (2)
 - a prudent wife (chapter 19) (1)
 - someone who is soon angry (chapter 14) (1)
 - a haughty spirit (chapter 16) (1)
 - the training of children (chapter 22) (2)
 - a faithful man (chapter 28). (1)
- From your reading of Ecclesiastes,
 - What is true of "all things under the sun"? (chapter 1) (2)

- (b) In chapter 12 what are we told is our whole duty? (2)
- (c) What special advice is given to young people? (2)
- (d) Why would it be foolish to ignore this advice? (2)

New Testament

1. Read John chapter 12.
 - (a) Quote a verse which speaks of eyes being blinded. (2)
 - (b) What did Jesus say is true of those who “walk in darkness”? (2)
 - (c) Who said, “Sir, we would see Jesus”? (2)
 - (d) Complete the statement: “I am come a light into the world . . .”. (2)
 - (e) Who said these wonderful words? (2)
2. Read Acts chapters 17, 18 and 19.
 - (a) How are the worshippers at Berea described? (2)
 - (b) How did they receive the Word? (2)
 - (c) What caused Paul’s spirit to be “stirred in him” at Athens? (2)
 - (d) In what way did the Lord encourage Paul in Corinth? (3)
 - (e) Quote a verse which shows the effect of the Word at Ephesus. (2)
 - (f) Why was Demetrius anxious to stir up the people against “this Paul”? (2)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 4 in the Shorter Catechism: What is God? (3)

Junior Section (11 and 12 years old)

UK answers to *Mrs C M Sutherland, Inchure, Saval Road, Lairg, Sutherland, IV27 4ED.*

Old Testament

1. Read Proverbs chapter 15.
 - (a) What turns away wrath? (1)
 - (b) What kind of words stir up anger? (1)
 - (c) Who despises his father’s instruction? (1)
 - (d) Whose prayer is a delight to the Lord? (1)
 - (e) Whose way is an abomination to the Lord? (1)
 - (f) Who makes a glad father? (1)
 - (g) Who despises his mother? (1)
 - (h) What comes before honour? (1)
2. Read Ecclesiastes chapter 11, verses 9 and 10 and then chapter 12
 - (a) What are we told about childhood and youth in chapter 11? (1)
 - (b) Fill in the blanks in this sentence (3 words in each blank):
We should remember our Creator in the days _____ before the _____. (6)
 - (c) When will the dust return to the earth as it was? (1)
 - (d) What will happen to the spirit (or soul) in that day? (1)
 - (e) What is a weariness of the flesh? (1)

New Testament

1. Read John chapter 13.
 - (a) What three things did Jesus do after He rose from supper and before He began to wash the disciples’ feet? (3)
 - (b) Who said to Jesus: “Thou shalt never wash my feet”? (1)
 - (c) What was Jesus’ reply to that? (2)
 - (d) To whom did Jesus say, “What thou doest, do quickly”? (1)
 - (e) What did some of the disciples think Jesus meant when He said that? (2)
2. Read Acts chapter 3, verses 1-10.
 - (a) Who was lying at the gate called Beautiful? (1)
 - (b) What was he doing there? (1)
 - (c) Peter did not give him money. What did he tell him to do? (2)
 - (d) What happened when Peter took him by the right hand? (2)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 63 in the Shorter Catechism:
Which is the fifth commandment? (3)

Upper Primary Section (9 and 10 years old)

UK answers to *Mrs M Schouten, 58 Fairfield Road, Inverness, IV3 5QW.*

Old Testament

1. Read Proverbs 8:1-17. This chapter talks about wisdom as if it was a person. We can say that Jesus is speaking to us in these verses.

- (a) To whom is Jesus calling?
- (b) What is better for us than silver, gold and rubies?
- (c) What does the Lord hate?
- (d) Whom does the Lord love? (4)

2. Read Ecclesiastes 12.

- (a) When especially should we remember our Creator?
- (b) What happens to our souls (spirits) at death?
- (c) What is our whole duty in life?
- (d) Why should we fear God and keep His commandments? (4)

3. Read Isaiah 9:6-7. These verses tell about Christ coming into the world.

- (a) Write out 5 of His names or titles.
- (b) Which one tells us that Christ is God?
- (c) Which one tells us that Christ is eternal (never had a beginning)?
- (d) Which one tells us that Christ has a Kingdom? (4)

New Testament

1. The Gospel of John contains the seven "I am" sayings of Christ. Write out each complete statement. Then fill in the missing word in the following sentences, choosing from these words: *die, life, fruit, only, saved, soul, darkness.*

- (a) John 6:35. "I am the _____."
As bread gives life to our body, so Jesus brings life to our _____. (2)
- (b) John 8:12. "I am the _____."
He that has Christ shining in his heart need never walk in _____. (2)
- (c) John 10:7. "I am _____."
He that comes to God, through Christ, the door, will be _____. (2)
- (d) John 10:14. "I am the _____."
The good Shepherd gave His _____ for His sheep. (2)
- (e) John 11:25. "I am the _____."
Whosoever believes in Christ shall never _____. (2)
- (f) John 14:6. "I am _____."
Christ is the _____ way to God, the Father. (2)
- (g) John 15:5. "I am the _____."
If we are joined to Christ by a living faith we shall bring forth much _____. (2)

Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write down the answer to question 85 in the Shorter Catechism:
What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us for sin? (2)

Lower Primary Section (8 years old and under)

UK answers to *Mrs R J Dickie, 11 Churchill Drive, Stornoway, Lewis, HS1 2NP.*

Old Testament

Fill in the missing words to complete these well-known verses from Isaiah:

1. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as s_____, they shall be as white as s____; though they be r__ like crimson, they shall be as w____. (Isaiah 1:18)
2. T____ ye in the L____ for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting s_____. (Isaiah 26:4)
3. Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a s____, a t____ stone, a precious c____ stone, a s____ foundation: (Isaiah 28:16)
4. For the LORD is a G__ of j_____: blessed are all they that w____ for him. (Isaiah 30:18)
5. For the LORD is our j____, the LORD is our l____, the LORD is our k____; he will s____ us. (Isaiah 33:22)
6. But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their s____; they shall mount up with w____ as e____; they shall r____ and not be weary; and they shall walk and not f____. (Isaiah 40:31)

New Testament

1. At which gate of the temple did the lame man sit? (Acts 3:2)
2. He sat there to ask alms (beg for money). From which two Apostles did he ask an alms? (Acts 3:3)
3. Who said that he had no silver and gold? (Acts 3:6)
4. What did Peter, in the name of Jesus, tell the lame man to rise up and do? (Acts 3:6)
5. When the lame man was made strong and able to walk, who did he praise? (Acts 3:8)
6. When Peter was in prison he was tied with chains, and there were keepers in front of the door. How many soldiers were there too? (Acts 12:6)
7. What fell off Peter's hands when the angel woke him? (Acts 12:7)
8. Peter got dressed and followed the angel out of the prison. Did he understand that it was really happening? (Acts 12:9)
9. What were the people in Mary's house doing? (Acts 12:12)
10. Who had brought Peter out of prison? (Acts 12:17)

Overseas Names for Exercise 1

Senior Section: *Chesley:* Esther Schuit, Samuel Zekveld. *Connecticut:* Rachel, Rebecca and Sarah Mack. *Gisborne:* Annika and Emma van Dorp. *Grafton:* Duncan Marshall, Alexandra van Dorp. *Zenka:* Nobubelo Ndlovu, Moyo Velani.

Intermediate Section: *Auckland:* Claudia Campbell, Rita de Bruin. *Chesley:* Josiah Smith. *Singapore:* Nehemiah Chai Yong. *Zenka:* Sitsengisiwe Dube.

Junior Section: *Auckland:* James Campbell, Monique Jago. *Chesley:* Joel Bouman, Joshua Schuit, Abigail Smith. *Grafton:* Christina Kidd, Calum Marshall, Rachel van Dorp. *Zenka:* Pedina Mathenjwa.

Upper Primary Section: *Auckland:* Rachel Campbell, Abby de Bruin. Danielle Jago. *Gisborne:* Sarah van Dorp. *Grafton:* Hugh Marshall, Jared McAlpine. *Singapore:* Owen Heyer Chai Yi. *Texas:* Elijah Dawkins.

Lower Primary Section: *Auckland:* John and Peter Campbell, Megan de Bruin, Bryce and Diana Jago, Amelia Smith. *Chesley:* Isabel Bouman, Kara Zekveld. *Connecticut:* Nathanael Mack. *Grafton:* William Marshall. *Singapore:* Naomi Ruth Chai Shi.

UK Youth Conference 2014

The Conference will be held, God willing, in *Gartmore House, Gartmore, Stirlingshire, FK8 3RS*, from Tuesday, April 8, to Thursday, April 10. The lower age limit is 16. The cost is £40 for those in full-time employment and £20 for others. Cheques are payable to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Further details are to follow later. I would encourage all who hope to attend to get their application in, if possible, by the middle of March (to the address below or by e-mail to dmacdclashmore@aol.co.uk or, if necessary, by phoning 01876 510233). We look forward to meeting the young people again, DV.

(Rev) Donald Macdonald

1. Heaven and Hell

A Scriptural View *Rev J B Jardine*

2. Regeneration and Conversion

Make the Tree Good, and its Fruit Will Be Good *Rev K M Watkins*

3. Life of Robert Murray M'Cheyne

Jehovah Tsidkenu, All Things to Me *Mr Frank Daubney*

4. The Fifth Commandment

Our Duty to Man *Rev Donald Macdonald*

5. Zimbabwe Mission

A Talk and Slides *Mr Hugh Mackenzie*

6. Jeremiah

The Weeping Prophet *Rev J L Goldby*

2014 Youth Conference Application

To Rev Donald Macdonald, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS.
I/we wish to enrol as residential/non-residential. I enclose my/our fee.

Name(s)

Address

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Price £1.00