

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; **Fifth:** Auckland, Inverness, New Canaan.

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

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

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

May: First Sabbath: Donsa, Grafton, Leverburgh; **Second:** Achmore, Scourie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fourth:** Chiedza.

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

July: First Sabbath: Beauly; **Second:** Bonar Bridge, Uig; **Third:** Auckland, Applecross, Fort William; **Fourth:** Struan. **Fifth:** Cameron.

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

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

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

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

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

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The Need for a Mediator

The Children of Israel had reached Mount Sinai. There they heard God delivering the Ten Commandments and they “saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking” (Ex 20:18). These were all tremendously impressive. The Israelites felt profoundly afraid and they moved “afar off”. They said to Moses: “Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die”. Or, as recorded in Deuteronomy, “This great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die” (5:25). They saw their need of a mediator between God and themselves. They did not feel safe when God spoke to them directly. So they asked that they might have Moses stand between them and God, to act as a prophet – one who would speak to them on behalf of God.

Yet one wonders if the Israelites really felt the solemnity and authority of, for instance, the command, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” (Ex 20:3). Did they really understand how easy it is for sinners to make gods for themselves – whether money or possessions or people, not to speak of the imaginary gods that the Egyptians, for instance, had been worshipping. The Israelites needed a change of heart, so that they would truly love and serve the Lord, who had created them and had brought them out of bondage in Egypt. They clearly did not appreciate the full significance of their sins, and that God saw all their sins and would punish them for their lack of repentance even if He would speak to them through Moses. But the Israelites had *some* sense of the basic truth that sinners need a mediator.

We today fundamentally have the same needs as the Israelites; we all need a new heart, so that we may love and serve the God who made us and has given us so many blessings – in providing us with food, for instance, and His revelation in the Scriptures. Let us then seek to learn something further from that significant incident at Mount Sinai.

As a prophet, Moses was indeed a mediator between Israel and God. It was good that Israel had some understanding of their need. But something more was necessary: a mediator who could actually save their souls. In speak-

ing to Moses, God promised a greater and more glorious Mediator: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him” (Dt 18:18).

Peter spoke of the Lord Jesus as the One in whom God’s promise was fulfilled (Acts 3:20-22). Though Moses was indeed a type (or, a pattern) of Jesus Christ as Mediator, Christ was altogether greater. Moses could pass on to the Israelites what God had revealed to him, but he had no access to their souls; he could not apply the truth to them; he could not change their hearts and make them godly. But Christ has access to the souls of sinners. Working by the Holy Spirit, He can apply the truth to them, change their hearts and make them godly.

Let us note how God dealt with Lydia in Philippi, “whose heart the Lord opened” – gently, it would seem – so “that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul” (Acts 16:14). Christ as prophet so spoke through His ambassador Paul that Lydia believed in the Saviour and her soul was saved. But it was the same Prophet who spoke to Paul when he was going on in rebellion against the despised Jesus of Nazareth and was struck to the ground; the Prophet asked, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” and when Saul of Tarsus responded with a question about who was speaking, the Prophet answered, “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks” (Acts 9:4,5). By using His name *Jesus*, He was doing more than convincing this violent persecutor of his sin; He was revealing Himself as the Saviour, a suitable Saviour even for one who was to call himself “the chief of sinners”. And that is still part of the self-revelation of Christ, as He speaks by His Word and Spirit. He spoke to Saul directly; since the Bible was completed, He does not speak directly, but speaks powerfully and effectively into the hearts of sinners through the preaching and reading of Scripture.

Yet there can be no salvation apart from sacrifice. It is said emphatically: “without shedding of blood is no remission” of sin (Heb 9:22). And the sacrifice must be perfect if it is to be accepted; this was illustrated by the demand that the Old Testament sacrifices must be “without blemish” – though only the outside could be examined; the inside of the animal could not be checked. But the sacrifice that will effectively take away sin must not only be entirely pure and holy; it must be offered by a priest who is without blemish of any kind inwardly and outwardly. Christ was that priest and He was also the sacrifice; He said to the Father: “A body hast Thou prepared Me” (Heb 10:5). The “body” was the entire human nature, body and soul which He took into union with His divine Person; it was in that nature,

which was “holy, harmless, undefiled” (Heb 7:25), that He suffered unto death. This was the work of the Mediator as priest and, by this work, those whom He was representing were to be delivered from eternal destruction and brought at last to eternal glory.

How much we sinners need the priestly work of “the one Mediator between God and men”! We cannot be saved without it. The sacrificing work has been completed; He said, “It is finished” (Jn 19:30). But the priestly work of intercession continues, as the Mediator presents before the Father the merits of the substitutionary work He completed on earth. Christ stands between God and sinners as they seek to come before God and plead for blessings. But how can *sinners* be accepted when they come with their requests? Only because of the Mediator and, not only His great work of redemption in this world, but also His work of intercession. We sinners are under an obligation to pray, but we need to remember that our petitions are stained with sin. How can a holy God accept sinful petitions? Only when presented on the sinner’s behalf by the perfectly holy Mediator.

The Mediator also acts as king, in subduing sinners to Himself, in ruling and defending them, and in restraining and conquering all His and their enemies (see *Shorter Catechism* Answer 26). What a mercy, when we are altogether unable to come to Christ – to believe on Him and be saved – that He as Mediator is able to exert His authority over us and draw us to Himself! What a mercy, when His people are so weak in the face of the temptations of Satan and his followers, both human beings and devils, that Christ is able to restrain and conquer them all!

One of Christ’s functions as king is to exercise judgement. We must all appear before Him to be judged on the last day, “that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor 5:10). How awful it will be then if we have not availed ourselves of the Mediator when we had the opportunity!

The second coming of Christ will be reminiscent of the scene at Sinai, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power” (2 Th 1:7-9). At Sinai, there were various signs warning of the fearfulness of transgressing God’s commands; the Israelites were very afraid and sought a mediator. In God’s mercy Moses became a mediator between them and God. The consequences of sin remain tremendously serious. A divine Mediator, Jesus, has been provided. Let us ask ourselves: Have I sought to have Him as the one Mediator between me and God?

A Coronation Sermon (2)¹

John Flavel

Song of Solomon 3:11. *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.*

Application. 1. The first point of application is **information**, in several inferences from it.

Inference 1. Learn what is *the true cause and reason of Satan's rage and spite against the gospel* and the most painstaking, able and successful preachers of it in the world. The great purpose of the gospel, and of all who sincerely preach it, is to win Satan's subjects and persuade them to forsake his cruel, unjust and tyrannical government and to submit to the kingdom and rule of the Lord Jesus.

What is the preaching of the gospel but the sounding of a trumpet in the devil's kingdom, to win his subjects from their allegiance to him, to proclaim another king in his territories? Every faithful minister's business is to gather these wretched vassals of Satan together and set before them the miserable bondage they are in, under the tyrant that rules over them (whose laws, like Draco's,² are written in the blood of their souls), to emphasise their sin and misery, and to let them know how willing Christ is to receive and save them, if they will renounce Satan's government. The minister is to set before them the blessed freedom and glorious privileges of the subjects of Christ, to beseech them to break away from their cruel master and come over to Christ, to answer all their pleas and objections against it, and to denounce the wrath of God against all who refuse Christ's gracious proclamation.

Satan knows all this; he reckons the loss of one – much more the revolt of many – a greater danger than a king reckons the loss of a kingdom. How it grates on that envious spirit to see them break away from him and be ready to fight against him! How it sharpens his malice against the instruments and agents in this work! As William Gurnall says, it torments the foul spirit to see his old friends and servants forsake him, and this new Lord come and take away his subjects. Hence persecutions and slanders come in showers on Christ's faithful ministers. Satan knows his kingdom of darkness must vanish, as the light of the gospel rises and spreads itself. You read of "an angel

¹Preached at Dartmouth when William and Mary were crowned in 1689. Taken with editing from Flavel's *Works*, vol 6. The first part dealt with three points: (1.) In what respects the day of a sinner's espousals to Christ resembles the day of a king's coronation. (2) How these two days differ. (3.) Why it is the day of the gladness of Christ's heart.

²A scribe of the law in Athens who imposed heavy punishments for small offences.

fly[ing] in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth” (Rev 14:6,7). And another angel follows him saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city”.

Satan knows every charge made by the gospel will issue in a rout of his infernal legions. He has a particular grudge for ministers coming forth against him as heralds, to proclaim Christ’s rights – and as captains of the army of Christ, who is their general. He seeks every way to destroy them or to stop their mouths. Surely he has pushed hard at them and made desperate attempts against them in our days. No doubt but it was reckoned a great service done for him, to shut up the mouths of so many at once;³ but the time draws nigh when Babylon must fall, and those that could not lately show their faces on earth must fly in the midst of heaven, with the everlasting gospel. The dead witnesses of Christ shall hear shortly a great voice from heaven, saying, “Come up hither”; and they shall ascend in a cloud, their enemies beholding them but not able any more to hinder them.

Inference 2. *How altogether groundless are the discouragements and fears of humbled and convinced sinners, that Jesus Christ will reject them and shut the door of mercy against them, if they should go to Him and cast their poor sinful soul upon Him by faith? Certainly such people fear, although there is no reason for fear. To come to Christ – which is His command, the earnest desire of His soul, that act which makes His heart glad, as the text speaks – can never meet with such a repulse as you fear. Was any king ever unwilling to have the crown set upon his head? Do they usually frown on their subjects when they pay homage to them? No, it is the day of the gladness of their hearts.*

Renounce your old master Satan, give a bill of divorce to those lusts which have reigned over your soul, ponder well Christ’s terms, and consent to them heartily. Then see if He will not quickly prove your vain fears to be wrong and fully make good His gracious and most encouraging assurance, “Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out” (Jn 6:37).

Inference 3. *What an honourable relationship faith brings the soul of a sinner into! The day of conversion is the day of that soul’s espousals to Christ. A king from heaven makes suit for a poor sinner’s heart, woos for union with sinful creatures, rejoices exceedingly when He wins their consent and espouses them for ever to Himself when He obtains it. A contract is consent in plain affirmative words: I disclaim and for ever renounce all others and willingly yield up my heart and life to Jesus Christ. Now an obligation results from this contract with Christ, and a most honourable mystical*

³No doubt a reference to the Great Ejection of 1662, when around 2000 ministers, including Flavel, were put out of their charges.

union with Him. “He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit” (1 Cor 6:17).

The greatest honour that was ever put on human nature was by it being assumed into union with the Person of the Son of God, and the greatest honour that can be done to our persons is by our being united with Christ. Hereby we become “members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones” (Eph 5:30) – the spouse of Christ. What preferment is this! What soul does not feel itself lifted up far above all earthly honours, in such a relation to Christ as this? The nobles of the kingdoms think it preferment to serve their queen; and the angels of heaven do not think themselves degraded by performing service to the bride, the Lamb’s wife. Let all the saints understand their dignity and privileges, by this honourable union with Christ; and let them balance with it all the reproaches, scorn and contempt that this vile world loads them with for His sake.

Inference 4. Learn *the dreadful and damning nature of the sin of unbelief*: a sin that not only questions but denies Christ’s right to rule over the soul. It blinds the mind, hardens the heart, stiffens the will and makes the soul obstinate to all the gracious offers of Christ in the gospel.

Unbelief is the poisonous breath of Satan whispering jealousies, surmises and dangerous prejudices against Christ into the ear of the soul, and all tending to this mischievous purpose: to hinder or break the treaty of spiritual marriage between Christ and the soul. Now it will be digging at the very root of the assenting act, and thus it whispers, How can you be sure of the reality of the things reported in the gospel? Is it not possible they may be devised fables, the cunning artifices of men, to keep the world in awe? But you never saw Christ, for whose sake you are so earnestly solicited to renounce all your real, present comforts and enjoyments. Then it expands rhetorically on the severe terms of the gospel, advises the soul to think, sadly, how hard, grievous and unreasonable the demands of Christ are: “If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (Lk 14:26).

How do you like this? Here are all your principal comforts, your most dear and desirable things in the world – to be forsaken; indeed, hated for Christ’s sake. The terms are set so high that a man must lose his brains, says unbelief, before he can be wrought up to them. Can you endure to see all the labours of your life become a prey to your enemies; to see what has cost you so much study and toil scattered and destroyed in a day, when it is yet in your power to save all; to see your habitation cast you out, to see your pleasant fields possessed by strangers? Are you hardy enough to encounter beggary, to fight with hunger, thirst and nakedness, to lie in a nasty jail, to endure a parting pull with your nearest relatives, who are as your own soul?

But there are harder trials than these. Can you endure a tormenting death, by cruel barbarous enemies; can you stand quietly at a stake and endure the terrible torments of fire, even while you are in the flower of your age, have the full use of your senses, and have a fair prospect of many pleasant years before you – and all this for unseen glory in another world? These are the arguments urged by unbelief against embracing Christ’s overtures in the gospel, or coming under the rule of this new Lord. And how many they prevail with! Thus Satan makes his subjects secure to himself.

But sinner, if God has any intention of saving your soul in mercy, you shall feel the more powerful principles of faith and love overpowering these carnal reasonings within thy soul. It is admirable to behold the almighty influences of grace upon nature: how the drawing of the Spirit, His omnipotent pull at the heart, makes the strongest ties of this world to give way. “Lo, we have left all, and followed Thee” (Mk 10:28). But if you are fixedly resolved not to give up Satan’s government for Christ’s; if you say in your heart, I will never consent to such hard conditions; then hear your sentence, “But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me” (Lk 19:27). The sentence is dreadful, the execution sure; your unbelief will as surely damn you as a millstone about your neck, in the midst of the sea, will drown you. “He that believeth not shall be damned” (Mk 16:16). You have cast the vilest dishonour on Christ, you have rejected the only way of salvation; and what can the outcome of your final unbelief be but ruin and destruction?

2. The next point of application is **persuasive work**, to gain the consent of souls to come under the government of Christ, to make His heart glad and yourselves happy for ever, by your espousals to Him. O that I could this day so represent this King in His glory, so make known the miserable thralldom you are in under Satan and your lusts, so make clear the reasonableness and easiness of Christ’s demands, that the response to my demand for your consent to Christ might be as hearty (though not so audible) as ever was at the coronation of any king.

1. Consider *the glory and dignity of the Person of Christ*; He is the Son of God by nature, “the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person” (Heb 1:3). He is “the Prince of the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5). The most glorious monarch over men is but as a worm of the earth, or as an insect in the air, compared with Solomon in his glory; the most perfect beauty in the creatures, beneath or above, is blackness and deformity in comparison with Christ: The beauty of roses, lilies, sun, stars and angels is not worthy to be mentioned in comparison with Christ: “Thou art fairer (says His spouse) than the children of men”. No one ever saw Him savingly by the eye of faith

but were charmed into His bosom by love. To see Christ is the feast of blessed souls above.

The King of glory makes suit for your hearts this day; He woos for your consent. He passed by apostate angels, not once making them an offer of reconciliation or union, but comes to you in His red garments, glorious in His apparel. He shed His invaluable blood to redeem sinners to God; He loved them and gave Himself for them; if there is a drop of love in your hearts, I think the excellence of Christ should extract it. Write that man a beast, a senseless post, that has no love for Christ.

2. Consider *what a blessed state*, abounding with glorious and invaluable privileges, that your consent to be Christ's brings you to. It opens to you all privileges, mercies, and blessings that are desirable in the eyes of men; it opens into freedom and liberty, from slavery to Satan and sin, from the curse of the law and the danger of wrath to come. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (Jn 8:36). It opens the door into rest and peace – peace with God, peace in your own consciences (Rom 5:1-3).

You have never yet tasted the deliciousness of peace if you are strangers to Christ – and never shall till you consent to be His. This shall be your support, amidst all the confusions and distractions, hurries and tumults, of this restless and unquiet world. "This man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces" (Mic 5:5). Christ has pitched His standard in the gospel; go to it, come under His banner, and enlist among His faithful subjects; and the glory of the world to come is yours if you overcome and are faithful unto death (Rev 2:10,11). The subjects of Christ, in this kingdom of grace, are shortly to be all translated into the kingdom of glory.

3. Consider *the miserable bondage* you are now in, over whom Satan rules, and how your condition grows worse and worse till it shall not be capable of any further addition of misery, to make it more completely miserable. You are now without God, without a promise, without peace, without the pardon of one sin (Eph 2:12). You have no communion with God or title to heaven; you are slaves to your sordid lusts (Tts 3:3), under the curse (Gal 3:10), condemned already (Jn 3:18), and if you die out of Christ, you shall die in your sins (Jn 8:24). He that was your ruler in the world, is to be both your companion and tormentor in the world to come (Mt 25:41.).

Is this a condition to be satisfied in? Can you sleep quietly in your chains? I think the poor prisoners of Satan should sigh and cry, through the grates of the prison, especially when they are informed of deliverance at the door.

You have no reason to take fright at the terms propounded to you by Christ; they are fair, necessary and easy. "Come unto Me . . . My yoke is

easy, and My burden is light” (Mt 11:28,29). “His commandments are not grievous” (1 Jn 5:3). All His ways are pleasantness, and all His paths are peace (Prov 3:17). “The joy of the Lord is your strength (Neh 8:10). If there is repenting work, believing work, sin-mortifying work, or suffering work for you, there is also a suitable provision of divine assistance, to enable and carry you through it all. “My grace is sufficient for thee” (2 Cor 12:9). If men cast you out, God will receive you (2 Cor 6:17,18). If you experience any sharp trial, a door of escape has been prepared for you (1 Cor 10:13). If you meet with trouble in the world, you shall not fail to find peace in Christ (Jn 16:33). If you lose any outward enjoyment for Christ’s sake, it shall be recompensed an hundredfold in this world, besides the reward of heaven hereafter (Mt 19:29). If you are cast into prison for Christ, the Comforter shall come from heaven and rest upon you (1 Pet 4:13,14). If you suffer with Him, you shall reign with Him (2 Tim 2:12).

What do you think, brethren, of Christ’s terms now? What is there here for men to scare and take fright at? Can you mend yourselves elsewhere? O when shall the match be made? When will you come to Christ and say, Lord, I heartily consent to take Thee for my King; I am pleased with the hardest condition required in Thy Word.

4. Be convinced of *the unreasonableness of all that you can pretend against this great duty*. If you say, The pains of mortification are hard, you must in reason accept that the pains of damnation are harder, and that it is better for you to enter into life, halt and maimed, than having two eyes or hands, to be cast into hell; where the worm dies not, and where the fire is not quenched (Mt 5:29,30). If you say that you have no power to come to Christ, your consciences will at once tell you that you never yet put forth the utmost power that you have, in striving for your salvation. It will also tell you that you suppose you have such a power, or else why have you so long delayed repentance and conversion upon the pretence that you will seriously perform them hereafter? Besides, though your endeavours do not oblige God to do for you what you cannot do of yourselves; yet it is more probable He will do so when you strive to your utmost than when you carelessly neglect those duties and give yourselves up to the opposite courses.

Do you say you would strive if you were assured you would be accepted by Christ, if you came to Him and cast your poor souls on Him? Yet you daily spend your time and pains on lesser things, with no assurance at all of success. The husbandman toils all day at ploughing, yet is not assured of a good harvest; his corn may die in the seed, or be blasted in the ear. The seaman ventures his possessions on the sea, yet has no assurance of a good return; the ship may come to harm. The miner will dig into the bowels of the

earth and try here and there; yet he has no assurance that he shall find that rich vein of ore that shall repay his expenses and pains. Now if men will labour so hard and risk so much for uncertainties, for a little of the world, does your own reason not conclude that you ought to do more and venture further than any of them, to obtain Christ and eternal salvation? Strive to escape from Satan's kingdom to Christ. Do not sit with folded hands on seats of sloth, saying, It is to no purpose.

Suppose you are now on your deathbed, and all earthly comforts have become insipid, conscience anticipating the wrath to come, with time and hope ending together. Would you not then wish that you had been ruled by Christ's laws and Spirit, and not by Satan and your own lusts? If you had been a servant of Christ, you would now be going to Christ. If He had been your ruler, He would have saved you: but "his servants ye are to whom ye obey". You have served your lusts, and "the wages of sin is death".

Or suppose you saw the glories of heaven or the horrors of hell; suppose you heard the hallelujahs of the palm-bearing multitude or the shrieks of damned castaways; would you be so indifferent about obeying Christ's call? Believe it, these things are no fables, but they really exist, whether you pay attention to them or not. And why should you not think of these things beforehand that are so sure and so near? A sweet voice comes from heaven this day, saying, Let all who expect to enjoy eternal glory see that they submit heartily to Christ's rule, for He saves no more than He rules over. The whole number of the glorified in heaven is made up of such as heartily closed with Christ's terms on earth. A dreadful voice comes up from hell, crying (as it were) in your ears: As you expect to escape the miseries and torments that are here, do not reject Christ's yoke as we did. Our yielding up ourselves to be ruled by our lusts was our ruin.

3. The last point of application is: **Let all men** try their own state of soul and **examine what king they belong to**, and whose subjects they truly are, Christ's or Satan's; for these two kingdoms make up the whole world. God has given us self-reflecting powers; we can leave the confused noises of the world, and sit in the innermost closet of our own souls, where none but God and our consciences shall be privy to our thoughts. There we may solemnly demand of our conscience and charge it to give plain and faithful answers to such questions as these:

Question 1. To whom do I yield the most prompt, cheerful and constant obedience? To the commands of Christ, or to the solicitations of Satan and my own lusts? He whom I obey is my Lord and King. "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey" (Rom 6:16). When God and conscience call me to pray, and the world calls me

away to attend its ensnaring pleasures and unnecessary employments; which of these calls do I obey?

Question 2. Who governs the secret and unseen part of my life? Every man is, in God's account, what he is in secret (Rom 2:28, 29). Now who is king in the closet? And what rules do my thoughts move by? If Christ brings my thoughts into obedience, so that I dare not indulge to myself a sinful liberty to enjoy the pleasure of the sins I have committed, or would commit if I had the opportunity; and if I am in the fear of God when alone and make conscience of my secret duties, as well as public ones; then I am under Christ's government, and He is King of my soul (2 Cor 10:5, Mt 6:6). But if I make an external show of obedience to Christ and secretly obey my lusts, I am really the servant of sin and belong to another king. O my conscience, what do you say to these things?

Question 3. Whom do I follow, or heartily resolve to follow, when it comes to a parting point between Christ and the world – when I must cleave to the one and forsake the other? (Mt 6:24). Do I with full purpose of heart cleave to the Lord? (Acts 11:23). Is it my sincere resolution to “follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth”? (Rev 14:4). Or have I secret wishes to quit Christ's service and give religion the slip, when it comes to real distress and difficulty? These questions will show whose government we are under.

Conclusion. Thus I have endeavoured to spiritualise and apply the great, solemn actions of this good day, a day for which, I hope, the children yet unborn shall praise the Lord. How blessed will our King and Queen be, if they reign over a people that Christ reigns over, and will conscientiously pay them obedience in, and for, the Lord! I believe it will be a greater joy to their souls to see you set the crown upon Christ's head, in your subjection to His laws, than to see the crown of England set on their own heads. Religion breeds the best subjects.

Let England praise the Lord for such a day as this! How many sad years have run out since it saw the crown upon the heads of a Protestant king and queen at once! Let faithful magistrates rejoice that, under such a government as this, they shall never more be put on the odious and dangerous drudgery of persecuting good men. Let ministers rejoice with double the joy of others! They shall no more be driven into corners, or put to silence (a silence as bitter as death) while the royal sceptre is swayed by such hands, wherein God has now placed it. Let all the people rejoice, for these their rulers shall be to them as the light of the morning, as the clear shining after rain (2 Sam 23:3,4). And let us all say, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for Him; we will rejoice and be glad in His salvation” (Is 25:9).

The Grace of Adoption (3)¹

Rev Donald MacLean

Rule by a patriarch. Webb² mentions another form of government as well as the two we have already mentioned.³ This he calls the patriarchal form, in which rule by a master and a father is combined in the one head. The administrator of this form is at the same time ruler *and* father. This system is to be seen in the households of the patriarchs, such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

As already noticed, God inaugurated the human race in Eden, and this was under the patriarchal form. Adam was created at once a servant in God's kingdom and a son in his house and, after his creation, God stood in relation to him as ruler and father at one and the same time. Under this patriarchal form, Adam fell by his sin. He thereby lost his servanthood and his sonship. Adam was now the object of both judicial and paternal wrath. And, in order to be restored, he would need justification and adoption.

Due to his folly, Adam was now an outlawed servant and a repudiated son. In his heart he was a vicious servant and a depraved son. The whole human race fell in him. As the Saviour testified to the Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him" (Jn 8:44).

Restoration for man. Having commented on the first Adam and the low state of the human race on account of his sin, we now come to consider the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. There could be no restoration of any of the human race to paternal and filial favour, apart from the mediatorial work of the second Adam, the Son of God. The Word of God tells us: "It became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many *sons* unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings". The purpose of the Father, arising from His everlasting love to some of the human race, was to bring them to glory as sons.

This great work was to be carried out by His beloved Son, the appointed and anointed Captain of salvation. He is the eternally begotten Son of God, the second Person within the Godhead. His relationship to His Father is altogether unique; it is incommunicable. He is the Son of God by eternal

¹This is the final part of a paper given at the Theological Conference in 1999.

²R A Webb, an American professor of theology, wrote a "useful book entitled, *The Reformed Doctrine of Adoption*" (Mr MacLean's description).

³See the first part of this paper, printed in the May issue, which speaks of the rule of a master over a servant and of a father over a son.

generation. In a way that is inscrutable to the human race, the Father communicates the fullness of the divine nature to His Son by a necessary and eternal act. We cannot comprehend an eternal act being necessary, but we can understand that, if it was a necessary act and therefore not determined by the *will* of the Father, then the Son is in no way inferior to the Father. He is the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

In order that it would be possible for many sons to be brought to glory, it was necessary for the Captain of salvation to be made perfect through suffering. As God, it was impossible for Him to suffer; therefore the Son of God became the Son of man so that, in His holy human nature, He could meet the claims of God's law and justice as a result of the sins of the many sons.

By the power of the Holy Ghost, a sinless humanity was conceived in Mary's womb. By a personal act of His own, the Son of God took the holy humanity thus conceived into union with His divine person. Mary was instructed by the angel, not only to call this Child's name Jesus when she would bring Him forth, but also that He would be called "the Son of God" (Lk 1:31,35). We usually call this the theanthropic sonship,⁴ as distinct from His trinitarian sonship.

Thus, in the fullness of the time, the Son of God became the Son of man and yet continued to be the Son of God. *The Son of man* was a title in which He evidently delighted. The Son of man, He said, came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk 19:10); "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28). After His incarnation He abides for ever a theanthropic person; so *The Shorter Catechism* states that He "so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person for ever".

It is of this Person that the Father says, "Behold My servant, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth" (Is 42:1). So we see in the second Adam, as we see in the first Adam, servanthood and sonship meeting in the one Person. In the case of the second Adam, it was for the purpose of bringing many sons to glory through the suffering of the Son of God in our nature. These sufferings, as we have already mentioned, were to satisfy the claims of the holy justice of God in atoning for the sins of all who were loved with His everlasting love.

The chief end of the Person of the trinitarian Son is the happiness of God, which consists in the communion of love between the Father and the Son in the communion of the Holy Ghost. If there was no trinitarian Son, then the Father would have no son answering to the relation of Fatherhood. But the

⁴The sonship of the God-man.

chief end of the theanthropic Son, the God-man, is the happiness of men, for it is through Him, and Him alone, that they can enjoy the happiness of having fellowship with the Father.

The many sons who are to be brought to glory are by nature in the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of Satan. The work of the Captain of salvation was to open up the way for the many sons to be delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son. With the claims of divine justice satisfied, the many sons can be brought into Christ's kingdom. The Holy Spirit is represented as the great agent in bringing them into the kingdom, and He uses the Word of God as His instrument.

Justification and adoption. Through His effectual call, a soul is united to Christ by faith, and is justified through the righteousness of Christ being imputed to it. Justification is a judicial act of God; it is not a change of nature but a change in the sinner's *state* in relation to God. In this act of justification, the sins of the justified sinner are pardoned; he is reconciled to God and received into His favour. Those who are justified are made partakers of the grace of adoption, whereby they are taken into the number and enjoy the privileges of the children of God.

Adoption also is a change of state and so is completed at once. It also is the privilege of all who truly believe in Christ. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12,13).

The meritorious cause lying behind the privilege of adoption is the obedience and satisfaction of Christ. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal 4:4,5). The adoption of sons differs from the privilege of justification in that it brings the Christian before God in the new relation of a *child* to a father.

The privileges of the children of God:

1. They obtain a new name, for they are taken out of the family of Satan and adopted into the family of God. They are now known as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty (2 Cor 6:18).

2. They receive the spirit of adoption. By the grace of regeneration, the Spirit implants in them a new nature, so that they have the disposition of children; He begins to transform them into the image of God's dear Son. He gives them grace to cry, "Abba, Father," and He witnesses with their spirits that they are the children of God. He is also the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.

3. They have access and boldness to the throne of grace and can pour out their hearts before Him.
4. They are the objects of God's fatherly sympathy and pity – "He knoweth our frame".
5. They enjoy God's protection from their numerous enemies.
6. Their heavenly Father provides for them, both in providence and in grace.
7. They enjoy the privilege of God's parental correction or discipline.
8. The Father will not cut them off. He has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee".
9. They are heirs to a glorious inheritance, being "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ", so they look for His glorious appearing.
10. Christ is their elder brother.

The Covenant of Works¹

1. God and His Law

Archibald Hall

God created man after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness. The capacities of man were originally adapted to the law of God. He was absolutely dependent on his Maker, in whom he lived, moved and had his being, and this obliged him to serve and obey his Maker. He both knew the will of God and delighted to do it; as he was made upright, the ways of the Lord were in his heart. He was both holy and happy; he had favour with God, and dominion was given him over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, the cattle and every creeping thing on the earth. All the duties required of him were, in his own view, reasonable, pleasant and advantageous for promoting his happiness. He could say from constant experience: "I delight to do Thy will, O my God"; "in keeping of [His commandments] there is great reward"; wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace"; and "the law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver".

Adam was created as the natural root of a very numerous posterity, who were, in successive generations, to "replenish the earth"; and it pleased God to constitute him a representative of all this posterity who should descend from him by ordinary generation. To execute His own sovereign purpose for

¹Hall (1736-78) belonged to one of the Scottish Secession Churches and, for the last 13 years of his life, he ministered to their congregation in Wall Street, London. This is an edited extract from Hall's *Treatise on the Faith and Influence of the Gospel*.

man, God entered into a covenant of life with the first Adam, not only in his own person, but in the name of all his posterity, in virtue of the law of his creation. By it happiness was secured to himself and them, on condition of his perfect personal obedience to the law of God, until the period of his state of probation was ended. And the wrath and curse of God were denounced against both him and all mankind whom he represented, if at any time he swerved in thought, word, or deed, from anything prescribed to him as his duty, in the law of God. Perfect obedience was indeed to be continued ever afterwards.

That God really made such a covenant with man, and that Adam acquiesced in the terms of it, may be clearly gathered from Moses' narrative: "The Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die". In these words, the threatening of death is directly expressed, and a promise of life is strongly implied. Sin procures death, as this passage expressly affirms, and death could not enter into human nature except by sin.

To vindicate the reasonableness, wisdom, equity and goodness of this is not my present purpose. The reader who is able to examine the writings listed in the footnote² may expect all reasonable satisfaction on these points from carefully reading any or all of them. That Adam was a representative of all his posterity, descending from him by ordinary generation, is evident from the consequences of his sin. The Apostle Paul reasons thus: "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned".

It is as if he had said, The first man Adam was the father of us all, and the covenant was made with him in a state of innocence, for himself and his posterity; sin, that worst of evils – even the first sin he committed – was propagated from him to all the inhabitants of this world, and became the source of all the iniquity that has ever since been found among mankind. A sentence was passed on the world by his first sin; it brought about the beginning of death temporal, spiritual and eternal, including all the miseries of this life and that which is to come. And so death, in all its hideous forms came upon the whole human race – through Adam, in whom they all sinned, as their public head and representative, in whose loins they likewise were. Thus they are legally deemed sinners in him, his offence being imputed to them, and punished in them.

²William Strong's *Discourse of the Two Covenants*, Herman Witsius' *Economy of the Covenants Between God and Man*, Thomas Boston on *The Covenant of Works* (in vol 11 of his *Works*).

“Sin is not imputed where there is no law.” It would be flagrant injustice and tyranny to charge sin on anyone, and punish him for it, if he has not broken any law. But it is an undeniable fact, in the experience of all nations and of all ages, that “death reigned . . . over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression” – they had not committed actual sin; yet they were subjected to this punishment. Therefore, to maintain the equity of God’s administrations, we must include even infants in these general characteristics of the human race: “There is none righteous, no, not one”; “all the world [is] become guilty before God”; and “by the offence of one, judgement came [or sin entered] upon all men to condemnation”. This view of the covenant made with the first man, the root and representative of all mankind, leads us to a just way of thinking about our natural state, as it is affected by Adam’s first sin, and the dreadful consequences of that ruining offence.

God’s law is stamped with strong impressions of the glorious perfections of Jehovah, the Lawgiver. He is infinite, and His “commandment is exceeding broad”. He is “from everlasting to everlasting”, and “the righteousness of [His] testimonies is everlasting”. He does not change, and “till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled”. “God is a Spirit”, and “the law is spiritual”. He is absolutely perfect, and His law is “a perfect way”, the “perfect will of God”. His name is, “I AM THAT I AM”, which expresses not only His unchangeableness and self-existence, but the most perfect simplicity of His nature and perfections; and His law is so simple and so connected that “whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all”. He is “glorious in holiness”, and “the commandment [is] holy”.

He is “a God . . . without iniquity, just and right is He,” and “the statutes of the Lord are right . . . the commandment of the Lord is pure”. He is “abundant in goodness”, and “the commandment is . . . good”. He is “a God of truth”, and “the judgements of the Lord are true”. “Reverend is His name” and “fearful”; and it is our duty to fear the commandment. He will not give His glory to another; and the law of God, not the will of men, will be the rule of His procedure with mankind at last. “Them that honour [the Lord, He] will honour,” and “Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them”. “They that despise [the Lord] shall be lightly esteemed”; and “cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them”.

This harmony of the perfections of God with His law is obvious and striking. It might be illustrated in many more particulars, but these that have been mentioned are sufficient to show that God’s law is stamped with strong impressions of the glorious characteristics of the Lawgiver. It is most reason-

able to expect that the law should exhibit the glory of the Lord, because it is a transcript of His nature, a declaration of His will, and the standard of that obedience which reasonable creatures owe to the eternal God.

Mbuma Mission Hospital

Dr Angus Macleod

Mbuma, in a rural part of Zimbabwe near the Shangani River, is an unlikely location for a busy hospital. After a long drive north from Bulawayo, the nearest city, along corrugated dirt roads through mopane forest and past scattered villages, Mbuma Mission Hospital appears suddenly out of the African bush. I recently visited and witnessed first-hand how it plays an important role in the prevention and treatment of illness in a large rural area while bringing a remarkable number of people into contact with the gospel.

Clinical work at Mbuma. The hospital consists of four inpatient wards: a female adult ward, a male adult ward, a children's ward and a labour ward. These are usually full, often with extra patients sleeping on mattresses on the floor under other patients' beds. The outpatient clinic has nurse-led clinics five days a week and the doctor's clinic three days a week, often running until 9 or 10 o'clock at night. The maternal and child health department is busy with antenatal and postnatal clinics. Elective surgery takes place in the operating theatre one day a week, with further emergency operations at other times, as needed. Minor procedures, such as setting fractures in plaster or tooth extractions, take place in the procedure room.

Compared with hospitals in any Western country, the available diagnostic investigations are basic. Digital x-rays and ultrasound are readily available but more sophisticated scans, such as CT or MRI imaging, require a journey to Bulawayo (about three hours' drive) and a fee of several hundred US dollars, which many patients simply cannot afford. There is a laboratory on site, where testing for TB and HIV is readily available, but many simple blood tests, such as kidney function testing, are not available at present due to lack of necessary reagents. The staff at Mbuma often therefore have to rely on their clinical skills in situations where tests would otherwise give a ready and reliable answer.

The Mbuma Mission is a hive of activity. About 100 staff members live and work on the site. Most inpatients have an accompanying family member to help care for them, who will sleep on the concrete veranda at night with only blankets for a bed. Long queues of outpatients are present in the clinic

during the day, and at any one time about 50 pregnant women live in a dormitory at the hospital. These women come to be near the labour ward in the last month of pregnancy, given the lack of transport to get them to the hospital expeditiously when they go into labour. The church and the primary school are on the same site as the hospital.

Dr Snoek has been the doctor at Mbuma since 2005; more recently assisted by Dr Janse, who was on leave while I visited. Dr Snoek has a remarkable breadth of skill. By contrast to most Western hospital doctors, who are increasingly specialised, she ably combines the role of general physician, infectious diseases physician, emergency physician, general surgeon, urologist, gynaecologist, obstetrician and paediatrician. Working long hours, and dedicated to the work at Mbuma, Dr Snoek has built up the reputation of the hospital, together with Sister Geurtsen and the many others who work so hard at the hospital, so that people come from far beyond the catchment area. Some even come from neighbouring provinces and from Bulawayo seeking good healthcare. One patient I met had travelled home from South Africa to be seen at Mbuma. Medical work also takes place in several nurse-led peripheral clinics and many community workers provide basic health care and health education over a wide area.

Many patients seek medical attention later than is common in the UK and often come with multiple problems. One sad case I saw was a seven-year-old boy who came to the outpatient clinic looking very ill. Not only had he HIV (transmitted from his mother at birth, but previously undiagnosed), but also tuberculosis and anthrax in the skin, the latter from eating meat from an infected cow. It was good to see him looking cheerful after a few days of appropriate treatment. A young man had a tumour growing slowly in his neck for 11 years before he came to the hospital. He eventually came because he had developed severe weakness in all his limbs and was unable to walk. A scan showed that the tumour was invading the spine, with compression of the spinal cord causing the weakness, but it had also spread into the brain. Unlike the seven-year-old boy, who was doing well with treatment, sadly nothing could be done about this lad's tumour.

Some diseases are much more frequent there than in the UK. Gastro-intestinal infections are common in those who drink dirty water from the river or from dams. Pneumoconiosis – damage to the lungs from breathing dust – is common in mine workers due to inadequate personal protective equipment. Mortality before and after birth is higher than in richer countries: one morning I was there two babies died, one still born and the other only hours old, though this was unusual. On the other hand, there were many similarities to the UK: chronic diseases such as high blood pressure and

diabetes, injuries due to drunkenness or accidents, and various cancers are all common.

One major problem, which is worthy of note, is the difficulty of retaining trained nurses and midwives at the hospital. Many leave to work in the UK, where pay is much higher than in Zimbabwe, and their skills are sought to fill gaps in nursing rotas here. When we hear people talk about shortages of nurses in the UK, we should remember that relative to Zimbabwe we have an abundance of nurses. Given their vastly greater need, it seems deeply unfair to the people of Zimbabwe that a rich country such as ours should steal their doctors, nurses, midwives – and teachers.

Spiritual work at Mbuma. While the medical work of the hospital is important, the spiritual work is much more so. The aim of the Mission is that everyone who comes to the hospital will hear about the gospel. At the two services on Sabbath, the gospel is preached to a large congregation, and more attend the Thursday morning prayer meeting, when the benches at the front of the church are filled with primary school children. For those of us who are used to very small congregations in Scotland, it is encouraging to see so many hearing the true gospel being preached and particularly that so many are present who belong to a variety of sects or churches where a false gospel is preached. There is no minister in Mbuma at present, so the services are taken by an elder, divinity student, or visiting minister.

Another part of the spiritual work is the morning and afternoon worship. Every day, at 7.15 am and at 4 pm, the staff members and patients who are able, together with patients' relatives and the women in the dormitory, gather in the veranda of the outpatient clinic for worship. Well over 100 people gather for these times of worship – for Psalm singing, prayer, and a Scripture reading – and the hearty singing can be heard all over the hospital.

The catechists have a vital role in the spiritual work at the hospital. I previously visited Mbuma in 2002 and was disappointed that no one was focusing on the spiritual needs of people at the hospital, so I was pleased to find that there are now four catechists working at the Mission, who have many valuable roles. They speak to the patients about sin and salvation – both inpatients and outpatients, often one to one – during their time at the hospital, pray with them and read the Scriptures with them. They take morning and afternoon worship, and lead Bible studies. They also have a role in counselling particular patients where needed, such as a teenage girl I met who was in hospital after making an unsuccessful suicide attempt when she discovered she was pregnant. They also play a part in health education, such as warning people about the dangers of harmful traditional practices. One of these is to hold babies in the smoke over the fire, supposedly to help

the closure of the soft parts of the skull. The smoke, unsurprisingly, can damage the baby's lungs, but these efforts have been successful in leading to a marked reduction in the number of babies with health complications from this practice.

A particularly enjoyable aspect of spending time in Mbuma was the Bible studies. I attended three in the week I was there, although others also took place. On Sabbath afternoon, there is a Bible class for everyone at the hospital, with a similar attendance to the daily worships. They are currently going through Revelation, and the discussion on the occasion when I was present was about the locusts in chapter 9. While this may seem an obscure text for a mixed gathering, it was a profitable discussion, in which the locusts were considered as a picture of false teachers. Mr Nkiwane, the head catechist, used his personal experience of being under false teachings in the past to warn those present about the dangers of false prophets. It was clear that most present were listening intently, including the pregnant women, who mostly do not belong to the Free Presbyterian Church.

On Thursday evening there was a Bible study for the senior management at the hospital, when we profitably discussed a verse in Jude. On Saturday morning I was invited to join the trained nurses' Bible study. All the nurses present participated in the discussion on John 17:24. The questions asked and points made were thoughtful and pertinent. Some of them gave evidence of spiritual understanding and appreciation of the profound truths relating to the glory of Christ.

Conclusion. A remarkable work is going on at Mbuma, which is worthy of our support and prayers. There is a continual need of financial support, for which we have the encouragement that "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7). But, more importantly, there is a need for prayer: that those who work there would be helped and encouraged; that those who are sick might have suffering eased and recover, where it is God's will; that a minister would be provided for the congregation; and, above all, that an abundance of spiritual blessing would follow the gospel work there. We should seek grace to be assiduous in prayer for the Mission and to be kept from formality in asking for God's blessing on its work. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas 5:16).

Having Christ is enough to answer all our needs, to make up for all our losses, and to make us happy for ever.

[Christ] is offering Himself to you. Everything the sinner needs is in Him. If you are a debtor, He is the surety. If you are unclean, He has opened a fountain in His heart, and He offers it for the washing of the unclean. If you are naked, He has clothing. If you need direction in the wilderness, He is a leader.

John Elias

The Invitation¹

Henry Law

Numbers 10:2. *And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.*

Israel's sojourn round the mount is over. The pillar is about to move. The silver trumpets are ready to sound. The tribes are ready for the march. Soon all will be an onward progress toward the promised land. The sight strongly arrests a Christian heart. Who can survey it, and not cry, Blessed are they who follow a preceding God? Father, lead me, guide me, keep me to the end.

At this moment the eye of Moses turns with tender yearning to his kinsman Hobab. He for a while had been the comrade of these tribes. He had learned that they were God's special care. The mighty proofs of God's presence were all familiar to His mind. But outward evidence alone does not convey inward grace. He is not fixed. His feelings fluctuate. He hesitates. He casts a lingering look towards the attractions of home. The former ties retain their hold. The well-known scenes allure him back. Like Lot's wife, his eyes revert. While Israel girds their pilgrim-loins, he meditates turning back.

Moses well knew that to return was wreck of soul. It is no gain to move from God. There is no profit in forbidden paths. Happiness departs when God is left. All earth is but a barren waste without the dew of grace. All is a void unless God smiles and fills.

Moses experienced the better choice. He scorned courtly pomp. He trampled on all Egypt's treasures. He had embraced affliction with God's people. And he had found God's favour to be the wealth of wealth, the joy of joys.

Reader, make God your own, and you have all. To barter Him for lower things is to clasp a shadow, snatch a husk, pursue a mocking taper, lean on a broken reed. There is no penury like a worldling's lot. What is a crown upon a godless head? What is a sceptre in a graceless hand? What is all gold to an impoverished soul? What were the plains of Sodom to ease-seeking Lot? Had Lazarus or the rich man the happier heart?

Moses beholds the doubting Hobab. He pities, and he would fain win him to a wiser choice. Therefore he thus tenderly expostulates, "We are journeying unto the place, of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel".

He states the fact. We are indeed a moving camp. Our rest is yet far off. But we advance not as uncertainly. We follow no deceiving guide. There is

¹Taken with editing from *Christ Is All: Numbers and Deuteronomy*.

a home conspicuously bright in view. It glitters in the rays of heavenly pledge. God's love and word and power secure it.

And then he pressingly invites, "Come thou with us". Turn not away. Recede not to a heathen land. Join not again the people whose home is darkness, whose walk is misery, whose end is woe. But cleave to us. All good is then your portion. We move not blindly. God's voice is gone forth, strewing blessings round us. From His courts, goodness and mercy walk as companions by our side. He dwells in us. We dwell in Him. Come then, come then with us. So Moses reasoned; so he called.

1. His invitation shows faith's happy state. It is a mirror reflecting the features of calm trust. Full faith has eagle-eye. It penetrates all earthly mists. It gazes steadily on Zion's highest light. It is content to live a stranger-life on earth. It would not settle in this thorny nest. It would not lie down beside such poison-streams. This climate is too cheerless. It looks aloft. Its true affections centre round a purer scene. So daily it moves forward, and nightly realises that an upward step is made. We are journeying to the promised place.

What is this place? Faith gazes – it ever gazes with increasing rapture. But it fails fully to describe.

It is *rest*. The happy inhabitants go no more out. No further step is needed. No loftier summit can be scaled. The pilgrim lays aside his staff and sits down in undisturbed delight. The warrior's wounds are healed. His struggles and his conflicts cease. The watchtower is exchanged for sure repose. The sword has found its sheath. The shield wearies the arm no more. No foe can enter into victory's domain. Reader, do you not long to reach it?

It is *perfect purity*. Earth's misery is sin. Saints groan, because they so oft stumble. The constant struggle and the frequent fall cause anguish. The flesh is weak. Temptations fiercely and most craftily assail. The garments contract stains. But in this place of purity, sin cannot come. The tempter is barred out. No step again can be unclean. No thought again can go astray. Heaven would not be welcome to a new-born man unless it were one flood of godlike purity. Reader, do you not long to reach it?

It is *joy*. Where sin is absent, peace must reign. Where God is present, happiness must overflow. Heaven is a boundless ocean, in which each swelling wave is pleasure in the highest. It is a prospect ever widening, in which each scene is rapturous delight. It is a firmament, for ever brightening, in which each orb is sparkling ecstasy. It must be so, for love is the one pulse in every heart; praise is the endless sound from every lip; hallelujah the one ceaseless echo. The blessed cannot cease to sing, because fresh views of their thrice-blessed state continually arise. It must be so, for they behold the glories of their Lord – not in dim distance, not through the varying medium of faith

– but near and never to depart, but clear and ever clearer. Transporting joy: daily to read new glories in the face of Christ, daily to dive into the deep wonders of the love of God. Reader, do you not long to be there?

Faith holds the title deeds of this celestial mansion. The word is spoken: “I will give it you”. It is a gift – and a gift worthy of the God who gives, worthy of the blood which bought, worthy of the Spirit who calls to it. No human spirit pays the price. No human strength can scale the steps. No human hand opens the gate. Some proudly hope for heaven, as if they had some claim. But none go proudly in. They all fall low before the throne, shouting glory to free grace: Salvation to the Lamb; “Christ is all”.

But it is *sure*. “I will give it you.” Who utters this wondrous promise? The Lord, whose might is almightiness, before whom all men, and all the hosts of hell, are nothing, far less than nothing. Let every foe swell into millions of ten millions; let all their power be increased a thousandfold; His arm can shiver them to dust; His breath can drive them as a feather on the hurricane’s wing. The Lord – whose word is truth, whose counsels are immutable, whose purpose ever stands – says, “I will give it you”. Faith hears and knows that every wave and every gale convey it prosperously to the assured haven. “We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us.” Such is faith’s happy state. Reader, have you this faith?

2. *This invitation shows that faith is aggressive.* “Come thou with us.” Each heaven-set plant strives for expanse. True grace has one sure sign: it longs and labours to communicate its wealth. A saving view of Christ slays self, relaxes every icy band, widely extends embracing arms, and yearns to multiply delights. When the heart burns, the life must labour. Where is the fire which emits no warmth? Where is the sun which darts forth no rays? Thus the history of faith is a chart of plans and toils for Christ.

It looks around. It first marks the Hobabs of the home-circle. It stops not here. It takes a wider prospect. It surveys the neighbouring abodes. It then mounts higher ground and flies around the circumference of the native land. It still ascends and, in the telescopic gaze of love, it comprehends the world, with its broad circuit and all its mass of people, kindred, tongues.

While it thus muses, what is the deep desire? O that these souls might be the heirs of heavenly life! Their nature-state dooms them indeed to wrath. Their steps unturned must bear them down to hell. Their hearts unchanged must link them to the lost. But Jesus died, and in that death there is redemption. But Jesus lives and, while He lives, who can despair? If only they can hear of Him, if the sweet mercies of the Spirit help, if faith convey them to the cross; then soul-graves open, then endless misery flees, as night before the orb of day. Then hell is spoiled, and angels shout.

While faith thus pants with longing hopes, it asks, How shall this be? The answer is at hand. God tells what aid must be employed. The means are the clear proclamation of gospel truth. And this proclamation is from preachers' lips. Then preachers must be sent forth. The men of God, with Christ on their lips, the Bible in their hands, must take their stand between the living and the dead. They must lift high the gospel-beacon in a lost world's night. Rejoicing in their known salvation, they must importunately urge, "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good".

Faith then will hasten to give far-flying wings to these appointed means. This holy zeal became the parent of missions to home-destitute and distant heathen. Hence arose that precious brotherhood of combined believers who send salvation's tidings far and near. But how scanty are their efforts before a world's need! How crippled are the sinews of their strength! How poor their coffers! How few the labourers!

Reader, are you the called of Christ? Are you a traveller to the promised place? Then show it by your self-denying succour to these enlisting labourers. Help them, for they need it. Help them, for the time is short. Help them, for the Lord requires it. Help them, as you would have a sure token in the day of Christ that you obeyed His mandate and that your faith was not a barren stock.

But perhaps some Hobab reads these lines, who is not pressing on to Zion's joys. Pause and reflect. This article, with Moses-like entreaty, grasps your hand, looks you tenderly in the face, and knocks imploringly at your heart's door. It asks with loving zeal, Whither do your footsteps tend? It prays you to turn and join yourself in heavenly fellowship to heaven-bound travellers: "Come thou with us."

Your present path is misery, briars, thorns, rough places, pitfalls, disappointments, all sloping towards hell. Before us is peace, and an eternity of light. Turn, "come thou with us". The world, sin and Satan pierce with death wounds. But we will do you good. Behold the Saviour, whom we love and trust and serve. Can you depart from Him? Mark His tender grace, His zeal for souls, His surety-sufferings, His guilt-expiating agony. Can you quit Him? Think of His patience, His frequent calls, His precious promises, His outstretched arms. Think of the rapture of His seen smile, the comfort of His felt presence, the calm delights of converse with Him, and the full glories of His kingdom in heaven. Think of the dying Lamb, the risen Lord, the reigning, triumphant King. "Come thou with us." Jesus has spoken good of Israel.

May the mighty Spirit prompt the quick reply from us: Grace conquers, and I come! May hesitation hide its face in shame! May wise decision make you Christ's for ever.

The Reformation in Italy¹

2. Some Italian States

Ferrara was one of the states² in northern Italy. Its ruler, in 1527, married Renée, a daughter of Louis XII of France. In her native country she had come under the influence of the Reformed faith, which she wished to promote in Ferrara. She offered protection to some French Protestants who had to flee persecution in their own country. John Calvin visited her under an assumed name and continue to have a significant influence over her through his letters. The scholars who were tutors to Renée's children, as well as some appointed to teach in the University, were a significant influence in promoting the Reformed faith in Ferrara.

Among the scholars was Fulvio Morata. His daughter Olivia is better known; Renée chose her to be the official companion of her eldest daughter. It was while she lived in the court in Ferrara that Olivia was converted, but she felt that her personal piety suffered from the temptations to be found in such a situation. As early as 1528 there may have been several Protestant preachers in Ferrara, but it is not clear if they were able to proclaim the truth in public. Yet their sermons clearly had an effect on a number of prominent people, who either received Protestant doctrine through their ministry, or else were confirmed in it.

Modena was a state near Ferrara and under the rule of the same family. Some who lived in the state were among Luther's early correspondents, and it was suspected that the academy there was infected by Protestant ideas. Those who taught there were ready to criticise the ignorance and hypocrisy of the priests, and especially of the monks – in most cases, with good reason. Some of these lecturers would stand up in church to criticise the sermon. Indeed a friar was accused of having preached heresy, yet on the next occasion he defended what he had previously said.

In 1540 an ex-friar, Paolo Ricio, who belonged to Sicily, came to Modena and persuaded those who had Protestant sympathies to gather for worship in a house. These services benefited those who attended, and the numbers who did so increased. People were talking about the Scriptures and keenly discussing the differences between Romanists and Reformers. The priests complained vociferously to the Pope, who complained to the Duke of Ferrara, Renée's husband, to do something about the situation. Ricio could see that he was in danger and tried to flee, but he was taken prisoner in a nearby village. He was

¹A further part of a paper given at last year's Theological Conference, somewhat enlarged. The first part was "an introductory survey".

²These were separate nations. Italy did not become one country until the nineteenth century.

brought to Ferrara, where he publicly recanted the doctrines he had preached, rather than be sent to Rome, where he knew he would be shown no mercy. Yet the seed sown in Modena had taken deep enough root to prevent damage to others as a result of Ricio's recantation.

In an effort to prevent further dissension, the Duke had directed that no one was to occupy a pulpit without the permission of some senior cleric. But the people were so anxious to hear the Word of God expounded that some preachers disobeyed the instruction; the local magistrates supported them, writing to the Duke's court in their favour. During 1540, one of the best-known Italian preachers came to Modena; this was Bernadino Ochino, who had already abandoned Romanism, though that was not yet publicly known. He preached in the cathedral to such a large crowd that there was scarcely room to stand. The priests were displeased at the way he preached; his sermons were so different from theirs. Perhaps even more displeasing to them was the praise that Ochino's sermons received. The local Bishop claimed that, after returning to his diocese, "I have found things which infinitely distress me. . . . Wherever I go, and from all quarters, I hear that the city is become Lutheran".³

The city of *Florence* was the capital of the state of Tuscany. Before 1525, many people in Florence had received the Reformed faith. Among them was Antonio Brucioli, who studied Hebrew and visited Germany, where he found great help in the study of the Scriptures. Back in Florence, he came under suspicion of heresy because he associated with Lutherans, and also because he was very free in his criticisms of the clergy. One of the Dominican monks in the city exclaimed, "Brucioli is fit for nothing but to be burned" (p 55), throwing out a pun on his name, as the word *brucioli* means twigs or wood shavings. Among his papers was a translation of the Bible, presumably his own work, which was no doubt highly incriminating. (In fact, three translations of the Bible into Italian became available about the same time, all by natives of Florence.)

Although the monks agitated for the death sentence against Brucioli, his punishment, through the influence of friends, amounted to no more than two years' banishment. He seems never to have returned to Florence but to have lived thereafter in Venice. He produced a commentary on the whole Bible, in seven large volumes. M'Crie reports the following testimony to the value of Brucioli's commentary: "It contains numerous and decisive proofs of the author's attachment to evangelical truth" (pp 56-57). Though the com-

³Thomas M'Crie, *History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy in the Sixteenth Century*, Edinburgh and London, 1856, p 54. Further references to this volume are given in brackets in the body of the article.

mentary had become “exceedingly rare”, M’Crie points out that “so far as the influence of the press is concerned, Brucioli is entitled to the name of the Reformer of Italy” (p 57).

Bologna, north of Florence, belonged to the Papal States; some of the severest edicts against heresy were issued there by various popes. Yet Reformation light penetrated into the spiritual darkness of that city, and John Mollio was one of those most used by God to bring that about. While young he became a monk and devoted himself to study, not only of general literature but also of theology. He applied himself to the Bible and to some writings of the Reformers; as a result he came to clear views of gospel truth, which he proclaimed, as a preacher and as a university professor.

In his lectures, he taught the doctrine of justification by faith, among other Protestant distinctives. These were debated between Mollio and another professor, but Mollio came out on top. The loser in the debate accused Mollio of heresy, which resulted in him being summoned to Rome. There he defended himself with such ability that the judges declared that his doctrines were true, though they could not be taught publicly without damaging the Church! Surely this was a confession that the Church did not teach the truth! Mollio was later removed from the University by order of the Pope. It is clear that in 1541 there were significant, and increasing, numbers of Protestants in Bologna.

There was considerable pressure on the Pope, throughout this period, to assemble a general council to regulate the affiliation of the Church; this went on until the Council of Trent was called. The popes were anxious to avoid holding one but, to reduce the pressure on him, Pope Paul III appointed a panel of four cardinals and five other senior clergy in 1537 to meet in Bologna to advise “as to the best method of reforming the abuses of the Church” (p 60). The report pointed to various abuses, such as “the admission of improper persons to the priesthood” (p 60) but, not surprisingly, they ignored the more-fundamental doctrinal errors, such as the denial of justification by faith *alone*. The Pope accepted the report but it was not put into practice. And, absurdly, when Caraffa, a member of the panel, became Pope Paul IV, he placed the panel’s report on the index of prohibited books! When German Protestants published the report, Luther contributed a preface, in which he commented, “The cardinals contented themselves with removing the small twigs, while they allowed the trunk of corruption to remain unmolested and, like the Pharisees of old, strained at flies and swallowed camels” (p 61).

If the godly might have their choice, they had rather be miserable with the people of God than happy with His enemies.

Thomas Manton

Book Review

Daily Walking with God, by Samuel Rutherford, published by Reformation Press in their Scottish Heritage Series, paperback, 41 pages, £6.90; may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Some of Samuel Rutherford's writings are well known, particularly his *Letters*, but the bulk of this publication has never appeared in print before as a book. However, the material was published in *The Original Secession Magazine* in 1925 and reprinted in *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* for July 1938.

The first section provides 17 "convictions of conscience"; an introductory comment sums it up: "Rutherford begins by reviewing his past use of time and the sins that were clear to him. He does this in order to reflect more deeply on how to live for the glory of God alone". Among the headings supplied for these points of concern were: "Not doing all for God's glory", "Lack of concern for the Church", "Not striving against sinful thoughts", "Lack of wrestling in prayer". A comment on spiritual duties reads: "The practice of my duty was so narrow and short, not answering the breadth and length of my light, and what I have weakly done was but to stop the mouth of a natural conscience, and have been contented only with mints [attempts] in place of real performances". Clearly, when Rutherford has to speak in such terms, we have much greater reason to confess our lack of godliness and true spirituality.

The second section is headed, "A guide for Christian living"; it "gives very practical rules as to how to order daily life to the glory of God". Among these rules, as summarised, are the following: "Set aside time for the Word and prayer", "Avoid idle thoughts", "Avoid all known sin", "Submit to God in affliction", "Avoid hatred, even towards enemies". We give the final point in full: "To strive against doubting, and if thou want feeling of faith, [thou art] to complain bitterly for the want of it, and seek out where the sin lieth that hindereth it. And use all means whereby thou can get the Lord's countenance, and no less to entertain it."

A final third section gives "Practical help from daily progress in grace"; it "draws out some general guidance as to how to live in the presence of God". Rutherford encourages high thoughts of Christ's free grace when riding or walking. Further, believers should be "certainly persuaded" that God hears prayers, even of the least importance. They should not be discouraged with a refusal if their prayer was "lawfully put up". They are to believe that if God does not give what they asked, "He will give thee as good, and that which is better for thee nor [than] that which thou askest". The final point is headed: "Imitate the most holy people".

The publisher has included, as an extra section, Letter 159 from Andrew Bonar's edition of Rutherford's *Letters*. It covers similar ground to the main part of the book, but more briefly. Prayerful consideration of Rutherford's work presented here should, by God's grace, be very profitable.

Notes and Comments

Persecution of Christians

A report prepared for the UK Foreign Secretary by the Bishop of Truro states, "Across the globe, in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, Christians are being bullied, arrested, gaoled, expelled and executed. Christianity is by most calculations the most persecuted religion of modern times." To give an idea of the numbers involved, the charity, Open Doors, shared the following statistics for 2022, which they say are a conservative estimate:

- 5600 Christians killed for their faith.
- 2100 churches attacked or closed (mostly in China).
- 124 000 Christians forcibly displaced from their homes because of their faith, almost 15 000 of whom became refugees.
- 360 million Christians suffering high levels of persecution for their faith in over 50 countries.

North Korea has long been the world's most notorious country for persecuting Christians and, according to all the agencies which monitor persecution, it remains in the number one spot. This dictatorship is a brutally hostile place for Christians to live. If discovered by the authorities, believers are either sent to labour camps as political prisoners or killed on the spot. Even owning a Bible is a serious crime and will be severely punished.

Nigeria has a Christian majority in the south of the country, but Islamic militants from the north conduct raids on the Christian community; the Nigerian government denies it is religious persecution and so the raids continue with impunity. In sub-Saharan Africa, Islamist extremism has spread well beyond Nigeria. Open Doors fears that Nigeria will soon trigger "a vast humanitarian catastrophe" across the continent.

Christians face most physical violence in Nigeria, Pakistan and India. During the Covid pandemic there was a great deal of discrimination, especially in Pakistan and India, with Christians often being refused help and food aid.

Christians are persecuted for a number of reasons, which include: Islamic oppression (8 of the top 10 persecuting countries), dictatorial paranoia (Syria and Uzbekistan), Communist and post-Communist oppression (North Korea and China), and religious nationalism (India and Myanmar).

In the United Kingdom, we should be thankful to have laws which protect our religious freedoms. However, there is an atmosphere, certainly in the workplace, where one must be very careful of expressing a Christian opinion, especially when it is opposed to the current wholesale acceptance of abortion, same-sex marriage, gender fluidity etc. There are many examples of discrimination and heavy-handed officialdom, but they cannot be compared with the persecution experienced in other countries. We must not permit our current religious freedoms to be eroded. In our progressively “liberal” society, some honourable vocations such as medicine, teaching and working as a registrar are becoming intolerable for some to continue in without violating Christian principles. There is a steady drip, drip of subtle, and not so subtle, erosion of freedom of speech with the expression of some opinions being described as hate crimes. This may yet lead to the censoring of the preaching of the gospel and must be resisted at all costs. “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (1 Cor 16:13).

As for those who are persecuted and discriminated against for taking the name of Christ on their lips, we should prayerfully “remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body” (Heb 13:3). *FRD*

The Church of Scotland General Assembly

One problem discussed at the recent General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was its numerical decline. It is now estimated that 60 000 people attend in person on a Sabbath with another 45 000 online. This amounts, very roughly, to 1% of the total population of Scotland attending in person, and 2% in all. With more than 1000 churches to maintain, and ministers to pay too, the financial problem is obvious. Prominent and historic churches are being closed in many places. In Inverness, the East Church and the Old High Kirk have already closed, and in Aberdeen, four West-end congregations, Holburn West, Midsocket, Rubislaw and Queen’s Cross have just been amalgamated into Fountainhall Church. Three buildings are being retained, one of which hosted a “successful” farmers’ market last Sabbath. The Christian witness is being taken away from Scotland and the overwhelming majority of people are on their way to eternal torments in hell.

The Assembly also discussed how to get people into hell more quickly (although few thought of the discussion in that way). The “Faith Impact Forum” moved a motion affirming the Church’s opposition to Assisted Dying, but a countermotion in favour of “exploring more deeply the diverse views held by Kirk members” carried the day. Liberal religion, irreligion and false religion are bringing Scotland very low. “And they shall go forth, and look

upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh” (Is 66:24). *DWBS*

Women Pastors and the Southern Baptist Convention

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), is one of the largest denominations in the United States. It consists of 47 000 congregations, with a total membership of more than 13 million. It has appeared in the news after expelling two of their congregations – one a “megachurch” in California and the other in Kentucky – because they had female pastors. The Convention’s “mission statement” states that the office of pastor should be “limited to men”. Hence the two congregations were stated to be “not in friendly co-operation” with the SBC.

One of the pastors claimed, “This is a sad day for Southern Baptists because they are losing gifted and talented and called women of God, as we continue to proclaim the gospel”. The women may well be gifted and talented, but we can be sure that God did not call them to the gospel ministry. The Apostle Paul wrote, “Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak” (1 Cor 14:34), but he was not writing in a private capacity. He was not merely giving his own opinion; he was writing Scripture as a man inspired by God, and we must follow the principle: what Scripture says God says. Ultimately it is God who is saying, “Let your women keep silence in the churches” – which ought to be a permanent principle in all Christian churches.

Church Information

Rev John Campbell

Very sadly, Mr Campbell passed away on May 25, at the age of only 50 and only some nine months after his ministry began in Staffin. His death followed a major operation on his head. We sympathise with his immediate family and the wider circle of relations. May the Lord provide for his congregation. At such a time as this, we should remember the Saviour’s direction, “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest” (Mt 9:37,38).

Editorial Board

Rev A W MacColl has resigned from the Board, and we thank him for all his contributions over several years. The Synod has appointed Mr D Paul Rowland to take his place. His first piece will appear next month, DV.

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tues, 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. Thurs 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; Wed 7.30 pm. **Beaully (Balblair):** Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thurs 7.30 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel: 01349 866546.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wed 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Laigr:** Church and Manse; Sabbath 3.30 pm as intimated. Rev J A Morrison BA, 2 Cherry Grove, Bonar Bridge, IV24 3ER. Tel: 01863 766157.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, EH3 9NU, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, 35B Barnton 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 as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm, as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch (Ross-shire):** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thurs 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01445 712118. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE; Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. Rev R MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 4ND; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Greenock:** Sabbath 2.30 pm, held in Free Church of Scotland hall, 14 Jamaica Street, PA15 1XX. Contact Rev R MacLeod; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Halkirk:** Bridge Street; Sabbath 11.30 am, 5.30 pm, second, fourth and fifth Sabbaths of month; Thurs 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Duncan Street; Sabbath 3 pm; **Strathy:** 6 pm, first and third Sabbaths of month.
- Harris (North): Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Tarbert and Stockinish:** Wed 7 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; Wed 7 pm. **Sheilebost:** as intimated. Rev K M 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; Wed 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, Tues 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; Wed 7.30 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wed 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 810228. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist:** Bayhead; Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01876 510233. Contact: Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Oban:** Church. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. Rev A B MacLean, 5 Main Road, Luncarty, PH1 3EP; tel: 01738 828762.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wed 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 12 noon; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tues 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross, as intimated). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. Manse: Clachan, Staffin, IV51 9H. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thurs 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tues 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wed 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01859 520271.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.

England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wed 7.30 pm.; **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Upper Room (second floor), 11 Wilmslow Road, Cheadle SK8 1DW; (entrance is from the car park at the back of the building); Wed 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. 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; Tues 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1 2AW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 5.30 pm; Wednesday 7.15 pm. Manse. Contact Mr Hugh Campbell; tel: 01923 442497.

Canada

Chesley, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 11 am, 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm. Contact: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

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: graffton@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: sydneyfchurch@protonmail.com.

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 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, 5 Goldsmith St, Elgin, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140; mobile: 022 409 1336.

Tauranga: For services, contact Rev J D Smith; tel: 09 282 4195.

Singapore

Singapore: 33 Ubi Avenue 3, Vertex Tower A, #05-60, Singapore 408868: Sabbath: 9.30 am and 5.30 pm; Wednesday: 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, tel: (65) 9639 3040, 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 Levyskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevyskyi@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.

Mbumba: Church and Hospital. Postal Address: Mbumba Mission Hospital, Private Bag T5406, Bulawayo.

New Canaan: Church. Rev T Mwedzi.

Zenka: Church.

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