

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth” Psalm 60:4

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Communions

January: First Sabbath: Nkayi; **Fourth:** Auckland, Inverness, New Canaan.

February: Second Sabbath: Dingwall; **Third:** Stornoway; Carterton; **Fourth:** Zenka.

March: First Sabbath: Sydney, Tarbert; **Second:** Ness, Portree; **Third:** Halkirk, Kyle of Lochalsh; **Fourth:** Barnoldswick, Fiffh: Ingwenya, North Tolsta.

April: First Sabbath: Laide; **Second:** Chesley, Gisborne; Maware, Staffin; **Fourth:** Glasgow, Mbuma.

May: First Sabbath: Aberdeen, Donsa, Grafton, Leverburgh, London; **Second:** Achmore, Kinlochberrie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fifth:** Chiedza.

June: First Sabbath: Perth, Shieldaig; **Second:** Nkayi, North Uist, Santa Fe; **Third:** Lochcarron, Uig; **Fourth:** Bulawayo, Gairloch, Inverness.

July: First Sabbath: Beaulay; **Second:** Bonar Bridge, Staffin, Vancouver; **Third:** Applecross, Auckland, Fort William; **Fourth:** Cameron, Glendale.

August: First Sabbath: Dingwall; **Second:** New Canaan, Somakantana; **Third:** Laide; **Fourth:** Farr; **Fifth:** Stornoway, Zenka.

September: First Sabbath: Chesley, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Munaka, Portree; **Third:** Tarbert; **Fourth:** Aberdeen, Barnoldswick; Ingwenya, Tauranga.

October: First Sabbath: Dornoch, Grafton, Lochcarron, North Tolsta; **Second:** Gairloch; **Third:** Leverburgh, London, Odessa; **Fourth:** Edinburgh, Gisborne, Mbuma.

November: Second Sabbath: Glasgow; **Third:** Chiedza, Singapore.

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

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A Continuing City

Death is the solemn consequence of sin. Mankind was not created mortal; yet Adam was warned against eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because death would be the result: “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2:17). Adam and Eve did eat the fruit of that tree; it was an act of rebellion. And, according to God’s threatening, they became mortal from that moment; so they had to recognise that they had “no continuing city” (Heb 13:14) in this world. They did not die immediately, but it was certain that a time would come when they would have to leave this world.

So it is with every one of us, for in this fallen world “it is appointed unto men once to die” (Heb 9:27); none of us has a continuing city here. Probably no one would argue with the certainty of death; it is so obvious that everyone dies, sooner or later. Yet we need to apply this to ourselves and say, *I* must die. And we ought to add, Although I do not know when it will happen, it is utterly unreasonable for *me*, as well as for everyone else, to presume that death is far away – especially at a time when so many have been swept away into eternity through the Covid-19 pandemic.

A S Patterson, a nineteenth-century minister in Glasgow, expands on the thought of Hebrews 13:14: “The wealthiest, strongest, finest, noblest of the towns and commonwealths of earth are but things of time. And men themselves are frailer and more fleeting still. How urgent and important to sit loose to earthly homes and all terrestrial things, and to aim at the loftier dwelling and a nobler prize! How poor is he who has but an earthly city for his home and but an earthly treasure for his portion! How rich and happy he whose soul shall soon possess – and even now by Christian hope anticipates – the city that shall never pass away.”¹

Jesus vividly described the folly of assuming that death is far away when He spoke of the farmer who had a remarkable harvest and imagined the new barns he would erect to hold the abundance of food. The man was wise not to waste the food that God had provided in His kind providence, but he was

¹A S Patterson, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Edinburgh, 1856, p 549.

utterly unwise in his attitude to the future. He told himself: "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Lk 12:19). No doubt he did have enough food to last him for many years, but he had no guarantee that he would live for any of these years. So, when God spoke to him, He called the man a fool; it was altogether senseless for the man to think as he did. God told him: "This night thy soul shall be required of thee". He was rich in the things of this world but, Christ said, he was "not rich toward God".

We must die; it is God who has made the appointment, which makes it absolutely certain; we cannot avoid keeping it. But He has not told us when it will be. So it is surely wise to seek to be ready. Israel was told: "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12), and that direction is just as relevant to each of us today. *We* are directed to prepare to meet God. How foolish to focus solely on eating and drinking and other necessary things of this life!

We do need them; but other things are even more important, which is why the Saviour counselled, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and His righteousness" (Mt 6:33). We are to seek them above everything else; they are of the first importance. Unless we enter God's kingdom in this life and have Christ's righteousness made over to us, we can never enter heaven, the city that will last for ever. The rich fool was looking forward to being merry in this life, a dangerous distraction from earnestly seeking a place in God's kingdom and pleading to be accounted righteous in His sight – not through his own good works, but only for the sake of Christ's finished work on earth, to which He came as the Substitute for sinners.

There is indeed a city that will continue for ever; it is described in Scripture as "the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb 12:22). The Jerusalem on earth was *the* place of worship in Old Testament times; there "the tribes of the Lord" went up "to give thanks unto the name of the Lord" (Ps 122:4). It was a type of the heavenly Jerusalem, where the worship will be perfect and will continue for ever. And the people of the Lord, gathering in the eternal city from all parts of the world, will never cease to give thanks to Him for all the wonders of grace, particularly for the perfect work of Christ, who came into this world to work out redemption for sinners. But His work continues: He is the King on the throne of glory, who exerts His authority – through the Holy Spirit applying the Word – on each one who will be brought to the heavenly Jerusalem. The Spirit makes them willing to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness above everything else that is to be found here. And the spiritual blessings that Christ bestows will continue when the earth and everything in it are consumed with fire.

Abraham was one of those who were made willing to seek an eternal city,

one which is described as “a city which hath foundations” (Heb 11:10). He and the other patriarchs were not looking for an earthly city; they were content to dwell in tents, which was a sign of the temporary nature of their stay in this world. The city where they are now, and which all other believers will reach, cannot be swept away, for it has “foundations”; it is founded on the eternal purposes of God, which are unchangeable. These purposes are reflected in the covenant of grace, which is “ordered in all things and sure” (2 Sam 23:5), as David described it, for he understood that heaven is a city with foundations. He was looking for the same city as Abraham.

In spite of the sad state of David’s “house” – his family – he could look forward with confidence, even at a time when death was not far away. He could do so because of the security provided by the everlasting covenant. He had been made willing to seek the Lord; he records that the Lord called on him to seek His face – His favour, what David could not earn. But he records also: “My heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek” (Ps 27:8), for divine grace had made him willing to do so. In the same way, all God’s children are made willing to seek His favour, for the sake of Christ, who opened up a way to the city that will continue eternally. Their sin and guilt would have kept them out of that city permanently, apart from God’s saving power. But the God who made them willing to seek His favour heard their cry for mercy; He forgave them and turned them from their own ways to walk in the way of holiness, which leads to the heavenly Jerusalem.

If we are on the way to the everlasting city, we should be “redeeming the time” (Eph 5:16), which Charles Hodge, in his *Commentary* on this Epistle explains as seizing “upon every opportunity to do good” – doing all in our power not to waste time, but making the best use of the limited time we have left. And even if we are not on the way to the city which has foundations, we should be seizing every opportunity to obtain good for our soul. In a chapter on redeeming the time, John Angell James speaks of Henry Martyn as someone who was known, while a student in Cambridge University as “the man who never wasted an hour”;² no hour was to be wasted, but it was an opportunity, either to do good to others, or to get good for himself.

“How much of our time is already gone,” James writes further, “and how little may be yet to come! . . . We know not in any one period of our existence but that it may be the last. Surely, surely then we should [make good use of] our time, when we may be holding, for all we know, the last portion of it in our hands. With the absolute certainty of a life as long as Methuselah’s,

²J A James, *The Christian Father’s Present to His Children*, London, 1863, p 240. James was a nineteenth-century minister in Birmingham and a prolific author. Martyn became a missionary and Bible translator in India and in Persia, now Iran.

not an hour should be wasted.” This is particularly so, he emphasises, when we do not know that another day is guaranteed to us.

James goes on to ask, “What are the purposes for which time should be redeemed?” And he answers, “For the salvation of the soul, the business of religion, the preparation for eternity. You are immortal creatures, my children, and must live for ever in torment or in bliss; and certainly you cannot be forming a right estimate of the value of time, nor be rightly employing it, if your souls are forgotten, salvation neglected, and eternity left out of consideration, ‘for what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?’ . . .

“Our great business in this world is to prepare for the next; time is capital given us to trade with for eternity; and that man who goes off the stage of life, without having attended supremely to the great business of religion, will appear . . . an object of amazement for his unparalleled folly in wasting his hours upon matters which, compared with eternal happiness, were utterly insignificant.” James acknowledges that we must spend time on such other matters as earning our daily bread, but insists that time is to be redeemed from “sloth”, “unprofitable reading”, “worldly amusements”, “trifling conversation and gossip” and “not only . . . absolute idleness . . . but a slow and sauntering habit of doing anything”. And if he was alive today, one could well imagine him adding several other means of spending time which are the result of more recent technology but are largely unprofitable, especially if compared with preparing to spend eternity in the city which has foundations.

James brings the chapter on redeeming the time to a conclusion with renewed emphasis on what really matters: “Religion is a right disposition of mind towards the great and blessed God; and such a disposition, besides the more solemn seasons of public and private prayer, will diffuse its influence over the whole of a man’s life and fill the [spaces] which are left between the most continuous engagements with ejaculatory petitions to heaven, the aspirations of a soul panting after God, and the anticipations of a renewed mind looking towards eternity. Remember then above all things that time was given you to repent of sin, to pray for pardon, to believe in Christ, to work out your salvation, to lay up treasures in heaven, to prepare for the solemnities of judgement and secure that happiness which is not measured by the revolution of years but is, in the strictest sense of the word, eternal.”³

We still have that opportunity to prepare for the continuing city; let us seek grace to do so earnestly and flee to Christ for safety. And if we have set out on the narrow way that leads to that city, let us go on, through whatever is left of our lives in this world, consistently “looking unto Jesus”.

³James, *The Christian Father’s Present*, pp 243-251.

The Breaker and His People (1)¹

A Sermon by Rev D A Macfarlane

Micah 2:12-13. *I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them.*

We have here great and precious promises, which the Lord is giving to the Church. May He grant that, by His Holy Spirit, in His sheer mercy, our souls may have a saving interest in these promises. This prophecy was given by Micah for the comfort and consolation of the Church in his day and generation. He prophesied in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, and we are told this prophecy was concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. The great matter for us this evening is to refer to some extent to the evangelical aspect of it, and at the back of our minds we have the historical aspect.

These words were coming somewhat strongly before my mind for our service this evening, and there are some expressions here which are difficult to follow. Nevertheless, we should take time over them, and then leave these difficulties we find in the Word of God but do not have an entrance into; at the same time we should leave them simmering in our minds and watch for some understanding as to their meaning. My remarks with regard to this holy portion of the Word of God must be tentative or provisional, subject to abundant revision,² but the great matter is that, if we seek to be foursquare with the Word and labour and pray and seek some entrance into it, we may gather here a little and there a little, and get something to benefit our souls.

Let us look at the historical background, where this prophecy was in part fulfilled – even as an illustration – before going on to remark on the evangelical aspect, which is the main part. Micah prophesied before the long captivity, and he gives them in advance this revelation from the Most High: “Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction”. The people were in fact saying, Jerusalem is our rest, and Micah – as they said later of Jeremiah – is a false prophet, and the best thing we can do is to cut him off altogether and get rid of him; throw him into a dungeon and just give him bread and water.

¹The first part of a sermon preached in Glasgow on 27 April 1936, the Monday of a communion season, and taken down by a hearer. Mr Macfarlane (1889-1979) was at this time minister of the Dingwall and Beaully congregation.

²That is, as to the *interpretation* of the particular text.

At the same time, the Lord had a Jacob among them – a real Jacob of God, the “remnant of Israel”. This expression, “O Jacob”, is opened up to us in the expression, “the remnant of Israel”. It is a parallel remark throwing light on the other one. We have in Psalm 24 a statement of who the spiritual Jacob are, and who wear the “garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness”. These form the Jacob of God and the remnant of Israel – the Israel inside the external Israel. Not all that had circumcision and the covenants were the true Israel, but the Lord had a “remnant”, and if we are not of the internal Israel, we cannot be part of the true Israel of God; we do not know what real holy fear is, nor do we know the power of holiness, unless we are like this Jacob, who seek His face with their whole heart’s desire and who are gradually learning.

Seek to be among them. You may just here and now shut your eyes, if that will help you, and plead with the Lord that He would graciously bless you, not for your sake – do not have the rashness to do so – but for the Redeemer’s sake. The Redeemer fills eternity and inhabits it; He is infinite in His being; He is inexpressibly worthy, and He can place you among them, not for your sakes – and you do not want that, I hope. Nevertheless He may bless you and me for Christ’s sake, “at [our] petition”. That is a very nice phrase in the Bible (Est 7:3).

This portion of Scripture was given for the glory of God for more ways than we know in order to be bread and wine to his broken-hearted Jacob. If we had as much feeling as these excellent men of God – Micah, Jeremiah and Isaiah – and were enabled to put ourselves in the place of these noble servants of the Most High and if we had been with them, then we could see that they were speaking with a lump in their throat. They were giving out these excellent things – there is a remnant of us left, a stump in the ground – but if you listened to them there was a sob in their voices. The tears were trickling down, and God was at their back putting their tears in His bottle and writing them in His book.

Another brother came along and said, “Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come”. In the midst of it, the Lord whispered a word in the ear of Micah; He said, Say this to My Jacob and this to My remnant of Israel – these godly women in the village and these men. This is to be a rod and a staff to them, for there is a dark valley ahead and it will last 70 years, and the holy city will be forsaken for a long, long time. Will He forsake them for ever? O no. “I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold.” And although the Lord’s people suffered outwardly on account of the calamity that came upon the land as a whole – Daniel and

Ezekiel and hundreds more – nevertheless they had the secret consolations of the Holy Ghost. The hand of the Lord was upon them for good, and the Angel of the Lord encamped round about them.

This was to show them that the Lord would bring down His hand on Jerusalem, but would stay “His rough wind in the day of the east wind”. He would never make a full end of them because He had a cause, and the Redeemer was to come in the fullness of time, and hundreds of prophecies were to be fulfilled. How was this prophecy fulfilled in due course, say after the captivity? My answer is, so far as is necessary at present: It was fulfilled in what Ezra did. You have the case of Nehemiah also, coming to the land of His fathers, and mourning on account of how the temple was, and how Jerusalem was and the land of the sepulchres of the godly. The very dust of the godly is dear to the people of God.

If you keep to the example of Ezra – you have an account in his own book – of how he became the leader of the people in the days of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, and perhaps that throws some light on this. You see that the people gathered at the river of Ahava and fasted there and pled with the Lord to bless them and take care of them. Ezra was their leader, and spiritual leader too, and the Lord blessed them.

I may use the language of Solomon in the dedication of the temple: “If they sin against Thee, (for there is no man which sinneth not), and Thou be angry with them and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near; yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto Thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly; if they return to Thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which Thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which Thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Thy name; then hear Thou from the heavens, even from Thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive Thy people which have sinned against Thee”.

You have it being historically fulfilled to the letter: how they had this prayer at the River Ahava, and how the Lord was entreated by them. The Lord answered their prayer by giving a token for good. I cannot say if the Lord gave Ezra some special revelation or message, but in any case the Lord showed His favour towards them. This will help us later on in the evangelical aspect of the promise, but what are we to understand by the breaker? And in what sense did he come up? Was Ezra the breaker? I think he was.

If you consider their condition in the land of their captivity, they were

“scattered sheep”, and the Lord caused Cyrus to publish a proclamation that they should return. He lifted up their heads and breathed the Holy Spirit into the souls of many. They were brought to say, “As for me and my house we will serve the Lord”; we desire to get back now to Jerusalem and the land of Judah to see if we can help with the building of the temple. The Lord was Himself the Breaker, and He gathered in, in this way, from the different cities one here and one there; they were all touched with the finger of the Most High. Where are the people being gathered? At the bank of the River Ahava. That bank of the River Ahava I take tonight to be a suitable illustration of the “fold” that we read of in our text. They were gathered to a “fold” and they entered into a covenant with the Most High. They pled for mercy from the Most High, and the Lord was entreated for them. He blessed them and visited them, and from that “fold” by the banks of the River Ahava, they went away safely.

Ezra was offered a bodyguard, but he refused and put his trust in the Most High. The Most High was the Breaker, breaking up obstacles in the way, and from that “fold”, where they made great noise “by reason of the multitude of men”. The Lord still continued as the Breaker, although there was no visible pillar of cloud going before them. As the Angel of the Covenant went before Israel in the wilderness to seek a place of rest, He really was going before them: “The Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rearward”. Ezra was on that occasion, under the Most High, the Breaker or leader of the people; he was their counsellor, perhaps in a similar way to what Moses was towards the Children of Israel. When the day came to move forward from that “fold”, they knew that they had a token for good – probably a comforting message from the Most High – and the Lord was with them as their King.

It is useful to look at the matter from the historical point of view, but it is well for me now to pass on to the great matter, which is the gospel use to be made of this prophecy. We will try to pick out particularly the points which are useful for the Church of God in all ages.

The *first* thing is to point out that *all are in captivity*, just as the Jews were literally. All who form the true Jacob of God are brought, by the Holy Spirit, to know that they are in captivity.

The *second* thing is the “Breaker”, and we emphasise here that the Most High is the Breaker, although He may use Ezra and others as ambassadors under Him. But He is the “Breaker”, in the Person of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bishop of our souls – the divine Breaker and He brings sinners to the “fold”.

The *third* thing is that once the Lord Jesus Christ brings them to the “fold”

by the Holy Spirit, as the Jews gathered at the River Ahava, from that point onwards *He is still the Breaker till they reach the promised land in glory*. He goes before them and provides pasture for them, guiding them in the good way. The moment they come to the “fold”, they have passed through the gate of the enemy and out of the land of captivity. Whoever they are, and however the Lord may deal with them, He will never forsake them; from that day they are in a state of reconciliation; that state is unchangeable, as the divine essence is unchangeable. From that point onwards – from passing out of the gate, into the state of reconciliation – they have entered into a covenant and are joined to the Lord. There is a flow of love and liberty – a flow and reflow of light and life between their heart and the heart of the Saviour.

There you have the beginning of the new life; they have reconciliation and regenerating grace, and they are in the fixed state of justification and adoption, and they go on with the Saviour as the Breaker, all the way until He brings them into the Father’s house. The King passes before them. Is this a careful and scriptural and evangelical use of such a prophecy as this? I hope it is. I hope we would not have the presumption to offer it to you otherwise, but may the Lord be guiding us into the enriching and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit!

1. They are all in captivity, and their captivity is more dreadful than ever the captivity of Babylon was. Ask yourself: Did my soul find out I was in captivity morally, a captive in my mind? Ask the Lord to show you this, and that you are a captive of prejudice and of ignorance. By nature, we are a lump of ignorance and, although godly parents would tell us of the love of a Divine Saviour, the whole thing would be “as a root out of a dry ground” to us, unless the Lord in infinite pity would anoint us with spiritual discernment. And He may have to shake us over the mouth of perdition, so that we see “the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone” and see the waves splashing on the shores of eternity, before we will be convinced.

Unless you have grace, you will be found cursing God in a damned eternity; think of it. Remember that cursing God is part of what those who will be sent there will be doing. Ask the Lord; cry to Him if you cannot pray; say to Him: In mercy, for the Redeemer’s sake, show me myself. What does that man mean who is saying, My soul is a captive of this bitter root: pride and self-seeking and worldliness, for instance? Have mercy upon my soul; “Thy mercy unto me do Thou extend”.

Seek in earnestness and seriousness, from your heart; plead with the Lord not to leave you shallow and superficial – some nice morality on the surface without the truth of the law and the sanctifying truth of the gospel in you. Ask Him to put it down into you and under you and wrapped round you so

that the devil can never untie it. If your soul is bound up in the bundle of life and well-knotted in the covenant of grace and you get Christ in the promise, then you will be happy and you will be safe; you are delivered from your captivity. The captivity of my soul by nature is a captivity to the love of sin, and that means darkness, rebellion, pride, worldly-mindedness, and no appetite for the worship of God. Who here has an appetite for the vicarious atonement of the Saviour? Show me a person who is getting a sweet taste of it; and if the vicarious atonement is as warm blankets round their soul, I would like to shake hands with them. And with the blood of the covenant sprinkled on us, I think we will meet in heaven, even with all our failings.

The next thing is that you are a captive of Satan. He can lead you captive at his will, and perhaps you will not know it is he. Perhaps you may be at prayer and you think you had first-class liberty, and all the time you are doing the work of the devil. You are in captivity to sin and Satan, and usually, where that is the case, you can speak about a hundred things: music, literature, Greek philosophy and moral philosophy and what not, and you can be a scholar and be moral (and outward morality is a great blessing through restraining grace). But when a godly man or woman speaks to you about regeneration and about justification, your mouth is closed, or else you will put the cart before the horse and pretend you are godly and show yourself a fool, speaking about things you do not know, while showing that you do not know what you are speaking about. If you do not know, hold your tongue. “Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise.”

I remember, when I was young, being in a room with the late Mr Macfarlane and him saying, “The carnal mind is enmity against God”, and I remember thinking it was some fierce animal that was so savage as to attack the Most High, and I thought I would like to frighten it away. I had no more knowledge of the Word of God than one of the lower animals.

We are not only captives to sin and Satan, but we are captives to the law. Captivity to the law invariably follows captivity to sin. Where there is the root principle of hatred to holiness and opposition to God, that man is in captivity to the law – and it is in us by nature. That is another way of saying that the law has something to do with you. However easy you may feel and however far away you may put the day of death, if you go into eternity without being united to the Lamb, as the branches are to the vine – and drinking in the merits of the atonement and glorying in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that “the world is crucified unto [you], and [you] unto the world” – if you do not have that in your conscience and heart, the law will sooner or later want to speak to you.

O but I have plenty of liberty in the world, you may say; I pay my way at

the butcher and grocer, and what noise is being made about this holiness and my unholiness and sin and lack of preparation for eternity, and the lack of the fear of God and holy love? I am free; I am my own master. I am not going to pay attention to you. But the Judge will say, Stand here; do you love that law?

Your conscience may be asleep and doped, but when the Most High touches it, it will burst on you like a volcano, and you will agree with it when it charges you. Although you may be able to hush it till death, I desire to tell you in compassion and love that you will turn against yourself and waken in remorse – not repentance, which is entirely different.

When your minister here, Mr Mackenzie, will be preaching to you, watch with lynx eyes what he sets before you. Keep your mouth well open and swallow down the truth as it is in Jesus. See if it helps your soul, for when the law turns on you, your condition will be truly awful if you are not in Christ, in the cleft of the Rock of ages. The anguish, remorse and pale face you will have that day cannot be put in language, and you will go down to hell before the look of the Most High under the sentence of the Law. You have heard this from the ambassador of the Lord who used to be here,³ for many years, and from your present minister, and I am only trying to put in a word or two as this came strongly before me today.

We have to consider the two sides of the law: the demand of the law and the penalty of the law. So long as we do not satisfy the demand of the law, we must face its penalty. The Saviour met the demand of the law; in effect He said to the law: I love you and I am to satisfy you, and He met the penalty. He could say, The sword of justice will pass into Me, but it will not pass through Me; I will open My bosom to the flaming sword, but not one inch of it will come out on the other side, for I am going to quench the flames in My soul and exhaust them for ever and ever.

Unless you are in Christ Jesus and under the shelter of His wings, there is nothing for you but the holiness of God to come into conscious contact with your naked soul, and if the infinite essence of the Most High comes judicially into contact with your naked soul, you are bathed in hell. That is what happens, and you are in a fixed state; you can neither go north, south, east or west. You are in the presence of the Most High, and you cannot get away from His judicial presence.

The Jews were evidently scattered sheep away in Babylon. And see how we are scattered on the mountains of vanity: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way”. Some of us are scattered to the way of the flesh, others to greed for money, others to greed for learning,

³A reference to Rev Neil Cameron.

but we are all scattered sheep on the mountains of vanity. That was true of all who are saved: millions and millions, like the sand on the seashore. They are brought to be like Jacob in grace. (We better not gather stones to throw at poor Jacob's faults. As far as possible, it is wise, loving and tender to cover over the faults of the people of God, and if we have to mention them, as David, Peter – and Jonah too; the Lord put him into the whale's belly to learn a lesson or two – let us do it in love and tenderness. It will not do for you and me to speak superciliously of Jacob, asking, What right had you to be so deceitful? We need not go past ourselves. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.")

If the Lord does not carry on the good work He has begun, if we are left to ourselves, we will break out again almost as if we had no grace at all. We should see then our need of the Saviour and His finished work on account of seeing the old Jacob here, and the deceit and subtlety that poor Jacob exhibited. That would be bitter to the excellent man Jacob, who was very beautiful at last, and today is beautiful in the palace above. But what would be more bitter to him in later days was not so much that he deceived Isaac, but that he deceived himself. He thought he had plenty of liberty, but he was deceiving himself all the time – he was self-deceived. Have we not to look back to the time when we thought we were our own masters, and must we not say to our heart, Fool, you deceived yourself? If you have received mercy, you will acknowledge that sin deceived you – you were self-deceived.

John Kennedy of Dingwall¹

3. Days of Gospel Blessing

To what extent was there fruit from Kennedy's labours? Obviously, only a general answer can be given. Auld spoke of his preaching being blessed to the conversion "of not a few". But he felt able to state without hesitation another result of his ministry: how largely it "was owned as the means of enlightening, instructing and encouraging the hearts of thousands of the followers of Christ throughout" the north of Scotland. He adds, "If the Highlanders are generally regarded as a moral, Bible-reading, Sabbath-keeping, law-abiding people, they owe it largely to the teaching and preaching of such men as Mr Kennedy".² How much, sadly, has changed since then!

¹Last month's article gave some further information about Kennedy's spiritual experience, before going on to speak of him being settled as the Free Church minister in Dingwall.

²Alexander Auld, *John Kennedy*, DD, London, 1887, p 96. Unidentified quotations in this paper are from this volume.

As an example of the effects of Kennedy's preaching, we may take the testimony of someone whose initials were HS and later became a Free Church minister: "I was concerned as to my state before God, as being responsible for not fulfilling the end for which man was created: to glorify and enjoy God. I was much troubled by the sinfulness of my nature, for although restrained from open sins, yet the bent of my mind was earthly and carnal; and even when attempting spiritual duties, vain thoughts and worldly imaginations would overpower me, so that I seemed to be aggravating my sin by engaging in the forms of religion. It is true that I believed that Christ *had* fulfilled the law of God in behalf of His people, but my faith gave me no comfort; rather the reverse, for it seemed ineffectual in making me conformed to Christ and spiritually-minded; so I concluded it was not genuine."

This man heard that Kennedy was to preach 12 miles from where he lived. He took longer walking there than he expected and arrived just in time to hear the preacher give out his text: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters . . ." (Is 55:1). The man described Kennedy's sermon and his own reaction: "He began by opening up the free and wide invitation of the gospel to all classes of sinners; and I felt that, though he was a most attractive speaker, and I could not help listening to every word he said, yet it was not the *proclamation* of the gospel I was in quest of, but how to get the gospel to *influence* my heart and life.

"At length, after showing the adaptation of the 'call' in the text to the various thirsts of mankind – their thirsts for happiness, for peace, for rest – he said, 'But there is one here today who says, You have not mentioned my thirst yet; my thirst is for *holiness*, for such a knowledge of Christ as would subdue sin in me and weaken my heart-corruption'. This arrested me and I listened as if I were the person spoken to, when he added, 'My dear, dear friend, if *that* is your case – if you do thirst for Christ in order to the crucifixion of all sin within you, and in order to your becoming conformed to His holy image – let me tell you, in His name, you shall yet be as free of sin as if you had never known it; yea, you shall yet be satisfied with the fellowship of Christ and with likeness to Him throughout the endless ages of eternity'."

This hearer was conscious of "the growing fervour, yet deep solemnity," of Kennedy's words, and they "quite overcame" him, so that he experienced what he called "a begun heaven". He added that the preacher "exhibited Christ as the living waters to which the text invited, not only as by His atoning death satisfying the sinner's thirst for peace with God, but as also in His risen life procuring the outflow of the Holy Spirit to dwell in the hearts of those who responded to the call, and then traced up all to the fountain of

God's sovereign grace, given in Christ Jesus before the world began" (pp 104-6). This is only one of many testimonies to the blessing that rested on Kennedy's preaching which Auld records in his biography of Kennedy, and the number who benefited from his preaching, not only in Dingwall, but much more widely, cannot be estimated.

A Skyeman who attended a communion season in Stornoway recorded the "extraordinary liberty" Kennedy experienced in preaching on the Sabbath morning, as he declared "the glorious majesty, love, worthiness, beauty and suitableness of the Lord Jesus Christ in all His mediatorial offices". Someone else, possibly in Inverness, who had often heard Kennedy preach, commented that he "was chiefly useful in solving the difficulties of the Christian life and in enlightening and comforting the Lord's true people. But there were fruits of another kind also. A woman who was the terror of my childhood, and her tongue the scourge of the district, was, under the preaching of Mr Kennedy, quickened into a new life which was so clearly manifested in after years that anyone could see the serpent transformed into the dove. She was long known as a consistent Christian. . . . Three of her children likewise profess to have received the like precious faith through the same ministry as was blessed to their mother" (p 113).

Somebody who knew Kennedy personally spoke of "his sympathy with all spiritual and even speculative difficulties", and went on, "None knew better the depths of doubt and unbelief into which men's minds are prone to fall, and none was more skillful and successful in dealing with such cases. . . . These he met with all the resources of his large experience and with the light which the unerring Word of God brought to bear upon them. . . . A more tender hand in dealing with spiritual concerns was never exercised by anyone. He was certainly mindful of the bruised reed and smoking flax. At the same time, he had no sympathy with, and gave no support to, those who merely made difficulties and doubts the apology and lever for overthrowing or unsettling faith in the fundamental truths of the Word of God. . . . There were few who could more effectively dispose of error or more scathingly expose the insincere. He held that the highest flights of reason ought to be submitted in the last resort to the light of revelation. . . . Frequently did he use, in the fullest import, the words that end all controversy for faith, 'Thus saith the Lord'" (pp 120-1).

An insight into his personal experiences is given in the following extract from his diary entry for 14 January 1845: "My soul for some time in a very unpromising state. My backslidden state is indicated by my formality in private duties, little soul-wrestling with God, and no true enjoyment in reading the Word, but the form gone through in a slavish spirit; by the want of

spiritual meditation on the truth . . . unwatchfulness and untenderness to sin in conversation, in the employment of my time, and in contact with temptation in duty. . . . Self appearing in everything; every duty is besmeared with it, every motive impelled by it. . . .

“After writing the above I addressed myself to prayer, and after a few minutes of darkness and temptation, the Lord was pleased to give me a wonderful enlargement of soul, in which I was drawn forth in earnest longing after Christ, saw somewhat of His excellency, and felt somewhat of His wondrous love, in drawing out my bowels after Him, and I found freedom in pleading for my congregation, friends and acquaintances in Christ, for the Church and for the service of tomorrow” (pp 98-99).

A few days later he wrote, “More lively impressions of eternity and my need of the blood of Christ. Pleading for a broken and a contrite spirit, that I may value precious Christ and because Jehovah promises to dwell with it” – with the broken and contrite spirit (p 99).

His varying feelings about his work are revealed in a diary entry written a few days later: “Preached with more than usual liberty on Sabbath, but *self* prevailed, and I was left in a dismal state all the week after. . . . Preached in chains from Matthew 22:1, and with more liberty from Hebrews 12:28,29. The same liberty at Kiltearn, from John 6:37 (pp 99-100).

In the course of his ministry, Kennedy had calls from Dunoon, Tain, Glasgow and Australia, and in a letter from Gairloch in 1872 he refers to a second call to the Gaelic congregation in Greenock: “At present I can see nothing that indicates I should part with my present charge, and am writing tonight to Greenock with a view of stopping further proceedings. I desiderate, however, still more assurance that my doing so is according to the mind of God; but I have long since come to the conclusion that dubiety suffices to justify one’s remaining where he is. . . . Meantime, as my duty, when I came to Dingwall, was made very clear to me, I must abide there until it is made as clear to me that I should leave it.”

In the same letter Kennedy comments on the communion season he was then attending in Gairloch: “Today I had more of understanding than of heart-work, but at least I was conscious of how far short my feeling was of my thinking. When the mind gets what whets the heart’s thirst, though this adds to the pain, it yields some profit. I had a solemnising view since coming here of God’s long-suffering. . . . It suspends the execution of the curse of the first covenant and gives opportunity for the forth flow of the grace of the second” (p 82).

The amount of work that Kennedy accomplished is scarcely credible. In the middle of October 1870 he speaks of having preached three sermons in

Dingwall on the Sabbath; on the Tuesday he took part in an induction service; and he travelled to Burghead, on the Moray coast, to preach there on the Thursday. In November of the following year he lists first his three sermons on a Sabbath; that evening he “made a few visits to sick people”; on the Monday he preached three times; on the Tuesday he preached once, performed a baptism and delivered what he calls a “lecture” in the evening (presumably the address at the prayer meeting); on the Wednesday there was an English “lecture” and prayer meeting. And one questions if the rest of the week was free from public duties, though he does describe this as a time of “an unusual amount of work”. He also mentions that he has “been better in health greatly than for some time” (p 129).

In the summer of 1872 Kennedy speaks of having spent a number of weeks at successive communion seasons throughout the Highlands; he did not feel any weariness “while the work and the sweetness lasted”. But he did confess that a reaction set in afterwards through “overwork” (p 131). In Caithness, in particular, there were many who valued Kennedy’s preaching. Auld comments, “How cheerfully they followed him in his varied labours!” David Steven was one of them; he wrote, “Mr Kennedy gives evidence that he is a minister of the Lord’s own making” (p 145). Another highly-esteemed Caithness worthy said of the Dingwall minister: He “above others is a means of warming my cold heart and reviving something of the love of days gone by” (p 146). Yet Kennedy himself spoke of feeling that he was “more ignorant and unwise than ever” (p 147).

The Right Use of the Law¹

1. What Is Meant by the Law?

John Newton

You desire my thoughts on 1 Timothy 1:8: “But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully”, and I willingly comply. I do not mean to send you a sermon on the text; yet a little attention to method may not be improper upon this subject, even in a letter to a friend. Ignorance of the nature and purpose of the law is at the bottom of most religious mistakes. This is the root of self-righteousness, the grand reason why the gospel of Christ is no more regarded, and the cause of that uncertainty and inconsistency in many who, though they profess themselves teachers, do not understand “what they say, nor whereof they affirm”. If we first state what is meant by

¹This is the first part of one of Newton’s letters. It is taken, with editing, from Newton’s *Works*, vol 1 (1985 Banner of Truth reprint).

the law, and then how we know the law is good, I think it will be easy to conclude what it is to use the law lawfully.

In many passages of the Old Testament, the *law* signifies the whole revelation of the will of God, as in Psalm 1:2 and 17:7. But the *law*, in a strict sense, is to be distinguished from the gospel. Thus the Apostle Paul considers it at large in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians. I think it evident that, in the passage you have proposed, the Apostle is speaking of the law of Moses. But, to have a clearer view of the subject, it may be proper to look back to an earlier period.

The law of God then, in the largest sense, is that rule or prescribed course which He has appointed for His creatures according to their several natures and capacities, so that they may answer the end for which He has created them. Thus it includes the inanimate creation. The wind or storm fulfills His word or law. He has appointed the moon for its seasons; and the sun knows its going down, and going forth, and performs all its revolutions according to its Maker's pleasure. If we could suppose that the sun is an intelligent being, and if it should refuse to shine, or wander from the place in which God had placed it, it would then be a transgressor of the law. But there is no such disorder in the natural world. The law of God in this sense, or what many choose to call the law of nature, is no other than the result of God's power, whereby all things continue and act according to His will from the beginning: for "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast".

The animals destitute of reason are likewise under a law; that is, God has given them instincts according to their several kinds for their support and preservation, to which they invariably conform. God's wisdom is unspeakably superior to man's; it is visible in the structure of a bird's nest, and the operation of a beehive. But this wisdom is restrained within narrow limits; they are incapable of either good or evil in a moral sense.

When God created man, he taught him more than the beasts of the earth and made him wiser than the fowls of heaven. He formed him for Himself, breathed into him an immortal spirit, gave him a capacity not to be satisfied with any creature good, and endowed him with an understanding, will and affections which qualified him for the knowledge and service of his Maker and a life of communion with Him. The law of God for man is therefore that rule for his disposition and conduct to which a creature so constituted ought to conform; thus the purpose for his creation is to be fulfilled and the wisdom of God manifested in him and by him.

For man to continue in this happy state was not inevitable. As he was capable of continuing in the state in which he was created, so he was capable

of forsaking it. He forsook it when he sinned by eating the forbidden fruit. We are not to suppose that this prohibition was the whole of the law Adam was under, so that, if he had abstained from the tree of knowledge, he might in other respects have done (as we say) what he pleased. This injunction was the test of his obedience; while he regarded it, he could have no desire contrary to holiness, because his nature was holy. But when he broke through it, he broke through the whole law and stood guilty of idolatry, blasphemy, rebellion and murder. The divine light in his soul was extinguished; the image of God defaced; he became like Satan, whom he had obeyed; he lost his power to keep that law which was connected with his happiness.

Yet still the law remained in force; the blessed God could not lose His right to that reverence, love and obedience which His intelligent creatures must always show Him. Thus Adam became a transgressor and incurred the penalty, death. But God, who is rich in mercy, according to His eternal purpose revealed the promise of the Seed of the woman and instituted sacrifices as types of that atonement for sin, which the Seed of the woman should accomplish in the fullness of time by the sacrifice of Himself.

After his fall, Adam was no longer a public person.² He was saved by grace, through faith; but the depravity he had brought upon human nature remained. His children, and so all his posterity, were born in his sinful likeness, without either ability or inclination to keep the law. The earth was soon filled with violence. But a few in every successive age were preserved by grace, by faith in the promise. Abraham was favoured with a more full and distinct revelation of the covenant of grace; he saw the day of Christ and rejoiced. In the time of Moses, God was pleased to set apart a people for Himself, and to them He gave His law with great solemnity at Sinai. This law consisted of distinct parts, very different in their scope and design though both enjoined by the same authority.

The Ten Commandments, uttered by the voice of God Himself, is a summary of the original law under which man was created; but published in a prohibitory form, for the Israelites, like the rest of mankind, were depraved by sin and strongly inclined to commit every evil. This law could not have been designed as a covenant, by obedience to which man should be justified; for long before its publication the gospel had been preached to Abraham (Gal 3:8). But the law entered that sin might abound; that the extent of sin, its evil and what it deserves might be known; for the law reaches to the most hidden thoughts of the heart, requires absolute and perpetual obedience, and denounces a curse on all who do not continue in it.

²As a public person, Adam represented all his descendants in the covenant of works.

To this was added the ceremonial law, prescribing a variety of institutions, purifications and sacrifices, the observance of which were absolutely necessary to the acceptable worship of God during that dispensation. By obedience to these commands, the people of Israel preserved their legal right to the blessings promised to them as a nation, which were not confined to spiritual worshippers. They were likewise helps to lead those who truly feared God, and had conscience of sin, to look forward by faith to the great sacrifice, the Lamb of God, who in the fullness of time was to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. In both these respects the ceremonial law was abrogated by the death of Christ.

As Jesus had expiated sin and brought in an everlasting righteousness by His obedience unto death, all other sacrifices became unnecessary and vain. The gospel supplies the place of the ceremonial law, to the same advantage as the sun abundantly compensates for the twinkling of the stars and the feeble glimmering of moonlight, which are concealed by its glory. By the sacrifices, as they pointed to Christ, believers of old were relieved from their transgression of the moral law. Believers under the gospel are relieved by a direct application of the blood of the covenant. In both cases, believers renounce any dependence on the moral law for justification; they accept the moral law as a rule of life in the hands of the Mediator and are enabled to yield to it a sincere obedience, though not a perfect one.

If an Israelite, trusting in his obedience to the moral law, had ventured to reject the ordinances of the ceremonial law, he would have been cut off. Similarly, if any who are called Christians are so well satisfied with their moral duties that they see no necessity of making Christ their only hope, then the law, by which they seek life, will demand their death. Christ, and He only, delivers sinners, by faith in His name, from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for them.

What is it to Pray Without Ceasing?¹

James Smith

1 Thessalonians 5:17. *Pray without ceasing.*

Some have professed to wonder at this direction of the Apostle Paul, as if it ordained a practice incompatible with the discharge of other duties which are also necessary. But the example of the Lord Jesus is at once the most impressive comment on it, and the most satisfactory explanation of it.

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Christian's Daily Companion*. Smith (1806-62) was, when this piece was written, parish minister of Dumbarton.

He spoke a parable (Lk 18:1-8) to show His followers that men ought *always* to pray, and not to faint, illustrating in it the nature of that gracious importunity which will not be put off without an answer. He evidently intended His people to understand that in praying always – or as Paul expresses it here, in praying without ceasing – importunity is one element.

But Christ's personal example shows that He does not mean, by *always*, uninterrupted prayer. None of Christ's followers ever accomplished more active labour than He did or undertook engagements so numerous and so diversified. He abounded in preaching publicly, instructing privately, working miracles, in attending stated ordinances, personal visits, travelling from place to place, from the commencement of His ministry to its close. While engaged in these He could not be praying; yet He prayed *always*, prayed without ceasing. He was constantly in a devotional frame and was ready at any time to lay aside the duty He was pursuing, in order to lift up His soul to God. Combining then His example and His parable, we infer that the two leading elements in the ceaseless prayer commanded by the Apostle are an uninterrupted devotional frame of spirit and gracious importunity.

1. When I think of the nature of a *devotional or prayerful frame of spirit*, I indeed have reason to be ashamed and to ask myself whether, after all my profession and all my prayers, I have ever yet attained to such a spirit. It is a frame so utterly opposed to the ordinary spirit of the godless world, so elevated above its unbelief, that only the Spirit of grace and supplications can give it birth. To live as in the very presence of God, to maintain a constant sense of my spiritual wants and to hang by a childlike confidence on Him for the supply of them all, to lie low before Him as vile and unworthy and yet never to fail in my confidence that He will hear my cry and have respect to my imploring look, and so to be ready to turn to Him with all my wants, saying as Jacob, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me" – such is a devotional frame.

This frame does not arise from a sense of need or from a knowledge of God's fullness and readiness to supply. It arises from the powerful blessing of the Spirit of prayer, shed abroad in the heart and drawing out the soul under a sense of its destitution and its confidence in God's promises, to ask – believing that He will do exceeding abundantly above what can be asked, or even thought.

Like the other holy habits of the Christian life, which grow out of the enlivening and moulding influence of the truth as it is in Jesus, this habitual frame of devotion is not acquired in a moment, but gradually gathers constancy and strength. And though the foundation of it is ever the same and remains at all times within my reach, experience has taught me that, without the habit-

ual exercise of prayer, a devotional frame dies away and refuses to return at my bidding. God's promises are the same today as they were from the beginning; His readiness to fulfill them is unaltered; my need is as great as it was when I first felt it – indeed greater. The throne of grace is open to me at all times; there is not only no obstacle in the way, but there is a pressing invitation to come, because the way is clear. Yet if I have not been active in presenting my petitions before the Hearer of prayer, the knowledge of these truths leaves me little, if at all, impressed though they awaken the spirit of supplication so prayerfully in others. It is the practical use of them that gives the soul such ability and confidence to wrestle with God.

In order then to obey the apostolic precept, two things are necessary. (1.) My set times of prayer must not be neglected. The psalmist called on God seven times a day (Ps 119:164). He had one of these seven at midnight (Ps 119:62). If I do not set myself seven seasons of regular prayer, yet I must, to maintain a devotional frame, have stated hours for coming before God and allow nothing to interfere with them. (2.) Nor must I, between these times, drop the duty of looking up. Ejaculatory prayer is possible at all times. Wherever I am, I may secretly lift up my heart. It is here that the true secret of constant prayer lies. If I can but attain to the exercise of ejaculatory prayer, I shall pray without ceasing.

2. But in praying always, *importunity* is as much an element as a devotional habit of mind. The importunity which pleases God and honours Him most is that which, grasping the faithfulness of His promises and His character as the Hearer of prayer, will not be put off without an answer. The answer may be delayed; indeed, to all appearance, it may seem denied. And when, after long looking up, the prayer remains before the throne but the blessing is withheld, it is indeed difficult for the soul to maintain its faith and prevent fainting. But grace, in a thousand instances, has enabled believers to persevere amidst apparent rebukes and refusals from God.

The woman of Canaan was thus tried. She implored Christ's help, but He answered her not a word. She continued to cry, but He would not acknowledge her as one of Israel. She still implored compassion, but He called her a dog. And yet her importunity was not put to silence. She caught His words, acknowledged herself a dog, yet pled for a share of the children's crumbs. Nor did she plead in vain. He had been but proving her faith, and having tried it, He removed the term of reproach, acknowledged her as one of His own, and gave her to the full, out of His heart, all that He had put into her heart to desire.

Thus I am to be importunate. The Hearer of prayer may be giving earnest heed to the prayer I offer when the answer is delayed; indeed He may be

preparing the most gracious answer, and the most full, when He seems to frown me away. To pray without ceasing, when by His frown He says, as it were, "Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter"; this is indeed to be importunate. Such importunity shows that He Himself gives the grace and confidence to carry it on and leaves me no room to doubt that, if He does not see it suitable to give me my heart's desire, he will give me far better, even His own heart's desire.

The Whole World Drowned¹

Henry Law

Genesis 6:17. *Behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth.*

We now reach the most terrific scene which earth has yet witnessed. Horror of horrors darkly frowns. The whole world lies drowned. Depths of waters have gone over it. What beacon can be more appalling? Its warning speaks loud as thunder's roar. It terribly proclaims that righteous wrath is no vain dream. Each drop in this unsparring deluge cries piercingly: Behold what sin deserves. What seeds of misery are sown by it! How deep is the cup of vengeance in its hands!

Holy Spirit, send now special help. Shake deadness from our hearts. Quicken dull ears to hear. Implant poignant conviction of the malady and its misery. Disclose the evil and its curse. And then display the gospel in all the brightness of its rescuing love.

Let the curtain rise gradually on this wide desolation. God speaks: "Behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth". There must be some mighty cause. What can unbar these fearful sluice-gates? The cause is indeed serious. God saw the whole earth flooded with evil. Can evil thus dwell and vengeance slumber? This cannot be. The flood of wickedness calls for a flood of punishment.

But God proceeds not without avowal of reluctant sorrow. The preface to this sentence states, "It repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart" (Gen 6:6). Thus condescendingly He speaks as man to man. He speaks in terms of feelings known to our experience. He comes down to the level of human intellect. Let not the statement be misinterpreted, as denoting fickleness in the great "I Am". This deep channel in His immutable purpose cannot change. With Him "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas 1:17). The announcement only prepares for altered action, such as human agents show, provoked by disappointed hopes,

¹Taken, with editing, from Law's *Beacons of the Bible*.

goaded by pained spirit. Abounding wickedness begets results which men would naturally expect if any work had caused grief to the designer's heart.

We are thus guided to the dread resolve. Patience can endure no more. Outraged attributes claim vindication. The righteous sentence therefore is pronounced: "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them" (Gen 6:7). Man who treads earth, the glory of creation – the mirror of My skill and power, the home of undying life, made in My very image, after My likeness, crowned with authority over lower beings – man shall be swept away and not man only, but with him all the living world. Sin has made him abominable. He has infected all of nature. The stain is common. The ruin shall be common too.

Reader, pause here. Crowds of solemn reflections press forward. Check not their awful voice. They loudly assert that iniquity is a monster wholly hated by our God. Can it be otherwise? He is holiness too dazzling for mortal eye to view. How can He tolerate unholiness? He is purity too vast for human intellect to grasp. Can He be lenient to impurity? He is righteousness too perfect for imperfect words to describe. Can he endure unrighteousness? His whole essence and being are holy, holy, holy. His word, His throne, His heavens are holy, holy, holy. How then can He look on sin? How can His indignation sleep when He surveys a world filled only with transgression? Reason concludes that the wicked cannot stand in His presence. Revelation tells us of vengeance justly rising. The present fact adds fearful confirmation: "God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth" (Gen 6:12,13).

But tenderness still grants some respite. Even now God strikes not without a pitying pause. He loudly proclaims that wrath is kindled and fury ready to break forth. But still a forbearing hand seems slow to execute. Where is the sinner who goes down unwarned into the pit? An unseen hand often restrains with gentle touch; a voice within often persuasively reminds him that ruin follows sin, that heaven's gates are barred against it, and all God's attributes are armed; and all God's universe will rise. For sin hell burns; the fiery lake is heated; and the everlasting chains are forged.

The annals of the old world prove this. When the avenging arm is raised, mercy pleads, Not yet. Truth announces that the inevitable end will come, but forbearance checks the final step. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Gen 6:3).

Here is a respite. Here is space to think, to weep, to turn, to pray. There are echoes of tidings of God's grace. A faithful teacher is raised up. "The longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah" (1 Pet 3:20). To the last moment, faithful lips proclaim a refuge. "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." Can we proceed without pondering this lovely picture of a saintly man? Amid the flood of evil he lived, the first of human race graced with the more than royal title of "just" or righteous. In this name, the principle of his life appears. God in His sovereign love, and by the mighty power of His Spirit, implanted faith in his heart. Thus he "became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb 11:7). His enlightened eye discerned redemption's distant day. His enraptured heart entirely embraced salvation's scheme. His confiding soul reposed delightedly upon the God-man's work.

Thus he was righteous in the righteousness of God. Faith in the heart must be uprightness in the life. So Noah was perfect, or sincere, amid abounding wickedness. He walked in the light, even as God is in the light, and they had fellowship one with another. He could not be silent. The zeal of a saved soul must blaze. The sun cannot be dark. The fire cannot be ice. The ocean cannot but swell with flowing waves. The vigorous tree cannot be barren wood. He who knows Christ cannot be mute. Gratitude must work. Love must extol. Faith must point to the dying Lamb. The faithful subject must proclaim the King. So in this interval Noah raised his faithful voice.

He preached loudly by voice, loudly too by deeds. A refuge was revealed to him. The ark – a graphic type of the Deliverer, Christ – was to be built. "By faith" he diligently worked (Heb 11:7). Through many years of tarrying wrath he toiled. It is instructive to stand beside him in his persevering labours. Countless sneers and keenest ridicule would oftentimes mock. Unbelief would jeeringly deride a work so strange. A ship too vast for any waves to float, constructed on dry ground! Designed to save from unknown billows, from a flood signalled by no foreshadowing marks! In it two of every living creature were to be housed. What instinct would direct them, male and female, side by side? Who would thus select and guide the fierce, the tame, to consort in peace? Where would their food come from? How shall Noah's household live uninjured in their midst? What turmoil, contagion, uproar, peril, fights! These and like jests would shoot their venom at his heart. But he looked up to God, away from earth. Faith made him quick to hear heaven's voice and deaf to man's reproach. Thus they persisted – he in obedience, they in sin – till the set time arrived.

Is it not so now? Unbelief still lives. Its atmosphere is the sneer, secret or muttered or uttered. But fast comes on the time when faith shall triumph and

unbelief shall perish. We read this in the end of the old world. The decreed years by sure advance reached their appointed goal. No unwonted signals seemed to have marked the nearing of the avenging waters. There was no wail above. There were no tremblings below. The sun poured down its usual rays. The skies presented their clear canopy of blue. Nature shook not with foreboding terrors. The earth seemed at peace. The fields waved with happy crops. The guilty inmates rose to their daily toil and sin. Nothing disturbed the dream that the course of past events would continue ever. "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage . . . and knew not until the flood came and took them all away" (Mt 24:38,39).

Fearful scene! Appalling ignorance! Destructive blindness! Besotted folly! But in defiance of awakening precedent, such catastrophe will be repeated. What saith the Lord? "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." His saints are bounding towards the glorious advent. Prayer is ever crying, "When shall it once be?" "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." But that day of days will find the godless world asleep, busied with its daily triflings, drunk in besotting merriment. Stupor will introduce despair.

Was not the old world thus startled? The ark receives the faithful remnant. The Lord's hand bolts the door. And then the heavens darken. The burdened clouds lower. All nature trembles. The storm breaks. There is no more delay. The rain descends. The showers increase. The waters fall in ceaseless torrents. Floods from above stop not their fury. Springs from beneath heave up their streams. What a moment for astonished man! What terror would thrill through the stout-hearted when first the fear assumes real form! Can the preacher's threat be verified? Shall earth be a watery waste? Truth – found to be truth too late – stares them in the face. They look upwards: nothing but waters fall. They look around: the earth seems to be dissolving into ocean. Whither shall they flee: to lofty building, to trees, to hills, to mountains?

Alas, deliverance is not in them. Waters follow with their rising swell. All refuge fails. There is no respite in the falling deluge. There is no ascending above the ascending tide. The work of sure destruction surely goes forward. Death stalks abroad unchecked. The rich, the poor, the noble, the peasant, the educated, the ignorant, the young, the old, lie in the one embrace of drowning throes; they are all swept together to one tomb of waters; they all disappear beneath one covering flood. No cries avail. The ruin cannot stay. No wringing hand, no smitten heart, no bended knee, no upward look, no contrite tears, no agony of prayer, no loud acknowledgment of guilt, no arms extended towards the ark, can mitigate the execution. Perishing multitudes find too late that God is true; too late they see wrath gone forth to its work,

and feel too late the iron-pressure of its hand, and learn too late the bitterness of being lost.

With what anguish do they now see the ark borne above the billows! What keen remorse contrasts the happy safety and the dread despair! The thought now burns them as a fiery coal: O that we had been wise, that we had listened, that we had not closed our ears, that we had not hardened our hearts, that we had not madly resisted every warning, that we had not willfully defied destruction! But we would not hear, and this is what we deserve. We would not turn, and this is the result. We wanted sin, and these are sin's wages. Once we would not have our God, and now we cannot.

Seek profit from this end of sin. See not in vain the whole earth a place of the dead. Gain wisdom from this wide reign of desolation. Ponder what the Holy Spirit inscribes upon this recording pillar: "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man; all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven: and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark" (Gen 7:21-23).

The ruin was thus sure and vast. All terms are brought together to depict life totally extinguished. Death in wide open arms embraced all breathing beings. One unsparing scythe felled life. Sin had spread very largely. Destruction overspreads it. Crowds of sinners thronged the earth, and they are crowded into a grave of billows. Man's pollution had polluted the world and all its contents. All therefore are thus swept away. Sin is no trifle. It cannot go unpunished. A deluged world sighs a sad proof. This wrath was visible. But there is wrath beyond, far worse, eternal.

Now look onward. Another flood draws near. It is decreed, denounced. God's Word foretells it. God's holiness requires it. God's power will bring it. God's wrath will inflict it. Have you not heard – do you not know – that "the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men"? (2 Pet 3:7). The world, rank in iniquity, is ripening as dry stubble for these flames. Patience again will reach its limits. The fiery deluge is ready to devour. Vengeance will unloose the final woe. Say then, what will your case be, when this last flood of flames glares terribly? Are you delivered from the wrath to come? Are you secure within the one appointed Ark?

Happy, thrice happy they whose glad response can testify that, through abounding mercy, they are locked safely in the arms of Jesus. Nestled there,

they know no fear. In Christ they are at peace with God, cleansed in expiating blood, robed in glorious righteousness, sanctified by the indwelling Spirit, new born by transforming grace. Thus they await, calm in heavenly joy, the coming of the day of God, in which “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet 3:10).

Thus may these pages always place the glorious cross beside the beacons of just wrath. Amid the threats of righteous judgment, may they ever sound the gospel note of full redemption. Above the warnings of perdition, may they wave the banner of salvation. If earth’s loftiest mountain were the pulpit, if the thunder’s loudest clang were the voice, if the assembled family of man composed the audience, let this proclamation go forth: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1). The curse of the law thunders in vain around them. It fell on Jesus in their place and was exhausted on His head.

It should no more scare, for it can harm no more. God’s justice – the inexorable foe of every sin – no more presses its claims. It is now their advocate. It pleads that full satisfaction has been made and payment rendered to the uttermost. To punish those who died in Christ would be unjust. Their death is past. They sit above the coming flood. They soar above these everlasting miseries, saved with everlasting salvation, blessed with everlasting blessedness. Soon they will shine forth, glorious in everlasting glory, waving everlasting palms, singing everlasting praises, joying in everlasting joys. “The Lord shall be their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning shall be ended.” For them there is no flood of wrath, no flood of fire – only a flood of glory!

The Life-Giving Spirit¹

B M Palmer

The very name given to the third Person of the Godhead, *Spirit* or *breath*, implies that He is the manifestation of life, in its secrecy and power. The sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the sound “as of a rushing mighty wind” (Acts 2:2). So the Lord, on His first appearance to the collected disciples after His resurrection, breathed upon them and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost” (Jn 20:22).

Again, if we reflect the light of the New Testament upon the Old, we read

¹Taken with editing from *The Threefold Fellowship and the Threefold Assurance*. Palmer (1818-1902) was a Presbyterian minister in New Orleans.

in the history of the creation that “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Gen 1:2) – indicated under the term *wind*. Thus, brooding over chaos as the principle of life, He became the separating force which “divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament” (Gen 1:7).

In the same history, when God created man He “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul” (Gen 2:7). Who but the Spirit, or breath of God, should breathe this life into the inanimate clay; and through the infusion of an immortal soul, make the indwelling of this spirit the necessary condition of the life of the body through all time? We may stretch our conception even beyond this. The most marvellous feature of our modern knowledge is that it discloses the hiding of God’s power throughout nature. What are all these mysterious forces of nature but the products of His secret power in matter itself? What is force but the expression of will? And what is will but the property of a being that has life? And what is life but the breath of the Creator Himself? And who should be the breather of this life, whether in nature or in grace, but He whose title is the Spirit or Breath of God?

Whatever may be thought of this as merely human speculation, it is certainly true that God reveals His secret power through the scheme of grace in the salvation of men. And the Holy Spirit is the immediate agent by whom this power is wrought, lifting the soul of man out of death itself into the life of God for ever. In the possession of this spiritual life, and in all its conscious activities, the renewed soul must recognise its fellowship with the Spirit.

Book Review

Exegetical Lectures and Sermons on Hebrews, by Charles Hodge, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, edited and introduced by William VanDoodewaard, hardback, 258 pages, £12.00, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

To have another exposition from this noted commentator and theologian is indeed welcome. Hodge (1797-1878) spent over 50 years teaching students for the ministry in Princeton Theological Seminary, and his commentaries on Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians and Ephesians have been highly valued since they were first published. But potential readers should be clear that Hodge did not work up his lectures on Hebrews for publishing as he did these other volumes published in his lifetime. The greater part of this first section (the lectures) of the book now published derives from 1842, when a student took notes of Hodge’s seminary lectures on Hebrews; these are sup-

plemented from a brief set of notes which Hodge used when lecturing on this Epistle in his first year of teaching. There are no comments on Hebrews 13.

Hodge worked from the original Greek and also had the Authorised Version before him; yet the version quoted before each section of the exposition (and for the texts of the sermons in the second part of the book) is the New King James. This sometimes (for example, on Hebrews 2:16) causes a mismatch between the verses quoted and the comments on these verses. (The comment on Hebrews 3:16 has an extra *not*, reversing the intended meaning of the sentence.) One would welcome more punctuation in many places; this would help the readability of the book.

The second part of the book contains 15 sermons, some of them just outlines (four of these were included in the volume edited by the preacher's son, A A Hodge, *Princeton Sermons*, a collection of outlines of the father's addresses to the students of Princeton Seminary on Sabbath afternoons). As an example of the helpful remarks we find in these sermons, we may listen to Charles Hodge preaching encouragingly on Hebrews 2:14: "Let it be remembered that in no instance did any cry of distress fall unheeded in the Saviour's ear; that in no one instance did He refuse to answer the prayer of the helpless or perishing. Mercy and grace to help are the two great blessings which we as sinners need, and these are the very blessings which God when manifest in the flesh never refused to give. We are thus assured in a way which otherwise would have been impossible. Whoever goes to Him He will in no way cast out."

Speaking on Hebrews 3:7,8, which warns readers of the Epistle against hardening their hearts, Hodge directs his hearers not to resist the influences of the Holy Spirit and goes on, "If the Spirit . . . has withdrawn and left any of you callous, is there not in that very fact a most alarming admonition? Is not this very indifference, daily increasing, calculated to force the conviction that if it is not resisted it will soon degenerate into a lethargy [from] which nothing but the call of death will arouse them?" And he concludes the sermon: "If you can do nothing else, under a full sense of your helpless misery, under the full conviction of your duty to obey this call [to turn wholeheartedly to God], throw yourselves on the divine mercy and cry, Lord, be merciful to us sinners".

Finally, from a sermon on Hebrews 5:9,10, we quote: "Christ is the author of salvation only to those who obey Him. . . . He is able to save to the uttermost all those who come to God by Him. Coming to God by Him is equivalent to obeying Him. And it is unquestionable that the particular act of obedience intended here is committing our cause to Him as our High Priest, so that He may make atonement for us with God, that He may present

His sacrifice on our behalf, and interceding for us become the author of eternal life. And as this cannot be done without our having a sincere desire for reconciliation with God, and for deliverance from sin, this act of obedience can never stand alone. It springs from a principle which must produce universal obedience. It will invariably be accompanied with a sincere desire and strenuous effort to conform ourselves to the whole will of God. To all who thus obey Him will Jesus Christ become the author of eternal salvation.”

These extracts should illustrate the quality of Hodge’s preaching. And the outlines, brief though they are, spell out the essence of his understanding of what his text teaches and how we should apply that teaching to ourselves.

Notes and Comments

Multi-Faith Prayer

Like the tempest-tossed mariners in the Book of Jonah, some of the leading figures in world religion joined together to call upon their various gods in a “Day of Prayer for Humanity” on May 14. The Pope said, “This time of global tragedy and suffering should cause believers of every religion to beg mercy from the one God and Father of all”. The participants also included Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist leaders as well as the Archbishop of Canterbury, and representatives of the Greek Orthodox Church and the World Council of Churches. Aware that his participation might bring accusations of religious relativism, the Pontiff asked, “How can you not pray to the Father of all? We are all united as human beings, brothers and sisters, praying to God each according to our own cultures, traditions and beliefs.”

Whatever Rome’s underlying intentions are in playing a leading part in multi-faith events, such words portray an ambivalent attitude to the competing claims of the world’s religions. In an age such as this, false religion can often appear to be tolerant of error and frequently seems to overlook radically-different beliefs and practices. But however tolerant false religions may appear, they are all intolerant of the truth as it is in Jesus. True religion is exclusive in nature, however, because God has revealed Himself as the God of salvation, only through Christ in the Scriptures of truth. “I am the way, the truth and the life”, the Saviour tells us in John 14:6, “no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.” Multi-faith prayers, therefore, are injurious to the claims of Christ and are an abomination to the Lord.

The mariners in the ship going to Tarshish were wiser than the Church leaders of our day, in that they sought to know “for whose cause this evil is

upon us” (Jon 1:7). For all their talk of praying, neither the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury or any of the other Church leaders have called on the people of the world to repent of their sin in view of the solemn judgement of the coronavirus pandemic. “They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Mt 15:14). *AWM*

Racism and Sexism

The two sexes of mankind – male and female – go back to the original creation of man (Gen 1:27), and the different races of mankind to soon after the Flood (Gen 10). To what extent modern-day racial distinctions correspond to the earlier ones is an interesting question. Many people now are of “mixed race” in nineteenth and twentieth-century terms, and perhaps these “mixed races” will come to supersede the present ones. It is a matter of daily observation that children of the same parents have different characteristics: one is tall, another strong, another clever, another placid, another cheerful, and so on; and as races have developed out of families, so these characteristics often preponderate in different nations and races, and are part of the variety and interest of the world.

Dominant races have succeeded one another in history – Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome – but generally no race is more important than another, except that God has marked out the line of Seth, and particularly the seed of Jacob, as that nation from which the Messiah was to come, and whose conversion to Christianity is to be as “life from the dead” to the Church (Rom 11:15).

Our duties to our fellow-men are governed by what is pleasing to Christ, and He requires that we treat one another with love, honour, kindness, helpfulness, purity, equity and so on: “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”; “therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them” (Mt 7:12). Our duty to others may be modified or complicated by questions of sex and race, and what may be scriptural in one situation may be inappropriate or unwise in another. The great rule, however, is the law of Christ; and we will find His counsel and example infinitely more helpful than trying to conform to the ever-changing demands of the world: “Giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel” (1 Pet 3:7), “How is it that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans” (Jn 4:9). God has made men of one blood (Acts 17:26), and there is One Saviour (Acts 4:12), and there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female in Christ (Gal 3:28).

But God is also the Creator of the two sexes and of the different races;

and these sexual and racial differences are part of His purpose for human life, and are not going to go away. Learning how to behave to members of the opposite sex, and to people of different races and backgrounds, is part of human and Christian life. The recent race-protestors in the streets of America and Britain probably have at least as much to learn in this regard as anyone else.

DWBS

Blasphemous Hollywood

The film industry has recently been in the news because of the abusive and exploitative behaviour of the film director Harvey Weinstein and others. The industry has always had a tendency to appeal to the lowest common denominator of fallen human nature. Over the years, there have been various distressing depictions of the Saviour in film, but now the industry is plumbing the depths of blasphemy in two recent productions.

One, already in circulation, is produced by Netflix, and is called, “The First Temptation of Christ”. Without going into detail, it portrays the Saviour as a sodomite, and His disciples as a group of rowdy alcoholics. The second, called, “The Habit”, has been completed but not yet released, and depicts the Saviour as a woman who has a lesbian relationship with one of her followers. There was a time when a person would have to go to the cinema to watch a film but now they can be transmitted into homes at the click of a button, making this fearful blasphemy even more accessible.

The very thought of these things is utterly abhorrent, and the fact that, despite many protests, producers feel entitled to peddle such wares to the public, shows how weak the cause of Christianity is in America and throughout the world. The film industry seeks to make a profit like any other industry, yet one cannot but feel there is another agenda here. This is an atheistic, satanic attack on the Lord of Glory, the Lord Jesus Christ. “Thy foes against Thee loudly speak, and take Thy name in vain.”

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.”

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

FRD

He to whom Christ is precious, to whom the Word of God is sweeter than honey, to whom sin is odious, to whom secret devotion is a delight, who makes it the business of his life to honour his Master, and who regards the world as a broken idol, has the witness that he has passed from death unto life.

The reason why the wicked hate God’s Word is that it is so holy.

Why should we be in love with this world? It reviled, maligned and crucified the Lord of life and glory. It deserves not our confidence or our love.

W S Plumer

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Glendale** and **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thursday 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street, IV15 9JP; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauliy** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; no F P services; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Mr J Campbell; tel: 01863 766296.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, EH3 9NU, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, 35B Barrton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227, e-mail: dcampbell1560@gmail.com.
- Farr** (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.
- Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev R MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Greenock:** Sabbath 2.30 pm, held in Free Church of Scotland hall, 14 Jamaica Street, PA15 1XX. Sabbath 2.30 pm. Contact Rev R MacLeod; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev WA Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Duncan Street; Sabbath 5 pm; **Strathay:** Sabbath: 6 pm (first and third Sabbaths of month).
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Tarbert** and **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7.30 pm alternately. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South):** **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. **Sheilebost:** as intimated. Rev KM Watkins BA, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, IV1 1NA; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 6 pm; **Scourie:** Sabbath 11:30 am, Tuesday 7 pm (as intimated). Contact Dr A Ross; tel 01971 502099.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present. Manse.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 810228. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist:** **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Manse tel: 01876 510233. Contact: Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Oban:** Church and Manse. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Rev D Campbell; tel: 0131 312 8227.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev I D MacDonald BA, F P Manse, Achachork, Portree, IV51 9HT; tel: 01478 612110.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. F P Manse, Clachan, Staffin, IV51 9HY tel: 01470 562243.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Tain:** Church. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis)** **Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.

England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Contact Mr R Middleton, 2 Emerald Drive, Sandbach, CW11 4ND; tel: 01270 761673.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.15 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623.

Northern Ireland

- Larne:** Station Road. No F P services. Contact Rev R Macleod; tel: 0141 954 3759.

Canada

Chesley, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 7.30 pm; Tuesday 8 pm. Contact: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367; or Mr Gilbert Zekveld; tel: 519 363 5899. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

Vancouver: Burnaby Community Room, 3605 Gilmore Way, Burnaby, BC, V5G 4X5. Sabbath 9.30 am, 6.30 pm, Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Douglas Spratt, tel: 604 990 4051, or Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. E-mail: info@fpcchurchvancouver.ca.

USA

Santa Fe, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 5 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith; tel: 409 927 1564.

Australia

Grafton, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA PhD, 3 Martin Crescent, Junction Hill, NSW 2460; tel: (02) 6644 6174; e-mail: grafton@internode.on.net.

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel. (02) 9627 3408; e-mail: sydneyfpcchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

Auckland: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J D Smith, 9 Pedlar Place, Conifer Grove, Auckland; tel: 09 282 4195.

Carterton: 124 High Street North, Carterton. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Hank Optland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743; tel: 02 7432 5625.

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev C Hembd, 14 Thomson St, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140.

Tauranga: 45 Cliff Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 6.30 pm (but on first Thursday of month place will be as intimated locally). Contact: Rev J D Smith; tel: 09 282 4195.

Singapore

Singapore: Sabbath: 9.30am and 5.30 pm; Beacon International College, 70 Martaban Road, Singapore 328667 (entrance is opposite 37/39 Mandalay Road); Wednesday: 7.45 pm, Lion Building B, #02-11, 12 Arumugam Road, Singapore 409958. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, 4 Chuan Place, Singapore 554822; tel: (65) 6383 4466, fax: 6383 4477, e-mail: byong1@singnet.com.sg.

Ukraine

Odessa: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 6 pm. Rev D Levytskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytskyi@gmail.com; or contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua.

Zimbabwe

Bulawayo: Lobengula Township, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo. Rev S Khumalo, F P Manse, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo; tel: 00263 9407131, e-mail: skhumalo.byo@gmail.com.

Ingwenya: Church and Secondary School. Postal Address: Ingwenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo.

Mbuma: Church and Hospital. Rev N Sibanda. Postal Address: Mbuma Mission Hospital, Private Bag T5406, Bulawayo.

New Canaan: Church.

Zenka: Church.

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