

The Young People's Magazine

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

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



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Cover Picture: *The ruins of St Andrews Cathedral. See page 15.*

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Editor: Rev Kenneth D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ. Tel: 01463 712872; e-mail: kdmacleod@gmail.com. All unsigned articles are by the Editor.

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Volume 88

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Number 1

Abel and Cain

These were the first children who were born into this world. They may have been alike as children, for all we know. The Bible just does not tell us, and we do not need to know. But what the Bible does tell us is that, as adults, there was a huge difference between them, especially in their attitudes toward God.

Abel brought a better sacrifice to God than Cain did. For his sacrifice, Cain took some of the crops that he had grown: perhaps vegetables and fruits and grains. But there was something missing. He should have known to bring an animal, just as Abel did. Abel was obedient to God.

How would Abel have known to bring an animal, and how should Cain have known? Their parents would have told them what God had shown them after they sinned. After Adam and Eve fell into sin, they realised that they were naked. They tried to do something about it; they sowed fig leaves together to make a garment for each of them. But, not surprisingly, their efforts were not successful; the leaves probably just fell apart as Adam and Eve tried to put on their new clothes. They needed something better.

So God provided then with suitable garments; He made them from animal skins. If Adam and Eve were to benefit from the skins, the animals had to die. Adam and Eve needed clothes because of their sin. They needed a sacrifice because of their sin, so that they might be reconciled to God. He had told them that death is the result of sin; they were warned that, if they sinned, they would “surely die” (Genesis 2:17). And if God provided a substitute, that substitute had to die instead.

Every sacrifice was pointing forward to Christ, *the* Substitute for sinners. He was to die instead of sinners. And, in the Old Testament, the animal that died as a sacrifice was to be seen as a substitute for the person who offered it. So, when Abel took an animal and offered it as a sacrifice, he was offering it as a substitute for himself. The animal died instead of Abel.

Cain ignored all this. He did not bring an animal sacrifice; so he had no blood to pour out. That was important; the *blood* of the sacrifices is emphasised in Scripture again and again. We are told that “the life of the

flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11); so when the blood has been poured out, there is no life left; the animal has died. That is why John says, "The blood of Jesus Christ [God's] Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). He means that Jesus Christ, through His death, takes away the sin of everyone who believes in Jesus as the One who suffered in the place of sinners.

Although Cain ignored these things, Abel did not. He had faith (see Hebrews 11:4). He believed what God revealed about the way of salvation – that he and other sinners were to look forward by faith to the One who was promised to their parents as "the seed of the woman" (see Genesis 3:15). This, of course, was Christ.

The sacrifices were designed to teach sinners that there is salvation, and that this salvation comes through the death of a substitute. Abel believed and Cain did not. So Abel was saved from his sins and Cain was not. And these differences were highlighted by the different sacrifices that these men brought. Abel's sacrifice showed that he listened to what God had said; Cain's sacrifice showed that he had not listened. What about ourselves? Do we listen to what God commands in the Bible? Do we listen to the teaching that He has placed there – especially about sin and salvation?

We read further in Genesis 4 that "the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering" – the Lord looked toward Abel. It suggests that the Lord looked favourably on Abel and accepted his offering. But how did God show His favour towards Abel?

Let us think of another time when God showed that He was accepting a sacrifice. We could look at the beginning of sacrificing at the tabernacle in the wilderness or at the temple Solomon built, but we will notice the time when Elijah was in conflict with the priests of the false god Baal. Elijah and the priests of Baal each had a bullock for a sacrifice. The priests called on their god to send down fire on this sacrifice; they did so very earnestly, for several hours and yet nothing happened. Baal did not exist.

Then Elijah took some stones and built an altar; he divided up the bullock and placed the pieces on the altar. He had 12 barrels of water poured on the sacrifice and in a trench around the altar. He then prayed to God to send down fire from heaven. God sent down fire, which dried up all the water and burnt up the sacrifice. God answered by fire just as Elijah had asked. Is it not likely that God showed that He accepted Abel's sacrifice by sending down fire from heaven to burn it up?

Abel was coming before God as a sinner; he knew that he needed to have his sins forgiven; so he came to God in the way that He had commanded; he looked to God by faith; he was now on his way to heaven. Cain did not come before God as a sinner; he did not consider that he needed to be saved from

his sins in the way that God had appointed; he did not believe what God was saying; he had no faith; sadly, he was still on his way to a lost eternity.

Yet Cain did have some religion. The problem was that he did not follow God's directions as to how He should be worshipped. He went his own way; he followed his own ideas and thought that these would be good enough. What about ourselves? Do we seek to worship God as He has shown us in the Bible? Are we like Abel, who knew that he was a sinner and needed a sacrifice, a substitute that must die?

We must take Christ as our sacrifice; we must trust in Him as the One who poured out His blood as the Substitute for sinners, who died in their place. He calls to us: "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah 45:22). Yes, we must look to Christ by faith if we are to be saved. No other religion is safe; no other religion will bring us to heaven – not even a belief in scriptural Christianity, where there is no trusting in Christ. Remember that "without faith it is impossible to please" God (Hebrews 11:6).

Think of what Jesus said, in Luke 18:10-14, about the Pharisee and the publican (the tax-gatherer). The Pharisee claimed he was a good man – a very good man – but he was trusting in himself, not in God. On the other hand, the publican knew he was a sinner and he prayed in faith: "God be merciful to me a sinner". God heard his prayer and was merciful to him; He forgave his sins and, Jesus said, "this man went down to his house justified rather than the other". In other words, the publican was justified but the Pharisee was not. The Pharisee remained condemned as an unbeliever. God accepted this believing publican as fully righteous, for the sake of Christ and what He was to do for the salvation of sinners, including the publican.

Cain was angry with God because He did not accept his sacrifice, "and his countenance [his face] fell". He was highly displeased – against God, but also against Abel. And his anger and annoyance made him murder Abel. We can be sure that God brought Abel at once to heaven, but Cain was now guilty of two extremely serious sins: the murder of his brother and rebellion against God. And he was determined to reject the way of salvation from sin.

It is very dangerous for anyone to rebel against the teachings of the Bible; rebellion is likely to bring such people further and further away from God and they are in danger of going on until they reach a lost eternity. So submit to God now; look to Christ as the Saviour that God has provided for sinners like you; do not go on in rebellion against Him, rejecting the way of salvation He sets before you. Remember Abel and seek to follow his godly, believing example for the rest of your life. Remember Cain and ask God to take away your rebellion, and to give you instead a living faith in Christ.

“Leave!”

Rev K M Watkins

Our blind dog has gained a lot of confidence over the months. He now loves to go off the track and explore to the right and to the left. Being a hound, and being blind as well, he has a very good sense of smell. He follows his nose wherever it leads him. Anything that smells, he will find it. Of course, he is attracted by many things that are not good for him. Dead seals, dead seabirds, dead sheep, droppings left by other dogs, rotting food – all of these interest him greatly. And he is far too ready to try to eat some of what he finds.

So we have taught him a new command: “Leave!” When he hears that, he will usually spring away from the item of interest, but sometimes it takes a bit more persuasion, and on occasions we have to drag him away on his lead.

This is a picture of us all. Because of our sinful hearts, we are quick to take notice of sinful things around us. It does not matter how horrible or harmful they are. Left to ourselves, we find them hard to resist. They have a power which draws us to them, just as our dog is drawn to horrible and harmful things. But God’s voice is telling us, “Leave!”

That is what God told Adam about the fruit that grew upon the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He could eat the fruit from all the other trees, but not from that one. If he ate of it, he would die, and so would we all. But Eve, and then Adam, did eat that fruit. They disobeyed the Lord’s command, “Leave!” Instead they listened to the devil’s lie. When Eve “saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (Genesis 3:6). All the sin in the world, with all the misery it has brought, flowed from that fatal refusal to obey God’s command, “Leave!”

When the Israelites destroyed Jericho, they were not to take anything from the city for themselves. It was all to be devoted to the Lord. If they took anything, it would be “accursed” (see Joshua 6:18,19). But Achan saw “a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight; then [he] coveted them, and took them” (Joshua 7:21). God said, “Leave!” But Achan refused. Because of this sin, the Israelites were defeated in their first battle with the men of Ai, and Achan had to be stoned to death.

Achan’s sin began with covetousness, which is forbidden by the Tenth Commandment. His sinful desire was so great, he refused to obey the

command, “Leave!” Covetousness is a danger to us too. “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Timothy 6:10). Indeed, “they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition” (verse 9). When we covetously desire anything for ourselves, not just money, we are failing to hear God saying, “Leave!”

When David saw Bathsheba washing, he should have recalled the Seventh Commandment, which was saying to him as a married man, “Leave!” But he did not. When he discovered that she was married, again God’s law was saying, “Leave!” But he closed his ears, went on in sin, and in the end was guilty of murder as well as adultery. How different it was with Joseph when he was tempted by Potiphar’s wife! He remembered God’s command, “Leave!” He resisted the temptation, saying, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Genesis 39:9). She was another man’s wife, and the Seventh Commandment forbids adultery.

Temptations to uncleanness come in our day through websites, books, programmes, pictures, places, music, companions and conversations. But the Word of God says, “Leave!” We must not go near things that can defile us. Heart uncleanness can be very strong, and we must cry to the Lord for deliverance when we are tempted.

It is the same with false religion. In our studies we may be taught about Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and so on. But it is dangerous to become too interested. False religion attracts the unconverted person. It is the same with false beliefs like evolution. We might have to learn about it in our education. But we must not drink in the lies of such a system, which denies the Bible, God and creation. To be sucked in to “science falsely so called” (1 Timothy 6:20) will poison our minds. Literature can do the same. Again, we might have to study all kinds of books, but we need to beware of the ungodliness and worldliness in them, for they have a very strong pull upon us by nature. What does God say about all these things? He says, “Leave!”

When the Corinthians were being tempted to compromise with the worship of idols, Paul wrote, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Corinthians 6:17). They were to leave the company of the ungodly engaged in their false religion. That would mean trouble. They could lose their jobs or businesses, because each trade had its own “guild” that you had to be a member of, with its own worship that you had to join in. Whatever the cost, the Lord’s will was clear: “Leave!” We too have to leave jobs, friends, company and recreations that involve us in sin. Professional sports,

much of the music business, and even environmental concerns, are among the idols people worship today. It is clear what Paul would tell us – “Leave!”

We want our dog to leave every harmful thing as soon as he hears our voice. We want him to do it because he trusts us. So with us and God. How good it would be if just hearing the Lord's voice would hold us back from sin! If we trust in Christ for salvation, we may be sure that He will never withhold any truly good thing from us. We will never lose out by obeying Him immediately whenever He says, “Leave!” God's people live by faith, relying on their Saviour to direct them through His Word. If the Bible forbids something, then faith agrees, repentance obeys, and they leave that sinful thing. “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Timothy 2:19). Surely it is the gospel that should attract us, not sin. For that we need a new heart from the Lord!

Lessons from the Life of Jacob

2. With Isaac and Laban

Rev J B Jardine

The first section of this paper, given to the 2022 Youth Conference, appeared last month. It was about Jacob's family.

Jacob's life can be separated into four distinct periods: (1) his life with Isaac in Canaan, (2) his life with Laban in Haran, (3) his life in Canaan, (4) his life in Egypt.

1. Jacob's life with Isaac in Canaan. Although they were twins, Jacob and Esau were very different in appearance as well as character: “Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man” (Genesis 27:11). Jacob was a quiet man like his father. He became his mother's favourite. Esau was about 40 when he married two Hittite women. Jacob took his time in finding a wife, who would be the mother of his children. Esau was careless about the spiritual things of the family in the future; “Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?” (Genesis 25:32). Esau exaggerated the extent of his hunger and despised his birthright by placing no more value on it than on pottage, which is boiled food or soup. Jacob made Esau swear a solemn oath. “Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob” (Genesis 25:33).

Under the influence of his mother, Jacob supplanted Esau his brother and deceived Isaac his father, in his old age (Genesis 27). Yet this was only after Isaac and Esau seemed determined to break the promise which had been

clearly revealed: the Lord had said to Rebekah, “Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder [Esau] shall serve the younger [Jacob]” (Genesis 25:23).

Esau had sold the birthright to Jacob and the birthright included the blessing; so Esau had no right to expect the blessing now. Isaac was unwisely favourable to Esau; perhaps he was influenced by his love for his son’s venison. Rebekah detected the secret scheme of Isaac and Esau and sought to counter it with both skill and deceit, instead of through prayer and fasting. She sought to obtain her husband’s fatherly blessing for her favourite son Jacob. But, in the end, this meant that Jacob had to flee from Esau, who threatened to kill Jacob. To save his life, Isaac sent Jacob away to find a wife. Rebekah never saw her favourite son again.

Jacob did not obtain the blessing because of his deceit, but in spite of it. Because God had promised it, Jacob would have received it in some lawful way. But he and his mother, distrusting God’s promise, sought the promised blessing in a wrong way. So they received trouble and sorrow with it.

God had already purposed that Jacob would rise higher than his elder brother, Esau (Genesis 25:23). But Jacob did not wait upon the Lord to fulfill this prophecy; instead he made Esau sell his birthright to him and cunningly obtained his father’s blessing.

Instead of occupying the place of honour in the family, Jacob had to flee; instead of a double portion, he fled with only the staff in his hand. If he had waited in faith for God’s time, and God’s way of obtaining the promised blessings, God would have defeated Isaac’s foolish purpose and Jacob would not have had to endure the chastisement he deserved.

Till then, Jacob had lived his life in submission to his father. Unlike the stronger Esau, he had been “dwelling in tents”, a quiet man (Genesis 25:27). Now he had to make a journey of 500 to 600 miles with no one to help, guide, advise or defend him.

Lesson One. *God can use our sin for our good but still chastise us. We must never use evil means even for a good end. We must exercise patience and faith, with prayer, waiting for God’s promises to be fulfilled.*

Bethel. Jacob’s dream at Bethel was to be the first of God’s many direct dealings with Jacob. It is referred to again and again, (Genesis 31:3, 35:1, 48:3). The Lord graciously appeared to Jacob at Bethel and gave him wonderful promises; they were totally undeserved. There he saw the angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder whose top reached to heaven. Then God said to Him: “Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for

I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Genesis 28:15).

At that time Jacob was asleep, lying on the ground, with a stone for a pillow. He was in a position of deep helplessness and need. The Lord favoured him by revealing the richest grace, without any conditions. Jacob acknowledged later that he did not deserve the least of all the blessings he had received.

Jacob made his stone pillow into a pillar and consecrated it with oil. He vowed that, as surely as God would fulfill His promises, the Lord would be his God and he would give a tenth of all that he received to the Lord.

2. Jacob's life with Laban in Haran. Jacob fell in love with Rachel as soon as he arrived in Haran; yet it would be seven years before they would marry. These were patient years of toil for Rachel, which “seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her” (Genesis 29:20).

Jacob himself must take some of the blame for what brought such trouble into his home life and sowed the seeds of division and jealousy in the future nation – although Laban, his mother's brother, was mainly to blame for Jacob's polygamy (having more than one wife). Jacob should have seen in it God's chastisement for his sin in deceiving his father. Jacob received Leah, not Rachel, at the end of his seven years of labour. The only excuse Laban could offer was that it was not the tradition of the country to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older. Yet a lifetime of sorrow, disgrace and trials followed, in God's providence, as a result of having two wives.

This marriage was the first of the ten times that Laban “changed the wages” of Jacob (Genesis 31:7,41). Jacob married Rachel seven days after he married Leah, and “served seven other years” for her. As cunning as Jacob was, he met his match in Laban. For about 20 years, Laban outwitted Jacob and turned him into a servant. In the same way that Jacob used deceit to take advantage of his father Isaac and brother Esau, Laban also used craftiness and trickery to take advantage of Jacob.

Jacob's years of service for his wives were followed by six years of service for wages. Laban's cunning in limiting the amount he paid to Jacob was matched by Jacob's cunning in devising means to outwit his uncle. Jacob was so successful that the penniless wanderer became the wealthy owner of herds of cattle and of hosts of servants. Jacob acknowledged to God: “I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands” (Genesis 32:10).

God commanded Jacob: “Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy

kindred; and I will be with thee” (Genesis 31:3). Laban told Jacob, “These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?” (Genesis 31:43). But Leah and Rachel said to Jacob: “Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father’s house? Are we not counted of him strangers? For he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money. For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children’s: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do” (Genesis 31:14-16). It is clear from the Bible that the justice of God dealt fairly with both parties. Jacob received a rich return for his skilful and patient labour, and Laban a rebuke and warning (Genesis 31:5-13,21,29,49).

Jacob’s departure was marred by Rachel’s superstition; she stole her father’s idols. This gave Laban an excuse to pursue them. It was only a dream in which the Lord spoke to Laban that kept him from forcing Jacob to return. In the end, the two parties parted with a formal reconciliation (Genesis 31:44-55).

For Junior Readers

Where Are You Going?

As the morning marks the beginning of each new day, so January marks the start of each new year. How should we mark such new beginnings? What did David say in Psalm 5? “My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord: in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up”.

At the beginning of this year, is that not what we should all be doing? We should be praying for God to be with us in the journey ahead of us this year, for His blessing on our souls, His care, His keeping, His guidance, His wisdom in every situation. We do not know what sort of journey lies ahead of us this year, but our times are wholly in His hand (see Psalm 31:15) and He knows.

Journeys today are usually fast and comfortable whether they are by car or train or plane. But that was not the case in days gone by. What about in Bible times? Journeys were usually slow. Think of the Ishmaelites who were merchants travelling from Gilead (in what is now Jordan) all the way to Egypt with spices and other goods to sell. They travelled in large groups called caravans, usually with camels, over huge distances.

This was still the case in some places even into the twentieth century. Missionaries in central Asia had to travel in this way. A group of them were

travelling for months at a time over the very empty and desolate Gobi Desert. When they occasionally met other caravans going in the opposite direction, it must have been a thrill for them to have contact with other human beings, even if only for a very short time. When they met, the greetings always took the form of two questions: "Where are you from?" and "Where are you bound?" An exact answer was expected and none of the travellers would mention any of the stages in between, although there would have been many of these. Only the destination mattered!

This first happened soon after the missionaries had set off on their trek. They met a large caravan heavily laden with merchandise. The driver greeted them in the usual way. "Where do you come from?" he shouted.

"From Kashgar", was the answer. Kashgar was nearly three months' journey behind them.

"Where are you going?"

"To Luoyang" they replied. That was a city about two months' journey away in Central China. So the caravan was on a five-month trek, an incredible distance of nearly 3000 miles. But in the outlook of the local people, nothing was worth mentioning except the point of departure and the destination.

This reminded the missionaries of Christian, the pilgrim in John Bunyan's book, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. On his journey, the pilgrim was often asked, "Whence come you and whither are you bound?" His answer would be, "I come from the City of Destruction and am going to the Celestial City". These were Christian's focal points. He had left the one and was travelling to reach the other. The goal was definite and must be reached.

So what about you at the beginning of this year? Are you still in the "City of Destruction"? Christian had his back to the city, a Bible in his hand, and he was crying out, "What shall I do to be saved?"

Would that not be a good way for you to start your journey through this year? To turn your back on the world, its friendships and all its temptations, to "seek . . . the Lord while He may be found, and call . . . upon Him while he is near," and to seek that "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God".

J van Kralingen

For Younger Readers

How Was She Different?

What happens when someone is converted? God changes them and makes them able to trust in Jesus Christ. He is the One

who died in the place of sinners to save them from being punished because of their sins.

And God changes the way they live. There was once a girl who was a servant in a house. Perhaps she cleaned dishes and swept the floor and did lots of other things.

She believed that she was converted, that God had changed her. Someone asked her if she could see some way in which she was different now.

After thinking for a moment, she said, "Yes. Up till recently I used to clean everywhere beautifully if it was where people could see, but now the places no one can see are cleaned just as well."

Remember God sees everything. Of course, He sees the places everyone can see. But He also sees the places that no one else can see. He sees them as well as what everyone sees. We should ask God to help us do everything as well as we possibly can.

The Cabin Boy and His Bible

A colporteur was working in a port in the south of the United States. His work was to sell Bibles and other religious books, but he also gave Christian reading material away free. He gave a Bible and some tracts to a cabin boy who was working on one of the ships in the harbour.

When everything was ready, his ship sailed from the port. Other members of the crew noticed the cabin boy often reading his Bible. They laughed at him, but that did not stop him. He seems to have been seeking salvation for his soul, and he found that salvation when he trusted in Christ Jesus.

Soon afterwards a severe storm got up, and it continued for several days. The boy kept on reading his Bible, and no one laughed at him now. The other seamen were too frightened of what might happen to them in the storm. What they were afraid of happened; the ship was wrecked, but the men were saved by clinging to the sides of the ship.

The boy warned the other seamen that they must trust in God; only He could save them. The boy managed to hold on to his Bible when he had to leave the ship and, when it was possible, he read to the others from it.

Soon afterwards, the shipwrecked crew were picked up by another vessel and were brought to the port from which they had sailed. The colporteur spoke to them and believed that all the men were under deep conviction of

sin. We hope that they went on to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners and that they did not turn back to the world and its ways, like the young man in the next article.

What the Young Man Missed

The young man was very ill. The doctor was sitting beside his bed; he had just told the young man that he only had a very short time to live. The young man said, "I have missed it at last".

"What do you say?" asked the doctor kindly, looking down into the young man's troubled face. The doctor did not understand what he meant.

"I have missed it after all", the young man answered.

"What have you missed?" the doctor asked.

"I have missed it at last", the young man answered, in despair.

"What have you missed?" the doctor asked again.

"What have I missed? Doctor, I have missed securing my salvation."

"How so?"

"How so?" the young man repeated. "It is a sad story. I was awakened not long ago. My conscience told me what a wretched, wicked sinner I had been. The Holy Spirit was striving with me. When I was in deep distress for my soul, I resolved to dismiss the subject of religion from my thoughts. I was urged to make sure the day of grace by repentance and faith in Christ. I begged to postpone the subject for a little time. But I had to promise myself that I would at some future time, not very far away, be a Christian and make my calling and my election sure. But now I have missed it. This is my sad story."

"It is not too late even now", said the doctor, hoping to encourage the young man to believe in Christ before it really was too late.

"Doctor, you do not know what you say. I tell you I have missed it at last."

"Do not say so. Remember the thief on the cross. It was not too late for him."

"Remember the thief on the cross! Yes, I remember him. It was not too late for him. He never said, 'Go Thy way for this time' to the Holy Spirit. But I did. *I did*. And now He tells me *I may go my way*."

"How does He tell you?" was the surprised question.

"He tells me," the young man answered as he laid his hand on his heart; "I feel it here." Yet such feelings did not come from the Holy Spirit.

"But some are heard at the eleventh hour", the doctor went on.

"I know. But my eleventh hour was when I had *that* call! *It was the last*."

“Not the last. You are called now.”

“Doctor,” said the young man, with complete hopelessness showing on his face. Then there was a pause before he said slowly and with great emphasis, “I’ve missed it at last.”

Soon afterwards he died. How solemn! He hardened his heart against the gospel, and against Christ in the gospel, when the Holy Spirit had been convincing him of sin.

The doctor was right in what he said. But the young man was so completely under the power of unbelief that he argued against everything that was said to encourage him. He refused to repent and believe the gospel: the good news that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”.

Yet clearly, when he resisted the Holy Spirit and went his own way, the Spirit left him to himself. The Spirit left him very much under the awful power of unbelief.

Unbelief is strong, and the devil is powerful in tempting sinners to continue unconverted, refusing the gospel – perhaps promising themselves, like this young man, that it will only be for a short time. We must seek the Lord *now*; we are to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ now, not at some future time, however close to the present moment that time might be. Yes, it may then be too late. But it is not too late for you to believe now and be saved. God’s call is His command. Do not refuse again; to refuse is rebellion.

A Reformation Tour

8. St Andrews Cathedral

Rev David Campbell

The previous article considered the life and martyrdom of Walter Mill, who was burnt to death outside the Cathedral of St Andrews in April 1558. This article looks at the Cathedral itself and some notable points of interest in its ruins.

It is difficult for us to imagine what the town of St Andrews must have been like in the period before the Reformation. The entire town was dominated by the very large and busy Cathedral, which now lies in ruins. The ruins are well preserved but we could not get in for our tour because of some concerns about the safety of the structure. The site is worth visiting when an opportunity arises. A good view of the ruins can be obtained by climbing St Rule’s Tower, which is in the middle of the Cathedral space. From the top, a very clear picture of the town and the surrounding area can be enjoyed, and the plan of the Cathedral ruins will be more clearly seen.

In the Wardlaw Museum (on The Scores) there is an exhibition about

the Cathedral and some imagined representations of what it and the town may have looked like around 1560, when the Reformation brought about such great changes. Such depictions of the Cathedral usually represent the destruction of the site and the end of its former uses as a great loss. The Reformers would not have shared such a view, nor, it seems, would the inhabitants of St Andrews over later years. Most of the stones of the now-ruined Cathedral were used for a better purpose in erecting houses and other useful buildings for the people.

The site of the Cathedral was originally used for the church of St Rule (or Regulus). It was possibly built at around 1130 for the newly arrived Augustinian monks who took the place of the former clergy living and working in the area. The Augustinians were one of several orders of monks in the Middle Ages and lived from the alms (or gifts) of the people. Martin Luther was a monk in this order before his conversion and work as the great Reformer of Germany.

It might be asked, Where did St Andrews get its name, and who was St Rule? The story (or legend) is that a fourth-century bishop (possibly simply a minister) of Patras in Greece fled to Scotland in 345 AD and took with him the supposed bones of the Apostle Andrew and deposited them in the place now known as St Andrews. Whether this actually happened and why he may have done such a thing is part of the legend that developed over the centuries that followed. The erroneous and spiritually ruinous teaching of the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages encouraged pilgrims to visit such sites where the supposed bones of former saints were stored for veneration. St Andrews became a place of pilgrimage from all over Europe.

The Augustinian monks very likely took over the church from those who had been monks of the Celtic Church. It is often forgotten that the Celtic Church survived in Scotland until the eleventh century without any submission to the Roman Catholic system or worship. It was viciously persecuted and removed from Scotland by the Romanist sons of the so-called Saint Margaret. Margaret was a Hungarian princess exiled in England who fled to Scotland after the Battle of Hastings in 1066. She married Malcolm III of Scotland in 1070 and set about romanising Scotland. North and South Queensferry are named after her. The Celtic Church was more closely modelled on the biblical pattern than the Roman Catholic Church but had various errors also, including the encouragement of monastic vows. We will look more closely at the events which led to the end of monasticism in Scotland later, when we visit the Blackfriars Chapel ruins.

Building the Cathedral of St Andrews began around 1160 and the work continued for over 150 years. It was finally dedicated (under the false idea

that it was a holy place on account of its use for worship) in 1318, when the then King Robert the Bruce was present. It was by far the largest church in Scotland and so became the headquarters of the bishops and archbishops which the relatively new Roman Catholic religion introduced to Scotland.

It was richly adorned, and all the abuses and idolatry of Romanism and monastic greed were to be found in this building. The theatrical nature of the worship at the Cathedral, and the spiritual tyranny which the Church held the people under, kept nearly everyone in deep spiritual darkness for several hundred years before the light of the Reformation shone in St Andrews. A few persecuted remnants of the Celtic Church, and other sincere believers remained in Scotland throughout this period of the Dark Ages. One or two of these witnessed for the truth by a martyr's death.

Following the preaching of John Knox in St Andrews, which has already been referred to and which I mean to return to later in a future article, the Cathedral was stripped of its riches, and the monks, priests and hierarchy (bishops and so on) were removed. The Romanist worship was forbidden and it ceased. It is said that much of the idolatrous furniture from the Cathedral was, in 1559, piled high on the spot where Walter Mill was burnt alive in 1558 and burnt to ashes. It is unclear how much use was made of the site for Reformed worship, but because the Reformed Church had no use for such gorgeous and over-sized buildings, the simple worship of the parish churches replaced the corrupt worship of the Cathedral. It was abandoned as early as 1561.

The many graves in the grounds show that the people of St Andrews evidently believed that the spot of earth once esteemed sacred by the idolatrous Romanists was better used for the respectable burial of the dead. With that long-held opinion we agree heartily. Perhaps the most important reason to visit the ruins of the Cathedral today is to see the graves of two eminent and godly ministers of the Scottish Church from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The bodies of these two eminent saints, Samuel Rutherford and Thomas Halyburton, lie side by side, just a few yards to the south-west of St Rule's Tower. The life of Samuel Rutherford is of great interest and some of his writings, including his famous letters, are still in print. I intend to speak further about him in a future article. The inscription on his grave reads as follows (the spelling has been modernised):

“Here lies the Reverend Mr Samuel Rutherford, Professor of Divinity in the University of St Andrews who died March the 20th 1661.

What tongue what pen or skill of men
Can famous Rutherford commend?
His learning justly raised his fame

True godliness adorned his name
He did converse with things above
Acquainted with Emmanuel's love
Most orthodox he was and sound
And many errors did confound
For Zion's King and Zion's cause
And Scotland's covenanted laws
Most constantly he did contend
Until his time was at an end
Then he won to the full fruition
Of that which he had seen in vision."

Thomas Halyburton has been described as of a kindred spirit to Rutherford and equally learned and of similar godliness and integrity of principle. He also was the Professor of Divinity at St Andrews, for a short time. His grave gives the following brief details of his life:

"Here lies the body of Thomas Haliburton, Minister of the Gospel. He was born at Dulpin on December 25th 1674, and ordained Minister of Ceres on May 1st 1700. In April 1710 he was admitted Professor of Divinity in the New College St Andrews, and on September 23rd 1712, at 7 in the morning he fell asleep in Jesus."

Space does not permit us to give more details about the life and writings of this eminent man. Yet words from the introduction to one of his more famous works (written against the error denying the need for the Scriptures), are worth pondering and applying to ourselves, especially when visiting the graves of those long gone: "The grave is the house appointed for all living. Some arrive sooner, some later; but all come there at length. The obscurity of the meanest [lowest] cannot hide him, nor the power of the greatest screen him, from the impartial hand of death – the executioner of fate, if I may be allowed to use a word so much abused. As its coming is beyond doubt, so its aspect [appearance] is hideous beyond the reach of thought, the force of expression, or the utmost efforts of the finest pencil in the most artful hand."

It is said that Thomas Halyburton was buried here, close to Rutherford, at his own request in the expectation of meeting again on the morning of the resurrection. Of this he said that, until then they would "be a knot of bonny dust" mingled together in the earth. The Reformation was, under God's blessing, the means of restoring that good hope of eternal life, through the preaching of the pure gospel, to the souls of needy sinners in Scotland.

Another grave of interest in the grounds of the Cathedral is that of David Hay Fleming (1849-1931) who did much, to recover and defend the history of the Scottish Reformation, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Scripture and Catechism Exercises

Overseas Prizes and Awards 2021-2022

Apologies for this list being so late. This was due to ill health.

Senior Section

Prizes: *Auckland:* Rachel Campbell. *Chesley:* Isabel Bouman, Kara Zekveld. *Fountain Inn:* Ehud Kerr.

Awards: *Auckland:* Amelia Smith. *Calgary:* Kharis Chang. *Carterton:* Aaron Verheij. *Connecticut:* Nathanael Mack. *Grafton:* William Marshall.

Intermediate Section

Prizes: *Auckland:* John and Peter Campbell. *Grafton:* Levi Kidd. *Hendrik-Ido-Ambacht:* Elize Poolman.

Awards: *Auckland:* Aaron Smith. *Calgary:* Khloe Chang. *Carterton:* Blake Verheij. *Fountain Inn:* Othniel Kerr.

Junior Section

Prizes: *Gisborne:* Shona Hembd. *Münster:* Clara Rösner.

Awards: *Auckland:* Owen Smith. *Carterton:* Chelsea Verheij. *Fountain Inn:* Isabel Kerr. *Gisborne:* Brooklyn Hembd.

Upper Primary Section

Prizes: *Auckland:* Joseph Campbell. *Chesley:* Angela Tuinier. *Grafton:* Harrison Kidd. *Sydney:* Ethan Macdonald.

Awards: *Auckland:* Keith Smith. *Calgary:* Karsten Chang. *Chesley:* Daniel Kuiper. *Gisborne:* Preston Hembd. *Sydney:* Sarah Steel.

Lower Primary Section

Awards: *Auckland:* David and Marion Campbell, Daniel Smith. *Calafell:* Valentina Nayach van Essen. *Carterton:* Lana and Mila de Boer, Ruby Verheij. *Chesley:* James and Matthew Kuiper, Meleah Tuinier. *Fountain Inn:* Katharine and Tala-Linn Kerr. *Gisborne:* Andrew and Ashley Hembd. *Münster:* Conrad Rösner. *Santa Fe:* Scout Smith. *Sydney:* Jackson Campbell, Abigail, Hugh and Lachlan Macdonald, David and Emily Steel. *Woodstock:* Jo-Anne Heikoop.

UK Names for Exercise 1 2022-23

Senior Section: *Barnoldswick:* Isaac Fisher. *Dingwall:* Catherine Campbell. *Edinburgh:* Claudia van Essen. *Halkirk:* Donald Maclean. *Inverness:* Jenna Campbell. *London:* Sarah Munns. *North Tolsta:* Uilleam Morrison.

Intermediate Section: *Aberdeen:* Julia Macleod. *Barnoldswick:* Jael Fisher, Bethan Middleton, Daniel van Essen. *Edinburgh:* Anna Cameron-Macintosh. *Glasgow:* Elena MacLennan, Violet Marr. *Halkirk:* Grace Maclean. *Inverness:* Susanna Jane Campbell, Anna McSeveney, Callum A Morrison. *Southampton:* Lydia and Jonny Wilkins. *Ullapool:* Tacita Faith Angell.

Junior Section. *Barnoldswick:* Ruth Fisher, Susie Middleton. *Beaulieu:* Rebekka Fraser, Hudson MacLean. *Dingwall:* Neil Campbell, Donald Allan MacColl. *Inverness:* Murray Dickie, James Maton. *Llanelli:* Sarah Cran. *North Tolsta:* Rebecca Morrison.

Upper Primary Section. *Aberdeen:* Kenneth Macleod, Cassia Soni. *Dingwall:* Iain MacColl. *Edinburgh:* Alec and Julia Cameron-Mackintosh, Darcy and Joella Essen, Alice Hicklin. *Halkirk:* Angus Hymers-Mackintosh, Sophie Stewart. *Inverness:* Campbell Dickie. *London:* Ernest Campbell, Edmund Johnson, Daniel Macleod. *North Harris:* Finlay Jardine. *North Tolsta:* James Morrison.

Lower Primary Section. *Aberdeen:* Philip Macleod. *Barnoldswick:* Matilda and Micah Fisher. *Dingwall:* Heather Campbell, Mairi and Charlotte MacColl. *Edinburgh:* Samuel and James Dickie, Teddy Esson, Leah and Matthew Hicklin, Genevieve MacLean. *Glasgow:* Joel Marr. *Inverness:* Molly and Emily Campbell, Harvey Dickie. *London:* Lydia and William Campbell, Constance Johnson, Benjamin Macleod. *North Harris:* Margaret Jardine. *North Tolsta:* James Morrison. *Portree:* Murdo Macraileid. *Southampton:* Benjy Wilkins.

Looking Around Us

Sympathy in Sadness

Four boys, aged from six to 11, died after falling through ice on a lake near Solihull, in the West Midlands in England. This sad incident shows the need for great caution before going on ice. The danger in falling through the ice is not only drowning, but also the fact that the water underneath is very cold indeed and anyone who does fall into it will soon die.

Of course, many people expressed their sympathy to those who lost their children. Many of them said that their thoughts were with everyone involved – that they were thinking of these people in their sadness and were conscious how difficult they must be finding the tragic event. A school in Solihull also said that their prayers were with everyone involved. Now it would be easy to understand this if they said that they were praying for those who were involved. If they understood prayer properly they would have meant that they were asking God to support and comfort those who had lost loved ones and were experiencing great sadness.

Others might have said they were praying for those who died. But that would be wrong. It is too late to pray for those who have died, though many – rejecting the teaching of the Bible – believe that one can pray for the dead. In all our thinking, even when trying to show sympathy to people in very sad circumstances, we must stick to the truth that is revealed in the Bible.

Let us realise that those who die go at once either to heaven or to hell. Let us realise too how necessary and urgent it is to be prepared for death, no matter how young one may be.

Bibles in London

The Greater London Auxiliary of the Trinitarian Bible Society is a local branch of the Society. Since it was formed in December 2019, the Auxiliary has focused on distributing Bibles to London schools and over 10 000 Bibles have been given out. Some hospitals and care homes for older people also have accepted free grants of Bibles.

The Auxiliary comments that millions of people in London know very little of the Lord Jesus Christ. So it is good that thousands of children have received copies of God's Word. But will they read the Bible? Otherwise it will do them no good. But God is able to make them willing to read this best of books and to apply its teaching to their souls. What reason there is to pray that these Bibles would be blessed to those who receive them!

Price £1.10