

# The Young People's Magazine

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

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*“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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**Cover Picture:** Part of the Sound of Harris. See page 83.

## The Young People's Magazine

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# The Young People's Magazine

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## Wisdom for the Voyage of Life

Some stretches of sea are dangerous because of rocks. They are particularly dangerous if the rocks are not far under the surface of the water. If a ship's captain does not know about them, the hull of the ship may scrape along the rocks and be ripped open. Then water will come pouring into the vessel, so that it sinks. And people may drown. Again a ship might be caught on a sandbank that no one on board realises is there.

Any sensible captain will make sure that he has a chart of the waters that he expects to sail through, so that he can follow a safe course through that area, and avoid striking a rock or becoming caught on a sandbank. As I used to look out of my study window, when I lived in Leverburgh, I might see a ship on its way through the Sound of Harris suddenly making a significant change of course to avoid rocks. Sometimes no one can see any danger ahead but, with the help of a chart, the captain will recognise that dangerous rocks lie not far ahead and take action to avoid them.

Under another part of the Sound of Harris, there are sandbanks, which a captain will recognise on his chart and will change course to avoid the area. That obviously is the wise thing to do. To ignore the information on a chart would be extremely foolish.

We are on a voyage through life. It should be obvious that we need a chart to guide us on our way, if we are to avoid the dangers that will meet us on our voyage. But where can we find a chart that will guide us safely on this voyage? People cannot look into the future to see what lies before them. They cannot know how long they will live, whether they will enjoy good health or suffer from some serious illness. Nor can they know whether or not their friends will live with them to old age, or if they will be taken away from them by death while they are still young.

Job asked, "Where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?" (Job 28:12). He was asking how people may get safely through this life. He emphasises that wisdom cannot be bought for gold or pearls or precious stones of any kind, such as sapphires or topaz. No matter how expensive something is, it is not valuable enough to buy wisdom.

Where then can we find wisdom? It must be revealed from heaven. God must give it to us as a gift; we cannot earn it. The chart we need is the Bible, which is a revelation from God. If we study this chart, we will find directions for going safely through this life, and we will avoid such dangers as seeking satisfaction in life from worldly entertainments like pop music, dances and drama – whether the play or film is watched on television or after downloading it onto some electronic device.

After explaining, at some length, where wisdom cannot be found, Job turned round and explained what God had revealed about where it can be found. “Behold,” he said, “the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding” (Job 28:28).

But what does Job mean by “the fear of the Lord” – what he describes as *wisdom*? Note first that he spoke about *understanding* as well as wisdom; they mean basically the same thing. So we can put “the fear of the Lord” alongside “to depart from evil”. Thus anyone who is departing from evil can be described as fearing God. To fear God does not mean that one is terrified of Him; it means that one hates sin and that one has a holy respect for God and for His commandments. It is like children who are afraid to disobey their parents, not because they fear being punished, but because to disobey would make their parents unhappy. So those who fear God do not want to sin because they would offend God by doing what is wrong.

It is the wise person – the one who has examined the Bible, the chart that God has revealed from heaven – who wants *not* to sin. And that is the person who will get safely to the end of the voyage through this world. Such people are willing to submit to God’s authority as He speaks in the Bible, and to submit to Him is an important part of true wisdom.

In the Bible, God tells us the wise way to live: to fear Him, to keep His commandments, to live a godly life. But lying behind all these matters is the call to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ – to trust in Him as the Saviour of sinners. This is what we find in the chart that God has given: the call, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). If you ignore that command, you are acting very foolishly, even although it may seem to you the right way – the way of happiness, the way to be popular. But, remember that the end of such ways is death (see Proverbs 14:12) – that is, *eternal* death – unless you repent.

Remember that there are many dangers on the voyage through time – like the rocks and the sandbanks on the Sound of Harris. Surely it is now time, however young you may be, to be wise, to forsake sin, to follow Christ, who is perfect wisdom. Surely it is time to seek Christ, to search for Him in the Bible, where wisdom is revealed to ignorant sinners like ourselves.

# Thomas Boston

## 6. *Human Nature in its Fourfold State*

Frank Daubney

In last month's section of this Youth Conference paper we saw Boston, now minister of the parish of Ettrick in the Scottish Borders, facing up to a variety of problems that he met in the course of his work. Simprin was his first parish.

As we mentioned earlier, Boston was still in Simprin when he began to preach his series of sermons on man in his state of innocence, state of nature, state of grace and eternal state. In 1708 and 1709 he amended and extended his sermon notes and preached them again to the people of Ettrick. It was at this point that his friend and physician, Dr Trotter, persuaded him that he ought to publish some of his material. The notes of this series of sermons appeared to be the best prospect for publication, but Boston hesitated for a long time as he sought the Lord's will on the matter.

The sermons had been greatly blessed, both in Simprin and in Ettrick, but they would reach a far wider audience when printed. They might even be read by people in the parish who never came into the church, thought Boston. He had no ambition other than the hope that a blessing would follow. He could never have imagined the eventual outcome: that the book, *Human Nature in its Fourfold State* would be read by multitudes and prove to be a blessing to the present day, 300 years later.

In 1718 Boston, with Dr Trotter's help, sent the first part of his manuscript to Edinburgh with a view to finding a publisher and printer. The following January he received a letter from a Mr Wightman, who had read the manuscript and offered to help pay for its publication, though he did comment "that the style would be nauseous to the polite world". Understandably, Boston was not impressed with that criticism and he thought that Wightman's way of writing was not the way that the Lord used to advance Christianity. But after much prayer he decided to leave Wightman to go ahead with publishing the book.

Yet, when the printer sent him the first of the pages for approval, he was astounded. The book had been "pitifully mangled" and was full of mistakes. Wightman had altered it in many places to his own satisfaction and had completely spoiled those parts of the book. By this time it was nearly finished, needing only a title page and preface. Boston was terribly upset. His wife was going through a time of serious mental illness and distress, but he had to leave her to dash off to Edinburgh (50 miles away) and put a stop to publication. When he arrived, he found that even the preface had been rewritten in "modish style". He stopped the press at once and then discovered

that most of the original copy had been destroyed by the printers after they had finished with it.

Thankfully Boston was finally able to leave the management of the printing to a Mr William Hogg, a Christian who was well known and respected in Edinburgh. Hogg went to a great deal of trouble to make sure that things went smoothly from then on. Wightman was given clear and firm instructions to work with Hogg and to alter nothing without the author's approval. Of course, to rewrite the lost pages involved Boston in a great deal of extra work. In November 1720 he received a bound copy of the *Fourfold State*. He spread it before the Lord in prayer pleading that His blessing would go with it.

Almost immediately it took a hold of people's attention. New editions were called for, and testimonies of its usefulness came pouring in. And no wonder, for the book was steeped in prayer. As a later publisher says, "It is so orderly and clear, so rich . . . so searching and, here and there, so softening; so full – [although there is so much] doctrine – of warmth and human life . . . so couched in language of the homeliest . . . rising at times into unquestionable eloquence".

I would heartily recommend it to you all.

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## Will God Wipe Away Your Tears?

### 1. A Place Where There Is Much Crying

*J C Ryle*

This is the first part of a tract, on Revelation 21:4, written by this noted English minister. No doubt it was originally a sermon. It has been edited.

Revelation 21:4. *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.*

Dear young readers, a Bible text stands at the top of this page. I should like you to read it twice over. I am going to tell you something which, I hope, will make you remember that text as long as you live. I am going to tell you about three places which the Bible says a great deal about. It matters little what we know about some places. But it is very important to know something about the three places of which I am now going to speak.

1. There is a place where there is a great deal of crying.
2. There is a place where there is nothing else but crying.
3. There is a place where there is no crying at all.

Now, listen to me, and I will tell you a few things worth knowing.

**1. *There is a place where there is a great deal of crying.*** What is that place?

It is the world in which you and I live. It is a world full of beautiful and pleasant things: the sun shining by day and the stars by night; the blue hills looking up to heaven; the rolling sea ebbing and flowing; the broad, quiet lakes and the rushing, restless rivers; the flowers blooming in the spring and the fields full of corn in autumn; the birds singing in the woods and the lambs playing in the meadows. All these are beautiful things. I could look at them for hours, and say, "What a beautiful world it is!" But still it is a world where there is a great deal of crying. It is a world where there are many tears.

There was crying in Bible times. Hagar wept when she thought Ishmael was dying. Abraham was sad when Sarah died. Joseph wept when his brothers sold him into Egypt. David wept when Absalom was killed. There was weeping at Jerusalem when good king Josiah was slain in battle. There was weeping at Bethlehem when Herod killed all the little children who were two years old or less. These things, and many like them, you will find in your Bibles.

There is crying now all over the world. Little babies cry when they want anything, or feel pain. Boys and girls cry when they are hurt, or frightened, or corrected. Grown-up people cry sometimes when they are in trouble, or when they see those die whom they love. In short, wherever there is sorrow and pain, there is crying.

I dare say you have seen people come to church all dressed in black. That is called being in mourning. Some relation or friend of these people is dead; so they dress in black. Remember that, when you see people in mourning, somebody has been crying.

I dare say you have seen graves in churchyards, and have heard that, when people die, they are buried there. Some of them are very little graves, not longer than you are. Well, remember that when those graves were made, and little coffins were let down into them, there was crying.

Did you ever think where all this crying came from? Did you ever consider how it first began? Did you ever hear how weeping and tears came into the world? God did not make crying; that is certain. All that God made was "very good". Listen to me, and I will tell you how crying began.

Crying came into the world because of sin. Sin is the cause of all the weeping and tears and sorrow and pain that are upon earth. All the crying began when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit and became sinners. It was sin that brought into the world pain, sickness and death. It was sin which brought into the world selfishness, bad temper, unkindness, quarrelling, stealing and fighting. If there had been no wickedness, there would have been no weeping. If there had been no sin, there would have been no crying.

See now how much you ought to hate sin. All the unhappiness in the world came from sin. How strange it is that anyone can take pleasure in sin! Do not let that be the case with you. Watch against sin. Fight with it. Avoid it. Do not listen to it. Take Paul's advice: "Abhor that which is evil". Take Solomon's advice: "When sinners entice thee, consent thou not". Say to yourself every morning: Sin caused crying, and so I will hate sin.

See again how foolish it is to expect perfect happiness in this world. It is to expect what you will not find. The world is a place where there is much crying and where things do not always go on pleasantly. I hear many boys and girls talking of the pleasures they will have when they are men and women. I am sorry for them when I hear them talking in this way. I know they are mistaken. I know they will be disappointed. They will find when they grow up that they cannot get through the world without many troubles and cares. There are no roses without thorns. There are no years without dark and rainy days. There is no living on earth without crying and tears.

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### For Junior Readers

## Jejana

Jejana was a young South African orphan in the days of slavery. The family who "owned" her were farmers. As they were travelling to a new home, they spent a weekend in a place called Tulbagh. The farmer and his wife attended the church there that Lord's Day and Jejana was allowed to go with them. This was the first time she had ever been to a church service. She watched with interest everything that took place and when the minister stood up to preach she could not take her eyes off him. His text that morning was Revelation 3:15, "I know thy works".

Jejana listened to every word which the minister said. She heard that there is a God who is a spirit and who sees and hears all we see and do. She heard that she had a soul which would live for ever either in happiness with God, or in a lost eternity of misery. The minister spoke of the wickedness of sin and of the evil deeds of his hearers.

Poor Jejana was so convicted by all she heard that she thought the minister was looking straight at her and pointing out her sins. Soon she had to leave Tulbagh, the church and the minister behind as the family continued their journey. But the deep and sad impressions which had been made on her heart that day did not leave her. Sadly she had nobody to turn to or to help her in her time of spiritual need.

But one day an old African, called David, came to the family's house to

do some business. Jejana overheard him saying something about having been to church and at once she listened carefully. When she got a chance, she spoke to him and asked him what he had heard. She also told him a little about her concerns over her sins.

Sadly, the old man either did not know the way of salvation or was not able to explain it to her. But he did tell her that she should pray to God for help. Poor Jejana was so ignorant that she did not even know how to pray. When she asked David, he told her that she should go and kneel down and look up to God in heaven and say, "O God, help me! O God, teach me!" Jejana ran straight out to the bush and poured out her soul in the words David had taught her: "O God, teach me! O God, help me!" Then she added, "For David says Thou wilt".

The Bible was read in her family, but sadly her owners did not think that slaves needed to hear it. Jejana tried to listen at a distance and tried to catch some words which might help her. One day she overheard the verse, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you".

She risked her mistress's anger by asking whose words they were, but the woman was so cruel that all she would say was, "They are not for you". All Jejana could do in her need was to go on praying even more earnestly, "O God, teach me, O God, help me, for David says Thou wilt".

Jejana felt desperate and decided her only hope was to run away – although she knew that to do so was a very serious offence for a slave. As she set off down the road, a wagon caught up with her and the driver gave her a lift as far as the village of Stellenbosch.

She arrived on a Saturday evening and, with great expectation, she made her way to the church on the Sabbath morning. The minister's text was Jesus' words in John 6:37, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out". He spoke much of Jesus Christ crucified for sinners, who was willing to save to the uttermost all that came to Him. The Holy Spirit applied the word with power to Jejana's heart and she left the church full of joy and gladness. Her prayers had been answered.

But by this time she had been missed from her household, and her master pursued her and found her. The next day he brought her to the magistrate's court to be punished for her "crime". In God's kind providence, the judge took a real interest in her. He questioned her much more than was normal in those days. She was amazed at what he decided: her master was to set her free. You can imagine how angry he was!

As the Lord had blessed Jejana in the church in Stellenbosch, she decided that she would stay there so that she could continue to attend church. Under

the preaching of the good minister and the blessing of God, she grew in the faith and love of Jesus. And she walked in the way of His commandments. Was that not wonderful?

And what about you? I am sure you are in church every week and know so much more than Jejana did. But are you praying to the Lord to teach you as she did? If not, should you not start now – perhaps with the prayer of the publican, “God be merciful to me a sinner”?

*J van Kralingen*

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## Andrew's Mother

A painter called Tom Brian was relaxing in his flat one evening. He heard someone knocking on his door. He seems to have paid no attention, but the knock came again several times. Then the painter called in a gruff voice: “Come in”.

A little boy entered, looking rather afraid. His name was Andrew. “What do you want here?” Tom asked, as he looked at the boy.

“Can you read?” Andrew asked.

“What do you want to know for, boy?”

“Mother's very ill, and maybe she'll die. And she wants somebody to read something to her, and I can't get anybody. And won't you come?”

“Nonsense, child. I'm busy now. Get away down with you, and mind you shut my door.” But Brian was not busy; he told a lie in the hope of getting rid of the boy.

Andrew was so concerned to help his mother that he asked again. But once more Tom refused and the boy went away sadly.

Tom tried to settle down again, but he kept hearing the little boy's voice in his mind. Then he seemed to hear a sob from outside the door. He went to open it and there was Andrew sitting on one of the steps of the stair, crying his heart out. Tom now spoke to him more kindly, telling him to go down to his mother.

“Mother'll be so sorry I can't get anybody to come and read to her”, Andrew answered. He went on to say that a lady had visited his poor, sick mother and read to her from a little book, which did her “a deal of good”. The lady left the book with his mother, who was now too ill to make out the words. She sent him to find somebody to read to her; he asked everyone else in the building but they all made excuses. “And there is nobody left but you; please won't you come?”

Tom was moved by what he heard and said, “I'll see”. But he wanted to wait for some time; probably he just did not want to go with Andrew. Tom

went back into his room but he could not settle; it would seem that his conscience was working. He went out again, locked his door and caught up with the boy at the foot of the stairs.

As Tom and Andrew went into the sick woman's room, she looked up eagerly. She was obviously very ill. In her hand she was holding the book Andrew had spoken about, probably a New Testament. As she handed it to Tom she thanked him in a weak voice. The book was open at Luke 5 and she wanted him to read verses 12 and 13, about Jesus: "And it came to pass, when He was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. And He put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him." Tom read the verses and waited for the woman to speak.

"Aye," she said, "poor man. Full of leprosy. That was like me. Full of sin. Aye, I am full of sin. Nothing but sin. All my life. O what many, many sins! But I must come to Jesus; he [the leper] came, poor man. I want to come. What was it he said?"

Tom read again: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make *me* clean".

And the ill woman repeated again and again: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make *me* clean". She added, "O Lord, do make me clean; make me clean now". How important that last word was – not some time in the far-away future. But now, before it was too late.

Tom read on: "And He put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean.

Then the woman prayed, "Lord, touch me. O make me clean. Say, 'I will', to me. Take this sin away. O take it away."

Then there was a long silence. Andrew fell asleep on the floor. His mother leaned back on her pillow. Again and again her lips moved as she prayed faintly: "Make me clean".

Tom sat looking out of the window. He was thinking – thinking about the past: his godly mother; his childhood home; his Bible, which he once knew well but had for a long time neglected; the church he used to attend; and his Sabbath school teacher. Then he thought about his years of carelessness and sin; his had been a wasted life.

Then he asked himself: "Might he return to God now? Would Jesus receive him and say, in answer to his prayer for mercy, "Be thou clean"?"

He turned round to look at Andrew's mother. He could see that she did not have long to live. She told him: "Thank you. I see it all now. He has said 'I will', to me; He has touched me; He has made me clean." Then her eyes closed; she fell back on her pillow and was dead.

Tom stood looking at her for a few moments; then he called in a neighbour to attend to things. He picked Andrew up, carried him upstairs and placed him on his own bed. But Tom could not sleep. He went to an old box which was half full of rubbish and opened it. He took out a Bible that he had not opened for many years. Inside the front cover he read his own name and the name of his Sabbath school teacher. Underneath she had written Jesus' words: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out".

Tom was still sitting beside the fire, with his face buried in his hands, when Andrew wakened up. The boy came over to him to ask, somewhat frightened: "Where's my mother?"

At first Tom could not answer but, when Andrew repeated his question, he forced himself to say, "She's dead, little lad".

Andrew looked earnestly at him and asked, through his tears, "Shall I never see her any more?"

"Yes, my lad," Tom told him, as he put his arm around the little boy, "if you come [to Jesus] as she came. You must say her little prayer, 'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean'."

"Let's say it now", said Andrew. So they both knelt down and said: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean".

The story almost closes at that point. But a comment is added which suggests that they were both heard in their prayer.

We too need to pray to God to cleanse us from our sins, because we are sinners. We need to be put right and we need to be forgiven. And God is able to do so, because of Jesus Christ and what He did in this world. He took the place of sinners; He endured their punishment, dying in their place. Let us ask God to wash away all our sins for Jesus' sake. And let us do so now, in case we become completely careless about these things, like Tom became, in spite of having a godly mother. Tomorrow may be too late.

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## A Mother's Touch

A new minister had come to the church and he began his work of preaching the gospel. The Lord's people in the church were thankful to see a number of converts. But they were rather surprised to see one particular man among them. He was no longer young and had lived a worldly life, without any thought of his need of Christ. He was a wealthy man, involved in horse racing and various entertainments.

Then suddenly he appeared in church and kept coming regularly. He took, it was said, "a solemn interest in divine things" and "was found before long

sitting, like a contrite child, at the feet of Jesus". His later life showed that his repentance was sincere; he lived a holy life until his death, and was generous with his money.

The new minister was curious to know how this surprising change had come about; he rather assumed it must have been the result of his own preaching. The man came to meet the minister and the elders with a view to becoming a member of the church and sitting at the Lord's table. They asked him what sermons had been specially used to awaken him to a sense of his sin. He did not realise at first what they meant, but at last he told them that the change in him was not due to any sermons but to his mother.

But his mother had been dead for so long that scarcely anyone remembered what kind of woman she had been. In fact, 40 years had passed since she had died. Even the oldest elder had never seen her; in fact, he had never heard of her.

The man was his mother's oldest son and she had died when he was only six. She was a godly woman who had been converted through the preaching of Samuel Davies, a noted preacher at a time when the American states were still British colonies. She had begun to teach her oldest son the truths of the Bible. It was the power of these teachings, and especially the memory of her deathbed, that had influenced him, 40 years later, to think seriously.

When his mother, still a young woman, was close to death, she gathered all her children around her. They were "like a cluster of frightened birds before the mighty hunter, death," someone said. She prayed for them and gave them her blessing. And she laid her hand on the boy's head, telling him, as her firstborn, to fear his mother's God and remember what she had taught him.

It was as if he felt the touch of his mother's hand through all these years which had been given over to worldliness. No matter where he was, he remembered that touch – when he was busy with other people at his work and when he was alone, when he was encouraging his hounds as they chased after a fox and when he was cheering on his winning horse during a race. It was this memory that God had used to bring the man to his senses, and God used His Word to convince the man of sin and bring him to faith in Christ.

Let us note a few lessons:

1. The Bible teaching that parents give their children is very important, even if God does not bless it at the time.
2. Children are under a great responsibility to receive such teaching, to consider it as *truth* that God is setting before them. They continue to have this responsibility even after they have grown up.
3. Young people ought to pray that the Lord would bless to them what

they have learned, especially that they would repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. God may bless such teaching to people even after many years during which they have rejected it and lived very worldly lives. But to feel free to live an ungodly life, hoping that they will still get to heaven at last, is dangerous. God may put His warning into effect: "If ye forsake Him, He will forsake you". Do not presume on God's mercy. Seek Him now.

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*For Younger Readers*

## Just One Herring

She was a godly woman in America. Her husband had died, and she was very poor. She seems to have gone to live in a different house some time after her husband's death.

One day she placed a smoked herring on her table. She had no more of these fish, and a herring is not a big fish. Not only had she no more herring, but she had no other food in the house for herself and her children.

Just then they heard a knock at the door. She went to open the door and found there a young man she did not know. He asked her for somewhere to sleep and for a little food. He told her that he had eaten nothing for a whole day.

The widow took him in at once and offered him part of the herring. Trusting in God, she told him that they would not be worse off because of this act of kindness.

The man came to the table and was shocked to see how little food the lady had. So he asked her, "And do you offer a share to someone you do not know?" He had never seen such kindness before. He was afraid that she was doing wrong to her children by giving away to a stranger some of the last food she had in the house.

Then the lady explained, "I have a boy, a darling son". She did not know where he was. But unless he had died, he was somewhere in this "wide world". She added, "I only act towards you as I wish that others should act towards him. God, who sent manna from heaven, can provide for us as he did for Israel." She knew that she would be sinning against God if she sent this man away hungry. She

knew that it was God who gave her the home where she lived, poor as it was. The Lord could give her everything she needed.

Then she stopped. Suddenly she knew who the man was; he was her son. And he knew who she was. He jumped up from his seat, put his arms around her and hugged her. He said, “God indeed has provided such a home for your wandering son. My mother! O my mother!”

Here was her long-lost son back all the way from India. How good it would be to know that the son came to trust in his mother’s God! God can provide not only good things for our bodies, but also for our souls.

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## Looking Around Us

### Easter Egg Hunts

There was a massive storm of criticism recently when the word *Easter* was removed from the name of egg hunts run by Cadbury (the chocolate makers) and the National Trust (who look after, for instance, stately homes in England and Wales). These egg hunts have been taking place at National Trust properties for 10 years.

Now, in reacting to this story, we must base our comments on the Bible’s teachings. This revelation from God must be the basis on which we judge how we think, speak and act, and how we judge what happens around us.

First, companies and other organisations are all too ready to remove references to Christianity so that they will not offend people of other religions. A generation which attempts to live as if God does not exist is not in a healthy state. A spokesman from the Church of England complained of “the folly in airbrushing faith from Easter”. Yet the National Trust and Cadbury denied that they were downplaying the significance of Easter. Maybe. But would either the firm or the Trust wish to be seen doing anything that really supports the *true* Christian faith?

Second, there is no command in the Bible to observe Easter as a religious festival. Easter is supposed to commemorate the death and, particularly, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but in fact it has heathen roots. The website [www.why-easter.com](http://www.why-easter.com) explains that “the word *Easter* comes from two old pagan spring festivals: the old European pagan festival of *Ostara* that celebrated new life and [the] Arabian sun festival of *Ishtar*. The early

Christians took over the festivals” – something they had no authority to do; the Bible gave them no right to do so. Nor should *we* celebrate Easter; we cannot glorify God in doing so.

The Archbishop of York even claimed that to remove the word *Easter* from the Cadbury Egg Hunt was like “spitting on the grave” of the chocolate firm’s Quaker founder, John Cadbury. Interestingly his great-great-great-great-granddaughter pointed out that “as a Quaker, he didn’t celebrate Easter”. Quakers do not celebrate festivals such as Easter and Christmas, but they have other beliefs that are far from the teachings of Scripture.

Third, these Easter egg hunts are not religious. Indeed some of them are scheduled to take place on a Sabbath. That is the day which God has set apart to remember the Saviour’s resurrection from the dead every week; the Sabbath is a sign that He had finished the work of redeeming sinners from sin and from the consequences of sin. Christ’s resurrection shows that God the Father had accepted that work of suffering unto death; it was a perfect sacrifice in the place of sinners.

The British Humanist Association, which opposes all religion, wants to go on making use of Easter, but as “a fun time of year for people of all ages and beliefs”. If that is how most people treat Easter, it just shows how far they are from understanding the tremendous significance of the event which is supposedly being remembered.

A spokesman for the Association claims to find it “disappointing that the Church saw fit to whip up a storm . . . over this”. And he goes on to accuse the Church of England of doing so “in a bid to maintain its relevance in an increasingly non-religious country”. One would have thought that humanists would not worry about what religious people say and do, for they claim not to believe in anything religious. Or are they really afraid that there is some truth somewhere in religion, especially in Christianity, and do they need to persuade themselves that all religion is false?

What we need is to recognise we are sinners, and believe in Jesus Christ, the One who suffered and died in the place of sinners, and rose again.

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## Scripture and Catechism Exercises 2016-17

### Exercise 3

All answers from *overseas* should be sent to *Miss Naomi Clemence*, 67 Clobberhill Road, Glasgow, G13 2LB. The correctors should have your answers before the end of June. These exercises are based on 2 Chronicles 18 to Job 26, and Matthew 12 to Mark 16.

**Senior Section (15 years old and over)**UK answers to *Mrs J Hicklin, 29 The Green, Edinburgh, EH4 5AF.***Old Testament**

As far as possible, use your own words unless otherwise stated. Read 2 Chronicles 19 and 20.

1. (a) In a previous chapter we are told that Jehoshaphat joined affinity with Ahab, king of Israel.  
Why was he to be blamed for this? (1)
- (b) What was he commended for? (2)
- (c) Jehoshaphat set judges in every city in Judah. What reason did he give them to "take heed" what they did? (1)
- (d) What three things does he say about the Lord to encourage them to judge faithfully? (3)
- (e) What encouragement does he give in chapter 19, verse 11 to the Levites and priests who were set "for the judgement of the Lord"? (1)
2. (a) What great trouble came on Jehoshaphat at the beginning of chapter 20? (2)
- (b) What was Jehoshaphat's initial reaction in verse 3? (1)
- (c) What did this cause him to do (1) as a private individual? (1)  
(2) as a ruler? (1)
- (d) What response did the people give, in verse 4? (1)
- (e) What encouragements did Jehoshaphat draw from (1) who God is? (3)  
(2) the experience of Israel in the past? (1)
- (f) What specific promise given to Israel does he plead? (1)
- (g) Look at 2 Chronicles 6-7. When and to which king of Israel was this assurance first given? (2)
- (h) Find and write out a verse where Jehoshaphat confesses they are totally unable to meet this trouble, and their complete dependence on God. (2)
3. (a) Look at verse 14. How did God answer the prayer of Jehoshaphat? (1)
- (b) Why were they not to be afraid? (1)
- (c) What were they told to do? (2)
- (d) What was the response of  
(1) Jehoshaphat and the people (2) the Levites  
to this answer to their prayer? (2)
- (e) What unusual group of people did Jehoshaphat place at the front of his army to show he was depending on God? (1)
- (f) How were the enemies of Judah defeated? (1)
- (g) What did they do on the fourth day? (2)
- (h) How were the surrounding nations affected by what happened? (1)

**New Testament**

1. Read Mark 4.
  - (a) In your own words, describe what happened to the seed that fell  
(1) by the wayside (2) in stony ground (3) among thorns (4) on good ground. (4)
  - (b) For each of the parts above, explain what effect the word had on each class of hearer and the reason for this effect. (4)
  - (c) What solemn warning is given in verse 25 to hearers of the word who fail to profit from it? (1)
  - (d) How is the process of sanctification illustrated in verse 28? (1)
  - (e) What do you think is illustrated by putting in the sickle, in verse 29? (1)
  - (f) How is the kingdom of heaven compared to a grain of mustard in verses 30-32? (2)

**Memory Exercise**

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 90 in the Shorter Catechism:  
How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become 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**

1. Read Job chapters 1 and 2.

- (a) How is Job's character described? (3)
- (b) In what ways was he "the greatest of all men in the east"? (4)
- (c) Which of Satan's statements tell us of his great activity? (2)
- (d) On hearing of his great losses what did Job do? (3)
- (e) What did he say? (2)
- 2. Read Nehemiah chapters 1, 2 and 4.
  - (a) What made Nehemiah sit down and weep? (2)
  - (b) What did he also do when he heard the sad news? (3)
  - (c) Where did he ask the king to send him, and why? (3)
  - (d) Name certain people who "conspired . . . against Jerusalem"? (3)
  - (e) How did the Jews react to this opposition? (3)
  - (f) In what practical ways did Nehemiah arrange the workers to defend the city? (3)

#### New Testament

- 1. Read Matthew chapter 14 and Mark chapter 6.
  - (a) Why did Jesus and His disciples go "into a desert place"? (2)
  - (b) How did Jesus react when the crowds followed Him? (3)
  - (c) How did the disciples react to the crowds? (3)
  - (d) What proved there was plenty of food for them all? (2)
  - (e) In what way did the disciples show their lack of faith after that? (2)
  - (f) With what words did Jesus comfort them? (2)
- 2. From your reading of the Gospel of Matthew:
  - (a) How many times did Jesus say a brother was to be forgiven? (chapter 18) (2)
  - (b) What lesson can we learn from the parable of the ten virgins? (chapter 25) (2)
  - (c) What last great command did Jesus give to His disciples? (chapter 28) (4)
  - (d) What last great promise did Jesus give to His disciples? (chapter 28) (2)

#### Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 42 in the Shorter Catechism:  
What is the sum of the Ten Commandments? (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 Esther chapter 4.
  - (a) When Mordecai knew that the Jews were to be destroyed what three things did he do which showed his grief? (3)
  - (b) Why could he not enter into the king's gate? (1)
  - (c) What did he ask Esther to do to prevent her people being killed? (1)
  - (d) What would happen to Esther if the king did not hold out the golden sceptre? (1)
  - (e) Esther bravely said she would go in to the king. What did she ask Mordecai and the Jews to do for her before she went in? (2)
- 2. Read Job chapter 1.
  - (a) How did God describe Job? (4)
  - (b) What did Satan say Job would do if God's hand went out against him? (1)
  - (c) What happened to (1) Job's oxen (2) his asses (3) his sheep (4) his camels (5) his family? (5)
  - (d) Write out what Job said after receiving news of these things. (4)
  - (e) Did Job do as Satan said he would? (1)

#### New Testament

- 1. Read the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25 verses 1-13  
How many virgins (a) had lamps (b) had vessels of oil (c) went to meet the bridegroom (d) fell asleep as they waited for the bridegroom (e) arose and trimmed their lamps at midnight (f) went in to the marriage with the bridegroom (6)

2. Say briefly what the teaching of the parable is. (3)
3. Read Mark 16.
  - (a) What did the women plan to do when the Sabbath was past? (1)
  - (b) What difficulty did they think they might meet when they arrived at the sepulchre? (1)
  - (c) Why did they not have to deal with this difficulty? (1)
  - (d) Describe what they saw when they entered the sepulchre. (2)

### Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to Question 84 in the Shorter Catechism:  
What doth every sin deserve? (3)

## Upper Primary Section (9 and 10 years old)

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

### Old Testament

All questions are from the Book of Esther.

1. Chapter 1 is about the feast of King Ahasuerus. Read verses 10-12.  
What was Queen Vashti commanded to do and why was the King very angry? (2)
2. Chapter 2 is about a new Queen. Read verses 5-7 and verse 17.  
What was her name? What was Mordecai's religion? (2)
3. Chapter 3 is about enemies. Read verses 1-6.  
Why did Haman hate Mordecai? Whom did he want to destroy? (2)
4. Chapter 4 speaks of "for such a time as this". Read verses 13-17.  
Write in your own words Esther's answer to Mordecai. (2)
5. Chapter 5 is about an invitation. Read verses 1-5.  
Who did Esther invite to her banquet? (1)
6. Chapter 6 tells about a sleepless night. Read verses 1-3 and 10-12.  
Who had plotted against the King? How was Mordecai rewarded? (2)
7. Chapter 7 is about the enemy destroyed. Read verses 7-10.  
What happened to wicked Haman? (1)
8. Chapter 8 tells about the salvation of the Jews. Read verses 10-14.  
On which day were the Jews allowed to fight against their attackers? (1)
9. Chapter 9 tells about days to remember. Read verses 20-22 and 26-28.  
What special name was given to these days? What was being remembered? (2)
10. Chapter 10 gives the ending. Read verse 3.  
How do we know that Mordecai was a very important man? (1)

### New Testament

Read Matthew 13:1-9 and verses 18-22. Here we have Jesus telling the parable of the sower and then explaining it. Here is a list of words: *forget, roots, choke, hearts, parables, Satan, Word, understand, stony, worldly, four, only*

Choose the correct word from this list to fill the blanks in the paragraph:

Jesus used \_\_\_\_\_ to speak to the huge crowds. The seed is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. The ground is like to our \_\_\_\_\_. There are \_\_\_\_\_ different types of ground in this parable. The hard way side ground is like to those who hear God's Word but who at once \_\_\_\_\_ it. \_\_\_\_\_ does not want us to remember it. The \_\_\_\_\_ ground hearers are those in whom the Word does not bring forth fruit, as the seed does not develop \_\_\_\_\_. The thorny ground hearers are those who listen to God's Word but allow \_\_\_\_\_ cares to \_\_\_\_\_ the Word so it becomes unfruitful. The \_\_\_\_\_ fruitful ground is like to the hearts of those who hear, \_\_\_\_\_, and obey God's Word. (12)

### Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write down the answer to Question 90 in the Shorter Catechism:

How is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation? (3)

### Lower Primary Section (8 years old and under)

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

#### Old Testament

Manasseh was a wicked king before he repented.

1. How old was Manasseh when he began to reign? (2 Chronicles 33:1)

2. Where did he reign? (2 Chronicles 33:1)

3. He did very many wicked things. Fill in the missing words.

He wrought much e\_\_\_ in the s\_\_\_ of the L\_\_\_, to p\_\_\_ him to a\_\_\_.  
(2 Chronicles 33:6)

4. He made the people of Judah and Jerusalem to e\_\_\_ and to do w\_\_\_ than the h\_\_\_.  
(2 Chronicles 33:9)

5. Manasseh and the people would not listen to the Lord. What place was Manasseh carried to by the Assyrians? (2 Chronicles 33:11)

6. Even although Manasseh had been so wicked, did the Lord hear his humble prayers in his affliction? (2 Chronicles 33:13)

7. God kindly brought Manasseh back to Jerusalem. Then Manasseh k\_\_\_ that the L\_\_\_ he was G\_\_\_. (2 Chronicles 33:13)

8. He took away the s\_\_\_ g\_\_\_, and the i\_\_\_ out of the h\_\_\_ of the L\_\_\_.  
(2 Chronicles 33:15)

#### New Testament

1. It was late and all the people had nothing to eat. How many loaves and fishes did the disciples have? (Mark 6:38)

2. Where were they all commanded to sit? (Mark 6:39)

3. There were very many people. They sat down in ranks [groups], by h\_\_\_, and by f\_\_\_. (Mark 6:40)

4. When Jesus blessed the food, He gave it to the disciples to give to the people. Was there enough food for everyone? (Mark 6:42)

5. How many baskets full of fragments were taken up? (Mark 6:43)

6. About how many men ate? (Mark 6:44)

7. Where did Jesus go to pray when He had sent everyone away?  
(Mark 6:46)

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