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A Day of Humiliation and Prayer

The yearly recurrence of a day of humiliation and prayer appointed by the Synod should not make us blind to the importance and weightiness of the duty. What becomes habitual with us often tends to become formal. In religious duties nothing can be more soul-withering and God-provoking than formality. A mere outward form may satisfy us but it will not profit us; nor will it satisfy the living and true God.

Israel in days of backsliding, where she had not altogether departed from the worship of Jehovah fell into the sin of formal worship. They kept their fasts and were not slow to ask of God, "Wherefore have we fasted . . . and Thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no knowledge?" (Is. 58:3). They made their voice to be heard on high; they bowed down their head as a bulrush and spread sackcloth and ashes under them. Why, then, was the Lord taking no notice? The reason is clear. The Lord knew their hypocrisy. Their fast was a mockery. They gave lip-service to the God of heaven but were not ready to put away their sins. They wished God to show mercy to them and yet they would not show compassion to their fellow-men. The Lord in contending with them showed them where they came short. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? — to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh." (Is 58:6,7).

In view of a coming day of humiliation and prayer to be held throughout the congregations of the Church on Wednesday, 16th October (D.V.) — a day set apart for the confession of the present low state of true religion, and to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit to revive His own people and to convert sinners to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ — do we not need to remind ourselves of the absolute necessity of engaging seriously and

solemnly in the duties belonging to such a day? It is evident that Daniel in his day so acted when he confessed the sin of the children of Israel, as we read in the 9th chapter of his prophecy. So, too, Ezra in his own day, as we find in the 9th chapter of Ezra. Have we any less need of sincerely confessing our sin to God?

What then, will make us engage seriously and solemnly in these duties? First of all, our minds must be suitably impressed with the glory and holiness of the God of eternity. Low views of the Almighty not only rob God of His glory, but leave us unsolemnised in His Presence. Trifling views of the majesty and glory of God unfit us for the duties of a day of humiliation and prayer. Second, we must be in no doubt as to the awfulness of sin — and particularly of our own sin and guilt. If we are not conscious of the evil of sin and do not have a realisation of the guilt of sin lying upon our own conscience and upon our land, and of our exposedness to the wrath and curse of God on account of it, how can we humble ourselves in the dust before the Majesty of heaven? Third, we must entertain the hope that our sins may be pardoned. It is only because God is a sin-pardoning God that we may come to His footstool to plead for mercy in Christ's Name. While we have to say on the one hand, "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? yet on the other hand we can say, "But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared."

May the coming day of humiliation and prayer be a fast indeed — a fast such as the Lord has chosen — a day of turning from sin; a day of showing mercy as we expect to receive mercy; a day of true humbling before God, being inwardly abased before the Most High; a day of looking to and pleading with the Lord saying: "Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." (Hosea 14:2). May it prove through God's grace and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the congregations of the Church such a day of humiliation and prayer as will bring forth the response from the Throne of God: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: from mine anger is turned away from him." None shall then have any regret that a fast was kept to the Lord.

Sacrament days in Scotland have been solemn and sealing days, yea, days of heaven to many; at such occasions many have had their trysts, and Bethel meetings with God, which they will never forget. John Willison.

A Synod Discourse

By Rev. Neil Cameron, St Jude's Glasgow

"Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours" — John iv. Verse 38.

At the beginning of this chapter, the envy of that inveterate class of men — the Pharisees — appears against the Lord Jesus. The causes of it were that our Lord exposed their hypocrisy, and that they were losing the popularity which they enjoyed hitherto among the people. These causes, fanned to white heat by the growing popularity of Christ impelled those men from bad to worse until we find them exulting over our Lord upon the cross of Calvary. The successors of the Pharisees have not failed in any generation since, and in all probability they will continue in the visible Church till the last day.

But Satan and his servants have been the means of driving the Gospel away from places and peoples then and since, only to spread it more widely in other places to their own confusion and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. So we read our Lord Jesus left Judea and departed again into Galilee. Samaria lay between Judea and Galilee, and on His journey He came to Sychar, being weary, thirsty and hungry, after a long journey. He sat at the well from which the inhabitants got water. Jesus asked a drink of her. From this sprang a conversation, the blessed results of which will last throughout the ages of eternity both to this sinful woman and to many of the inhabitants of Sychar.

The reason why our Lord came into the world was to call sinners to repentance or to seek and save that which was lost. To accomplish this was His meat and drink. To see poor sinners coming to hear the Gospel, drawn to Him by the Father, caused Him to forget His hunger and thirst and weariness. This was the meat He had to eat that the disciples knew not of. To see the fields between Sychar and Jacob's well bestrewn with people coming to Himself was the joy of His heart. This is true still; for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. But, alas! the fields of our cities and towns are often covered over with their inhabitants going, not to Christ, but to vain plays, causing grief to all the Lord's true people and bringing God's eternal wrath upon their own souls. The last day will come and then every one will receive according to the deeds done in the body whether they were good or bad. The people of Sychar will, on that day, rise with the men of this poor generation and will condemn them, for they came to Christ to be saved by Him while they had the opportunity. Oh, what fools sin and Satan have made of men as regards the things that

pertain to their everlasting peace.

Let us now consider our text under two heads:—

- 1 The labours into which we have entered;
- 2 Our duty in consequence thereof.

1 The nature of the labour referred to by our Lord is that in connection with the Gospel, and not the labour that men had in connection with the material affairs of this world. It was a labour of faith connected with the doctrine, form of worship, form of government, and discipline of the church of God in the world. Since God gave the first promise of a Saviour to Adam in Eden, we conclude, from circumstantial evidence, that He instituted a form of worship through a bloody sacrifice by which sinful men were privileged to approach His mercy seat by faith. We conclude this from the historical fact that: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them." Now skins must have been taken off animals; very probably off the firstlings of sheep, as future sacrifices manifest, or at least of animals considered sacrificially clean.

Adam must have been instructed by God to offer the two animals — the skins of which God made coats to cover them, and which were a beautiful type of Christ's righteousness in which God justifies and covers the guilty sinner — otherwise we have not warrant from God's word that sacrifices were to be offered until the time of Abraham. But we find that Abel offered a sacrifice to God by faith. Now faith there means more than the grace of faith in the heart of that young man; it means that he had the rule or warrant of faith, which is God's word. Abel is the first labourer brought to our view in God's word. We can picture him in our imagination as he appeared as far up as you can see on the sky-line of time, faithfully labouring in connection with the upholding of God's instituted worship. Cain was a worshipper of the Lord, but had neither the grace of faith in his heart nor the warrant of faith, God's word, in his worship; and consequently God had no respect to Cain nor his offering. And because God showed respect to Abel and his offering, Cain endeavoured to wipe out such worship either by prevailing upon Abel to join him in his way of worship, or by putting him to death. When he failed in his endeavours to accomplish the former, he took the latter course. This is how we understand the words, taking them as they are connected with their context. "And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and slew him," So we see that Abel kept the faith, and finished his course as a faithful labourer, in spite of the platitudes or wrath of his monstrous brother Cain. He counted not his life too great a price to secure God's

worship in purity for himself and those that would come after him. The labour of all who succeeded him and the opposition with which they had to contend — some of them even to death — are set forth in miniature form in this case of Cain and Abel.

Let us consider Enoch as the second labourer. It seems that ungodliness rose to a great height in his day. When we consider carefully the Epistle of Jude in connection with the following quotation, we can see as in a glass the enormity to which sin advanced then: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." So poor Enoch had to bear witness against the ungodly actions and hard speeches against God of the men of his time. He pleased the Lord as a labourer so well, on account of his faith and the faithfulness of his witnessing for God against sin in the professing church — or sons of God who had married the daughters of men — the atheistic daughters of Cain's posterity — that He took him away to heaven soul and body together.

Let us consider Noah as a third labourer. He lived at a time in which the professing Church was exceedingly corrupt. The effect of marriages contracted between the sons of God — the professors of religion — and the atheistical daughters of men — the offspring of Cain — was such that God saw that the imaginations of the hearts of men were only evil continually, so that he was pained by their ungodliness to such an extent that it repented Him that He had made man. He told Noah that he alone was righteous before Him in that generation, and that at the end of one hundred and twenty years, He would destroy with a flood the whole of them except Noah and his family. The Lord commanded Noah to build an ark for the saving of his house. Noah began to build this ark, and to preach righteousness — law and Gospel — to these men; but because they had grieved the Holy Spirit so that He forsook them, not one of them repented or believed. But Noah continued to build and preach as commanded, with the result that when the flood came, he and his family were saved from being drowned, while all the rest perished. We find Noah immediately the flood was over worshipping God in accordance with God's institution. He did not change the order of worship although he was alone in that godless generation, and on that account God promised him that He would not destroy the world any more with a flood of water, and gave him the rainbow as a sign of that covenant.

Let us consider Abraham as the fourth labourer. God called him from among the idolaters in Ur of the Chaldees. He obeyed the call and went forth not knowing whither he went. We find him setting up an altar and worshipping God in every place he came to. He did not swerve in the least after the heathen idolatry with which he was surrounded, but continued faithfully to worship God by sacrificing lambs etc.; as types of the great sacrifice of the promised Messiah. He was called the friend of God and the father of the faithful on account of his strict adherence to God's instituted form of worship, and the pains he took to teach his children to continue the same after he would be taken away. We read that he did all this by faith on God's promise in which Christ was set forth, and the way he was to worship by faith in Christ. Abraham was put to a great trial of his faith and obedience when God commanded him to offer as a sacrifice his son Isaac. He got in that great trial the clearest view of the day of Christ, and the one offering by which He forever perfected all them who are sanctified. "Abraham saw my day and rejoiced," our Lord told the unbelieving Jews.

Let us now consider Moses as the fifth labourer. Moses was instructed of God to set up a place of worship, and all the details of it were shown him in Mount Sinai, also all the ministry and sacrifices which were to be used in that worship. He made all things in all their smallest details in strict conformity to the pattern shown him, and kept to the worship so ordered, all his days, not without some opposition. So the Lord gave him the character of being a faithful servant in all His house. We have all the details of the tabernacle he built, and the order of worship ordained by God, in the inspired writings of Moses. The children of Israel prospered while they kept strictly to this order of worship, and when they departed from it they were punished with sword, famine, and pestilence down till the end of that dispensation. Why was this strictness manifested by God in connection with the worship of the Old Testament Church? Because by it Christ was typically preached to the people. "For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

All the holy prophets laboured to keep the people from the idolatrous worship of the surrounding heathen nations, and to warn them of the consequences which would follow departures from the order of doctrine, worship, and government set up by God under the hand of Moses. In the days of Elijah the false prophets who supported idolatry were nine hundred, while Elijah stood alone as a true and faithful prophet of Jehovah the God of Israel. The same thing happened on several occasions,

as the Word of God reveals — Satan had many prophets to lead the people astray, and the true prophets of God were few in number. Still, the people had no excuse, seeing they had the written Word of God to guide them in everything pertaining to faith, worship and practice. They had also the providence of God, which made it quite manifest that while they kept to the instituted worship of God they had peace and prosperity, but when they departed from the same, they had dispeace and sore adversity. But the people could not be kept from following Satan's messengers. At last the Lord after visiting them with many judgments for their repeated relapses into idolatry, brought the King of Babylon against them by whom they were annihilated, and the few who were left alive were carried away to captivity. The Holy Ghost recorded the reason why all this fearful vengeance overtook them: "Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much, after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending: because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling-place. But they mocked the messengers of God and despised His words, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; he gave them all into His hand" (2nd Chron. xxxvi 14-17). Surely the above should teach men in every future generation of mankind the awful consequences of following the ways of the heathen, or idolatrous nations, and of mocking God's messengers, and despising His word. But no; for we in this nation are guilty before God of the very sins for which God's wrath was so fearfully manifested against Israel and Judah in those days. But God cannot be mocked; for that which a man soweth, the same shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. All these laboured by faith.

Christ, now that He was going to leave His disciples in a sinful and God-hating world drew the attention of them who were to serve God in the Gospel of His Son to the labours of all His true and faithful servants in the past. These Old Testament labourers were set before the Apostles as their example, and their duty and privilege in having had such faithful predecessors was brought home to them by our Lord's words, "Other men laboured and ye are entered into their labours." The New Testament shows how faithfully, even unto death, did the Apostles prove that they were the worthy successors of former labourers in the church of God which

He purchased by His own blood. All these labourers were inspired by the Holy Ghost to reveal God's whole counsel to men, but since the revelation was finished, the duty of labourers now is to hold fast the form of sound words, i.e., to preach the word, and to rule in the church according to the precepts of that written word. There is a very solemn warning given against any interference on the part of man with the whole contents of God's Book: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book: If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city and from the things that are written in this book" (Rev. xxii, 18, 19). This scripture should cause infidels, who tear God's book to pieces, to tremble for fear at God's threatening which will certainly be executed; and it was from the above truth that we concluded many years since that these men have committed the unpardonable sin: May the Lord, of His infinite mercy, keep us and all our fellow-men from committing this awful sin.

These infidels may have high places in Churches now, but that will not save them and their adherents from the righteous judgment of God on the day of final reckoning. So let men beware.

Let us now consider the labours of faithful men in the church of God since the Apostolic age, as that is recorded in the history of the Church. In doing so, we can only mention a few of the outstanding labourers, because our time will not allow us to do more on the present occasion.

In the year 315 A.D., a presbyter of Alexandria, called Arius maintained that Jesus Christ was not God, along with other heretical views. A great controversy arose in the church on account of these views. Athanasius entered into this controversy with his whole heart, and, notwithstanding that he was deposed (for he was the Overseer or Bishop of the church of Alexandria) and banished and persecuted by all the ministers of the whole Church backed by the Roman Emperor, he would not yield to such soul-destroying and God-dishonouring doctrines. He was so absolutely forsaken by men in contending for orthodox doctrines against the views of the Arians that the well known phrase came into being "Athanasius against the whole world." After being banished from his people sixteen times — each time he advised them to stand firm, which to their honour be it said, they faithfully did — he gained the victory for the truth of God, and for the fundamental doctrines vilified by his opponents. The doctrines of Arius were condemned and the Biblical doctrines concerning the Godhead of Christ and of the Holy Ghost were vindicated in the Church

throughout the whole of the Roman Empire. This man proved that he was a faithful labourer who would not compromise the doctrines of God's truth in order to obtain a sinful peace with his fellow-men.

Let us take Augustine as the second labourer. He was born at Tagaste in the North of Africa, in the year 345. In his day Pelagius promulgated doctrines which denied the effects of the fall of Adam on mankind also many other pernicious doctrines. This Pelagius was one of the brightest ministers of the church at his beginning. The Rev. James Durham wrote in his lectures on the book of Revelation that, if he were asked who the bright star was that fell into the fountains of water, turning them to wormwood, which caused many to die on account of the bitterness of the waters, he would say it was Pelagius. Augustine took a very wise course in dealing with this enemy of God's truth. He wrote at large on the doctrine of predestination, the depravity of human nature, and the operation of divine grace. When these works of Augustine were published and read, men saw that they were the very doctrines of the Bible, and that the doctrines of Pelagius on original sin and the freedom of man's will were subversive of the scriptures. So Pelagius lost the day, not before he had done great harm in the church. Augustine's works are held in high esteem by all sound divines till this day. Calvin gave him a high place in all his works. He was truly a labourer that needed not to be ashamed, dividing the word of God aright, and was a true successor of the labourers who preceeded him.

As the third labourer let us take Luther. He was awakened to a real sense of his guilt and natural depravity by the Holy Ghost in a monastery in Germany. He tried to attain to peace of conscience by going through all the penances prescribed by the Papacy; but the more he tried them the deeper his misery became. The words came twice to him, "The just shall live by faith," but he, like Samuel of old, did not know God's voice. While he was on his knees going up the stair falsely called "Pilate's Stair" in Rome, the scripture, "The just shall live by faith," came to his mind with such light and power that he rose off his knees. From that day Luther began to teach that sinners are saved by faith in Jesus Christ, and not by any works of merit of theirs. The light went forth along with the truths which he divulged by his teaching and writings, so that the false and superstitious doctrines of the Papacy appeared to men in their true colours. The power of the Papacy was shaken to its foundations. Every effort was put forth to destroy Luther and his doctrines but truth is strong and will prevail. After all efforts of the Papacy to crush him — its power was universal at the time — he came off victorious by the grace of God, and ultimately died in peace in his bed. He had a great work to do and he

was immortal until he finished it. He was another of the faithful labourers in God's house, who did a great work by faith.

Let us consider Calvin as the fourth. He did more to establish the doctrines of the scriptures, and to expound their true meaning, than any other man did before him or since. His "Institutes of the Christian Religion" reveals a mind of the highest order and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. This work alone did much to advance the Reformation in the sixteenth century, and to close the mouths of the Papacy in their efforts to prejudice the minds of men in high and humble positions against it. In our opinion, no student should be allowed to pass through a Divinity course without studying this work of Calvin. It would be a tower of strength to ministers of the Gospel in meeting with errors in doctrines, etc.; while serving the Church of God in their generation.

Calvin endured a great deal of persecution and trials both from enemies and friends; but he held uncompromisingly to God's word in everything to the very last. He truly earned the character of being a faithful labourer both by doctrine and example.

John Knox may be considered as the fifth labourer. None of our reformers had more courage than he had. He faced boldly and dignifiedly those in civil authority in Scotland in defence of God's truth and the rights of the Church of Christ. Some men endeavour to revile his character as being harsh and uncivil to Queen Mary; but they either forget or willingly conceal that that unfortunate woman boldly endeavoured to undo the whole work of Reformation in Scotland by setting up the Papacy, which had been overthrown by Acts of the Scottish Parliament. She was a traitor to the constitution of the Church of the Reformation which was more dear to John Knox than his life, and, further, he had the law of Scotland and the authority of the Lord behind him in so doing. A more intrepid servant of Christ than John Knox can hardly be found in any country. His name will always remain fragrant to all lovers of civil and religious liberty, not only in Scotland, but also wherever faithfulness and integrity towards the truth of God and the salvation of lost sinners are admired.

I regret that through want of space, I can only offer a passing remark about other very faithful labourers, who endured much in order that the truth of the Gospel would remain with us.

John Welsh, of Ayr, who suffered the greatest hardship because he would not compromise nor surrender any of the claims of the Lord Jesus or the civil and ecclesiastical liberties of His Church in Scotland. For this he was imprisoned, then condemned to death; but, instead of being put to death, he was banished to France. Notwithstanding of all these great trials

he continued faithful unto death.

Andrew Melville was another faithful labourer. He also endured imprisonment and was banished on account of his constant adherence to, and his defence of, the Creed and Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Robert Bruce of Edinburgh, had to endure banishment to Inverness for the same causes three times. But he could not be prevailed with to lower the truth for king or council. He certainly deserves a very high place in the estimation of all true lovers of freedom and honesty in his dealings about the affairs of God's house.

Samuel Rutherford was as faithful as any man this country has ever produced. He suffered banishment to Aberdeen for his adherence to God's truth, and would have suffered death for his faithfulness to Christ's Crown and Covenant had the Lord left him a few days longer in the world. He and Alexander Henderson, and George Gillespie, will have a warm place in the hearts of all the Lord's faithful people in Scotland to the end of time, for the large share they had in framing the subordinate standards of the Church of Scotland, and for their faithful adherence to the same to the end.

Donald Cargill, Richard Cameron, Hugh Mackail, and James Renwick, these were men "who jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field." They forsook all for Christ. They lived for years in dens and caves of the earth; suffering from cold, hunger, nakedness, and sword, until they were one by one caught and put to death. Were it not for these men, and the unconquerable grace of God given to them, the gospel of the grace of God had not come down to us.

Scotland will not know till the day of final judgment how much its people owe to these mighty men of God. The benefits of their faithful labours in the cause of Christ will be held in everlasting remembrance as long as godliness will be continued in our beloved country. All those noble men both of the first and second Reformation periods, did contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints.

Let us come nearer our own time. We can see how Dr Chalmers and many other faithful men laboured to deliver the Church of Scotland from the incubus of Patronage, and when they found it impossible to move the British Government to repeal the Patronage Act, they set the Church free by separating from the thralldom imposed by unrighteous law, while maintaining the principle of Establishment and Endowment of the Church by the State. Thus the Church of Scotland became free.

In the past generation, Dr Begg and Dr Kennedy, also the Rev.

Alexander MacColl, faithfully contended against innovations in doctrine, worship, and infidelity then lifting its monstrous head in Free Church of Scotland.

These men continued to warn the people of the dangers to which they and their children were exposed by these heretical and infidel doctrines tolerated in the Free Church by the majorities in her ecclesiastical courts. But, notwithstanding all they did to oppose the floods of Satan coming in to the Free Church, they were not successful in saving it from being overwhelmed. They surely did what they could. Their memory as faithful labourers should not, and will not be forgotten by such as love God's truth. They were not men that loved contention, but being men of faith, they felt bound to oppose everything that destroyed the pure gospel of Christ, and the order of worship revealed in the Word of God. They served their generation well and slept.

At last the enemy of God and the souls of men thought that he might take a bold step, seeing that these faithful men had gone to their everlasting rest. So an Act was passed by an overwhelming majority in the General Assembly of the Free Church by which her doctrine and principles, as set forth in her subordinate standards, were completely undermined. When the enemies of God's Word thought they had won the day, and that the Free Church, as formerly constituted, had for ever passed away, the Rev. Donald MacFarlane rose in the Assembly of 1893, and tabled a protest by which he, in his own name and in the name of those who would follow him, refused to submit to the courts of that church as constituted under the Declaratory Acts and declared that steps would be immediately taken to revive the Free Church of Scotland as constituted in 1843. This step was actually taken as recorded in our Deed of Separation adopted in August of that year.

We have now given an outline of the labourers into whose labours we have entered. Beginning with Abel, we have traced briefly throughout the inspired and uninspired history of the Church of God, the labours of men (possessed of the faith of the Gospel) to keep pure and entire the faith and scriptural form of worship set up by God in His Church. It will appear to all who are not prejudiced in their minds that the father of our Church — the Rev. Donald MacFarlane — falls into line with the faithful labourers of the past. We have entered into the labours of these faithful men, and consequently our responsibility to God and men is great and far reaching. Therefore let us consider very briefly our duty.

II. Our duty in our Day.

(1) Our Lord, who was Himself the Father's servant in whom His soul

delighted, said to His disciples: "One soweth and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour." So we should make sure that He sent us, as otherwise we cannot labour in faith, and our services will not be acknowledged by Him.

(2) Our duty is: Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry (2 Tim. iv, 2-5). We clearly see that Churches in this land have set their back upon God's truth, and that they have turned to fables, so let us keep closely to God's Word in everything pertaining to doctrine, worship and practice.

(3) Another duty is: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath the believer with an infidel? or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you" (2 Cor. vi, 14-17). Let us take heed that we will keep separate from the mixture of the world and the flesh and the devil which has become almost universal in the churches in this country. The Holy Ghost has depicted clearly in the above quotation, the conduct of Churches in Scotland today; so our duty is plain. Let us, as we have already come out from among them, keep separate from men who cater to men's lusts instead of holding the faith in worship and practice. Alas, that it should be necessary!

I pray the Lord may give us one heart and one way, that we may all think and speak the same things; and that He may always preserve this church from the infection of error of one sort or another. John Willison.

Christ is all

by Dean Henry Law

5. THE TRESPASS-OFFERING

"If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the Lord; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the Lord a ram without blemish, out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass-offering. And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest; and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering, and it shall be forgiven him." Lev. v. 15, 16.

Sin is a monster, which has many forms. Each form has many hands. Each hand deals wounds. Each wound is death. It touches to destroy. But for each wound help is prepared. Jesus appears omnipotent to heal.

This is the truth, which Eden heard: which types displayed: which prophets sang: which cheered the saints of old: which martyrs sealed with blood: which faithful pastors still proclaim. This is the truth, which Satan hates; which infidelity derides: which worldlings tread beneath contemptuous feet. But it lives throughout the Bible-page: and ever will live — the joy of heaven and the rage of hell. This is the prospect, to which the Trespass-offering calls. It shows a pillar with a two-fold front. One indeed sternly asks for penalty. But the other brightens with atonement made.

Reader, the verses, which here meet your eye, state the first case of Trespass-offering. It will suffice to ponder this. The other instances in name may vary, but in principle are one.

A soul commits a trespass, and sins through ignorance in holy things. God's law is thus infringed:— His will transgressed. The dues of heaven are withheld. Such are the features of offence.

Can this be trifle? Shall no wrath arise? Shall deeds unholy cause no holy frown? This cannot be. Iniquity is hated by our God. Can he be clean who loathes not filth? Can he be pure, who shrinks not from impurity? Would not God's throne be tarnished, if sin be not condemned?

Let this ordinance be heard. The Trespass-offering first unveils God's wrath. Offence is dealt with terribly. The trespasser must seek the altar with a ram. The victim must lay down his life. The blood must flow. The costliest parts must be the food of flames. Where trespass had been death must flow. So speaks this witness, with no faltering voice.

Is the question asked, why is the life thus taken? What means a service, terrible in death and gore. The answer loudly thunders, Trespass brings death. No soul can sin and live. Such is the language of this solemn rite. Let all, who hear take heed.

Ignorance of this is the dark veil, which blinds our race. It is the downward path, which slopes to hell. Alas! how few believe, that all the streams of trespass flow to ruin's gulf.

Survey the giddy crowds, who throng earth's path. The mirth — the levity — the godless words — the silly unconcern, prove, that they little know the peril of their state. The current of their thoughts — the bias of their being — the channel of their words and works, widely transgress the law's strict rule, and still they sport, as moths around a flame. They fall to sleep, as Sisera in Jael's tent. Judges iv. 21 They take the dainties from a treacherous hand, but neither see the hammer nor the nails. Like Amasa, they seek a friend's embrace: but heed not the sword which Joab holds. 2 Sam. xx. 10. Thus multitudes unconsciously are slain.

But this rite specially condemns transgression in God's holy things. Alas! this is a frequent case. Many sacrilegiously invent a religion of their own conceit. God plainly speaks from His high throne. He states His will. He shows the only path to heaven. But man's indifference refuses to be taught. He pursues the light, which erring reason kindles. He chooses the rags of nature, rather than the Gospel-robe. But none reach heaven by such Babel-steps. This trespass cloaked in a fair guise, allures a Cain-like crowd. But it is trespass, and it slays the soul.

Some would buy heaven by the price of forms. They bring the offering of rites duly kept. They diligently tread the ceremonial round. They never doubt, that ritual strictness will secure the crown.

Reader, take heed of error here. Truth is a narrow line. Men easily diverge. On either side there is a foul descent. In Satan's creed there are opposing falsehoods. One lowers forms to dust. The other raises them to saving worth. He cares not which delusion is embraced. But each delusion is soul-peril. Forms are not nothing. They are ordained of God. They feed the soul. They fan the flame of faith. Their due observance proves the inward life. This is their Scripture-place.

But means will never cleanse one sin. They have no strength to hold back vengeance. Woe then is theirs, who use them, as their only plea, and clasp them, as their only hope. Would that each eye discerned this snare! Would that each pulpit gave a warning note! This trespass only lives in dens of ignorance. It cannot breathe when dragged to light. But it is trespass. Therefore it is death. The Gospel slighted, leaves no hope.

But when heaven's rays in mercy dissipate these mists — when trespass, as a murder, is seen — then the deep sigh is heard, Is there no remedy — no refuge — no escape? Must ever-lasting vengeance seize me as its prey? Now view the Trespass-offering again. While faith beholds, a saving gleam breaks forth.

A dying victim comes. A substituted life is taken. Another suffers in the offender's place. Pardon is granted through a proxy's blood.

Believer, here is the picture, in which faith delights. A Trespass-offering is prepared in Christ. He is made all your sin. He drinks your every drop of woe. Amazing grace! Astounding love! This is God's way to save. This is the song of all the saved — the joy of all, who really joy — the hope of all, who have true hope. This is the fact, which conquers death, and tramples on the grave, and gives enduring peace, and furnishes resistless pleas, and satisfies each attribute of God, and crowns Jehovah with His brightest crown. Look clearly at this ordinance. The Trespass-offering bleeds, and trespass is forgiven. So Jesus dies, and His whole family is saved. It is a heaven-taught challenge, "Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" It is a heaven-brought answer, "It is God, that justifieth." The Spirit prompts the question, "Who is He, that condemneth?" The same voice sounds the triumph-note, "It is Christ, that died." Each Trespass-offering shouts aloud this truth.

This cup of grace is not exhausted yet. The sinner's need is a vast varied field. No single image can depict its breadth. But Jesu's work completely covers all. His life is laid down as trespass-expiation. But death alone crowns not salvation's pyramid. More is required. More is performed by Christ. More is pre-figured here. The value of the trespass must be reckoned. Scales must be brought. The offender must pay down the estimated cost according to the sanctuary's weight. Further addition of a fifth part must be made. Equivalent will not suffice. Excess is superadded. Lev. v. 16. This rule sets trespass in a clearer light. Death is entailed:— that is the misery. Debt is incurred:— that is the penalty and shame.

We thus are taught, that trespass defrauds God. Creation's law makes us His sole possession. No faculty of mind or frame — no power of intellect or thought — no talent of influence or time — no opportunity — no gift — no grace, is property of our own. All then should serve the cause of the one sovereign Lord. Reason should plan, and eyes should see, and hands should work, and feet should run, to do Him honour and augment His praise. Our every energy should fly abroad with morning light, to gather fruits of glory for His name. Each night should prove, that faith and love have laboured to advance His kingdom upon earth.

But is it so? What is the witness of each hour? Alas! self mounts the great Creator's throne. We rise, we enter on the day, we journey on, as if self-seeking were legitimate employ. Whether we rest or toil it is unto ourselves. Is not this trespass? Such is its lightest name. It robs our God. It wastes His dues. Reader, this is a solemn thought. It fixes on our souls the blackest dye of wrong. It brands us, as purloining from a Father's and a Benefactor's store.

Some perhaps may ask, can no amends be made? Can no devotedness repay? That is a vain conceit. If not one thought of any moment ever swerved from a pure effort for the Lord, it would but be, that moment's due. Surplus of merit is the papist's dream. But our best acts are only increase of our debt. Hence all our works make bankruptcy more deep. When justice calls to the white throne, the fairest reckoning is one huge debt. Who then can stay arrest?

Here the true Trespass-offering again presents relief. Jesus is salvation to the full. Hence death for sin is not the whole of his grand work. This decks us with no merit. It fills no hands with fruits of righteousness. He pays then a whole life's homage to the law. He gives compliance to its largest rule. It asked for one undeviating course of love. Jesus was love without one straying step.

Reader, if you are Christ's, this pure fulfilment is for you. For you Christ wrought it. To your account He puts it. Ponder its wondrous worth. Since Christ is God, Deity embodies all His acts. When he obeys, it is Divine obedience. Unsullied righteousness is sought from man. The righteousness cast over him is the righteousness of God.

The Trespass-offerer added a surplus. But who can weigh the surplus, which Christ brings? He piles the scales, till God can give, and God can take no more.

Such is the Gospel, which pervades this rite. It is clear, and full, and rich, and precious, and divine. Reader, it comes to you this day. It deals most lovingly, most closely with you. It tells you in emphatic terms, that trespass stains your heart, your soul, your mind, your life, your every day, your every hour. It warns, that every trespass strengthens Satan's claims, and fans the flames of hell. It strips off every self-framed hope. It places a vast barrier between you and God. But next it sweetly shows a full recovery. Christ's cross and life are pictured in the brightest hues. You see Him dying to pay the trespass-penalty. You see His righteousness supplying trespass-wrongs. He tenderly persuades, only believe, and take My overflowing cup of merit. Come, cling by faith to Me, and all your trespasses are buried in My wounds, — and all your property is covered by

My robe:— Come, and by faith be one with Me — here is full pardon:— no charge against you can be found:— here is full beauty, — no speck of filth remains. Here is My cross — your all-sufficient expiation. Here is My surplus payment — as your wealth.

Reader, what answer do you give? Can you reject the only Trespass-offering.

Notes from letters

by Rev. Jonathan Ranken Anderson, Glasgow

(Taken from letters written to Mrs Anderson)

I *17th February 1840.* However mortifying to my pride, I ought to submit to let my fellow creatures see something of that vileness which is never hid from the All-seeing eye. The consequence will be that, if I am sanctified, every one that knows me must be convinced that the work is of God and not of man.

II My times are in His hand, and I must be content to return to my work when He pleases. I am sadly troubled with a spirit of alienation; and feel as if I were an entire stranger to God in Christ. Pray for me, my dearest, that I may have much of the spirit of adoption.

III *Saturday, 16th July 1842.* For light, I could get none upon the subject of Lecture — John xx. 24-29 (The case of Thomas), and as for a Sermon, I did not know even the text. From these dismal prospects, however, a pretty good Sabbath emerged. The Lecture came so readily and abundantly that the fragments would have filled more baskets than the loaves and fishes. The people were exceedingly attentive and manifestly impressed, particularly while I opened up from verse 25th the nature of unbelief as resisting the clearest evidence, filling the heart with self-conceit, and limiting the Holy One of Israel. I got my text for the afternoon after I came home, in Isaiah xxvi 9 ("With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek Thee early; for when Thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness"), which I discoursed from under the following heads:— 1st The subjects of the desires expressed in the text; 2nd The desires they breathe; and 3rd The object they have in view; that the Lord would arise and execute His judgments; because then it is the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

IV *18th July 1842.* I am not sorry, for your sake, that enemies rage; for if you are rightly affected, you will get the blessing promised to those of

whom you speak. The grace of God always gains by opposition of that kind, as steel becomes brighter by friction, and gold purer by the furnace. The secret of extracting honey out of the carcase of the lion, and of making a meal upon Leviathan is to be on the Lord's side, and willingly suffer anything for Him and His cause: for the Lord is with us so long as we be with Him.

V *Edinburgh — Monday after Communion Sabbath 1843.* I have just come from Dr Begg's after preaching from John vii, 37-38 — "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." I felt I was in the midst of the dead, but I trust my Lord helped me, and I preached with some degree of plainness and power.

The people had set themselves to dose out the thirty minutes allowed for a sermon, but the truth was too strong for them, and they were compelled to stare, and listen, and in some cases apparently to feel. Oh, that the dry bones may live! I had an uncommonly solemn season last night in Dr Elder's from Hebrew iii, 19 — "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. The truth was awful and very weighty. Many of the people were in tears, and at one time I thought the fire of awakening was about to lay hold of them and wrap in a flame of deep concern a multitude of sleeping sinners. I have not had such a message for a long time, and was so exhausted that I had to stop at the middle of my illustration of my 2nd head, unbelief, as the cause of the judgment that was inflicted. I do trust good was done. Mr Elder said his beadle was trembling like an aspen leaf.

I went to Mr Gray's on Saturday, fearful and anxious, with my text but no sermon. I cried, and struggled, and studied, but all was darkness till I was in the vestry and had on the gown; the light broke in, and heads and particulars lay before me in beauty and order. Oh who teaches like Him? The congregation was large and very fine; so I was on my P's and Q's, but the glory of Christ came out in such grandeur that my heart filled at one passage, and the people seemed moved. I preached from Rom. v, 6, 'For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.' Mr Gray said the people were rivetted, and his Elders expressed themselves much pleased. But what is all that if souls are not saved!

VI *Edinburgh, 26th April 1843.* Notes of sermon, Romans vii, 18, "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." The points illustrated were — 1st. The confession of the Apostle is just; 2nd. Attended with genuine humility; 3rd. Leads to a high esteem of Christ;

4th. Shuts up to a life of faith upon Him. I had some little liberty at the close of the first prayer, and the congregation seemed to be solemnized, but I had a good deal of the Edinburgh spiritual bondage.

VII Edinburgh, 27th April 1843. I am somewhat moved to desire that good may be done by the Word preached and the Sacrament dispensed here. But it is hard against the tide of unbelief and formality in our own hearts and in the hearts of others, to expect that the arm of the Lord will be revealed, and yet, according to our faith, so will it be with us. We do need entrance into the holiest of all; and oh, how wonderful that there is blood under the protection of which we may approach the consuming fire, and not be destroyed nor hurt!

VIII Gourock, 4th December 1841. I preached today from Rom. v, 10, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by His life." The principal part of the sermon was the state of those who are reconciled to God — "they were enemies" — a statement which completely shuts out the claims of works, and faith, and everything else in the creature, and proves that salvation emanates from undeserved and all-conquering love, and flows through surety righteousness, and surety death. Mrs P. said that she had never heard the doctrine of reconciliation handled so simply and fully; and both she and her daughter seemed to have been interested. But will you believe it? I was so poor and needy that I felt quite ashamed, and all the world could not let me into the truths of my own sermon. "Oh, send forth Thy light and Thy truth."

Deputy to Canada

Reverend J. A. and Mrs Macdonald, Fort William, leave Prestwick Airport (D.V.) on Friday, 4th October for Toronto, Canada. Mr Macdonald expects to be in Ontario for seven Sabbaths before returning to this country. We would ask the Lord's people to remember Mr and Mrs Macdonald at a Throne of grace. We trust that, in the Lord's good providence, they will be carried in safety to their destination and eventually brought back again safely to this country. We desire, too, that Mr Macdonald's labours may be blessed to the good of souls in that part of the world.

Letter

By Mr A. Docter, Holland

Oostsingel 31,
Delft.

22nd July, 1952

My dear friend,

So I have my holidays at last. Though I am usually strong as far as my body is concerned, I have been tired and exhausted of late. I think I overworked a little bit and although I should like to come to Scotland, I would not find a rest there unless I could restrict myself in calling only on a few friends; but this would be impossible for me as I like so many of your people. Therefore I decided to go with my wife to Kent, and spent a fortnight at a farm staying with a good friend.

Oh, to experience something like the man about whom we are reading in Acts ch. 8. I mean the eunuch. "He went on his way rejoicing." I feel and experience the contrary — dead and dry, and what is worse that it does not trouble me as much as it ought. How happy the eunuch was! He had something behind him (first) a great interest in the truth; he read Esaia the prophet; (second) a boundless ignorance for he said How can understand except some man should guide me? and in the third place a strong faith when he said "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." How wonderful that the Lord sent Philip and said to him "Go near and join thyself to this chariot" and that in the desert. Now we are living in the wilderness Oh that the Lord would guide us through His Word and Spirit Philip was taken away but the Lord went with the eunuch.

It struck me last Sabbath when I was reading in John ch. 14 that Christ says "And whither I go ye know, and the *way ye know*." But Thomas saith unto Him Lord, we know *not* whither Thou goest, and how can we know *the way*. Wonderful! what treasure is in His Word. How are your relations? Thank them for their kindness shown to me.

Receive our warmest regards,

Your Friend,
A. DOCTER.

He hates not sin a jot the less, because it is found in His own people. And though, for the magnifying of His mercy, He will pardon their sins, yet for the clearing of His righteousness, He will take vengeance upon their inventions.

John Flavel.

A Minister of God

The late Rev. D. N. MacLeod

(Continued from page 272)

By far the greater part of his ministry was to be spent in Ullapool. Inducted on the 9th day of July, 1924, he was to continue there until his death on the 5th day of April, 1967. The parish of Lochbroom had not been without the Gospel in the past nor forgotten by the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand. In the churchyard at Clachan the visitor will see the grave of Dr. Thomas Ross, a contemporary and close friend of that remarkable man, the Rev. Lauchlan Mackenzie, Lochcarron. Dr. Ross who, as well as being a faithful pastor of souls, was also a scholar and theologian of no mean repute, passed away shortly after the Disruption, to be succeeded as Free Church minister by the Rev. George Macleod. He, in turn, was much used of the Lord to awaken sinners to a realisation of the preciousness of their souls and the adequacy of God's provision in Christ to meet their needs. Some of them were still alive twenty three years after his death when the Free Church changed her Creed and the cream of them wholeheartedly aligned themselves with those who took up a separate position. They left the Declaratory Act Free Church not as some would fain have it, because they were not intelligently aware of the true situation, due to their minister, the Rev. John Macmillan, having failed to inform them properly as to the the Constitutionalist position, but because they fully realised the implications of that notorious Act becoming an integral part of its constitution and a binding law. Christians of the calibre of Roderick Mackenzie, Achmore, and John MacIver, Scoraig, were certainly well informed as to the Constitutionalist position and saw clearly that it was wholly inconsistent for anyone who professed faithfulness to the original constitution to remain in fellowship with the Declaratory Act Free Church.

The former was described by the Rev. J. R. Mackay as "one of the heaviest grains of wheat to be met with in these last years on the west coast of Ross-shire." He died in 1907 but John MacIver was still alive three years after Mr Macleod's settlement in Ullapool until he too, at the patriarchal age of 100, entered into the joy of his Lord. If, as is alleged, the people of Lochbroom were not properly informed by their minister, this could hardly have been the case in the neighbouring parishes of Lairg and Creich. In the former parish the Rev. John Noble was their minister and mentor; in the latter the eminent Dr Gustavus Aird. Yet we find such men as Angus Gray, Sandy Murray and others in these parishes, eminent in their day for grace and godliness, impelled to differ with their ministers

over this vital matter and parting company with them rather than compromise. To insinuate that these men were guilty of schism and did not really grasp the realities of the situation is to tarnish their memory and cast a most serious reflection on their Christian character. The truth is that these godly men and women in Lochbroom and elsewhere had the mind of the Lord on the matter and when the time for action came they obeyed God rather than men. Mr Macleod's predecessor in Ullapool, the Rev. Andrew Sutherland, left to join the present Free Church in 1918 but no one in the congregation, as far as we know, was apparently inclined to follow his example although by then, presumably, they were all very well informed.

In fulfilling his pastoral duties in Ullapool Mr Macleod had to care for a flock which was widely scattered from Coigach to the north to Scoraig, the isolated community on the north shore of Little Loch Broom and accessible only from the sea or by a rough footpath from the Dundonnell side. Achmore lies across the headland from Scoraig and the site of the meeting house was carefully and judiciously chosen midway between them so as to conveniently serve the two communities. There were then, we are told, some sixty or seventy adults living in the Scoraig area. At present none of the original stock is left as all the crofts have now been taken over by people from the south. Even the hallowed meeting house, once the focal point of the community, is now a ruin after having been, a few years ago, deliberately burnt down by one of the newcomers to the place. John Munro, who died at Kirkhill in 1950 when about 90 years old, was a native of Achmore and a member of the Ullapool Kirk Session in 1924. Nearer Ullapool itself, Alasdair Ross, who had been for some years in Harris as a missionary and colporteur, was then living and was held, with his brother George, in high regard by those who appreciated the worth of truly gracious men. There were others also, perhaps not so well known, but nevertheless such as adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour and served their own generation well. Between these men and their minister there was forged from the outset a close bond of mutual affection and trust and a care about the affairs of Christ's Kingdom in their midst that was to last for as long as they were together in the world.

That Mr Macleod's long ministry in Lochbroom was over the years a blessing to souls cannot be doubted, but he himself, although careful to leave the final result with God, often lamented the fact that there was so little evidence of the seed sown having borne fruit in the conversion of sinners. The godly men and women who were alive when he was first settled in Ullapool were one by one taken away and although the Lord was

not to leave Himself, even to this day, without a remnant in these parts, comparatively few were raised up to take the place of those removed. This state of affairs was by no means peculiar to the Lochbroom area, but as is alas! only too well known and too sadly evident, was generally the case throughout the land. The in-flow of the tide of ungodliness and infidelity had continued unabated as year succeeded year until the days of declension that Rev. Lachlan Mackenzie and others with prophetic insight had spoken of, came recognisably to pass. Among those already mentioned who adhered to the Free Presbyterian cause in Lochbroom there was a godly woman, Margaret Maclean to name. For forty years she regularly walked to Creich to hear Dr Kennedy and others preach the Gospel and it was while present there on one occasion that she heard the famous Dingwall minister say something which in after years she was frequently heard repeating: "Alas! poor Scotland, though exalted and joyful, little dost thou anticipate what is before thee." It would appear that Dr Kennedy clearly saw that the outcome of all the innovations in worship and doctrine being introduced in his day was to result in the spiritual desolation of Scotland. Two world wars, so costly in lives, and the cause of so much sorrow and anguish, instead of arresting the nation on its backsliding course only seemed to accelerate the progress of spiritual and moral decay. The Lord's Spirit being grieved away, the lot of ministers truly called to that office, and out of faithfulness to God and their ordination vows, committed to declare all the counsel of God, increasingly came to be far from an easy one. Mr Macleod, his contemporaries and successors in the Christian ministry were and are called upon to endure hardships to which perhaps Dr Kennedy was comparatively a stranger in his day, when vital godliness, although on the ebb, was still much in evidence, particularly in the Highlands of Scotland.

For decades now it has been for the most part commonly the lot of faithful ministers to see their words fall on deaf ears. This increasingly widespread apathy and indifference to the Gospel and the claims of the Saviour was regarded by Mr Macleod and others like-minded with him as a very solemn and sobering dispensation. On one occasion he summed it up in this way, and at least one person who heard him say it many years ago in Lewis never forgot it: "It is a most solemn matter when a generation passes by the Lord Jesus Christ but infinitely more solemn when the Lord Jesus Christ passes by a generation." Speaking at the meeting of Synod in 1947 he expatiated on this theme and we think part of what he said will bear repetition.

(To be continued)

Gathan Gloir na Diadhachd

Leis an Urr. Eldeard Pearce

)Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 279(

3. Ach ann an so, mar ann an sgàthan, tha aimeadais agus cuthach mòr na muinntir a tha roghnachadh a chreutair air thoiseach air Dia, na'n roghainn agus na'n aignidhean, a cur an sonas an sin, agus cha'n ann Ann-san. Tha mòran (cha'n e a h-aon, na dha, na beagan, ach mòran) ag ràdh, co nochdas dhuinn aon ni maith? Agus ciod e a maith bu toil leo a nochdadh dhoibh? Arbhar, fion, oladh, Salm iv.6. Maith a chreutair, maith mothachail, maith gu bhi lionadh càil fheolmhor; agus gu dearbh is e so a maith a tha chuid is motha de dhaoineibh a roghnachadh 'n an roghainn agus 'n an aignidhean air thoisich air Dia, a cur fois agus sonas an anamaibh ann an sin. Tha aig a chuid is motha de dhaoine smuaintean àrd mu'n a chreutair, agus smuaintean iosal mu Dhia; tlachd mòr mu'n a chreutair, agus tlachd beag mu Dhia; is ann an so 's an siud a tha neach a tha gu fìrinneach agus gu dearbh a giullain a shonas 'os ceann nan creutairean agus a leagas e air Dia: gabh a chuid is motha de dhaoine agus 's e'n creutair dha'm bheil iad a toirt gràidh, 's e'n creutair air am bheil iad a cur luach, 's e'n creutair a tha iad a roghnachadh, agus 's e'n creutair a tha iad a togail suas mar am fois agus an sonas; air son Dhé, cha bhi gnothuch aca Ris; mar a ghearain Dia mu'n timchioll bho shean, "Gidheadh cha d'eisd mo shluagh ri m'ghuth, agus cha do ghabh Israel rium." Salm lxxxi.11. Ann am focal tha Dia agus na creutairean a roinn cridheachan agus aignidhean an t-saoghail uille eatorra.

Tha Dia dha thairgse fein do dhaoine mar fhois agus sonas an anamaibh, agus mar sin gu bhi air a ghràdhachadh, luach a bhi air a chur air, a bhi air a roghnachadh, a bhi air gabhail tlachd ann leo; air an laimh eile, tha na creutairean dha'n tairgse fein do dhaoine air an dòigh cheudna, agus tha iad le cheile a tagradh air son a bhi air gabhail riutha, agus co aca, guidheam oirbh, a tha buannachadh, Dia na'n creutair. gu fìrinneach, 's e'n creutair leis a chuid is motha. Mo thruaigh! tha sinn feolmhor agus talmhaidh, agus tha sinn gu nàdurra a claonadh a dh' ionnsuidh nithean feolmhor agus talmhaidh, a gabhail riutha agus a dearmad Dhé, agus mar sin tha'n creutair air a roghnachadh air thoiseach air Dia. Oh! ciod e 'n aimeadas agus an cuthach a tha'n sol a bhi roghnachadh a chreutair air thoiseach air Dia ann ar roghainn agus ar n' aignidhean. Se tha'n so ach a bhi roghnachadh falamhachd air thoiseach air lànachd, neo-niachd air thoiseach air foghainteachd, ach 's e th'ann mar an ceudna a bhi roghnachadh diomhanas air thoiseach air neo-glusadachd, atharrachadh air thoiseach air neo-chaochlaidheachd, agus

oh, ciod e'n eimideas, ciod e'n cuthach a tha'n sol' a bhi roghnachadh air thoiseach air Dia, ann ar roghainn agus ann ar n' aignidhean, 's e th' ann ach a bhi roghnachadh soitheach nach cum uisge air bith air thoiseach tobar uisgeachab beo. Mar sin tha Dia Féin a dha chomharrachadh a mach mar olc dubh agus gràineil, Ier.ii.12, 13, olc a tha E gairm air na neamhan gu bhi gabhail ioghnadh, agus an talamb gu bhi air uamhasachadh do bhrìgh e.O luchd mo ghràidh, 's e ni eagalach a th'ann a bhi roghnachadh slochd air toiseach air tobar; maith bochd, cumhann, gann, air thoiseach air maith làn, gu leoir, gu'n toiseach, uile fhoghainteach boinne roimh chuan de mhaitheas agus de mhillseachd. Is e aimeadachd mhòr a tha'n so; ach a bhi roghnachadh slochd eu-dionach, agus slochd eu-dionach nach cum uisge air bith, air thoiseach air tobar de dh'uisgeachan beo, neo-niachd a tha dol seachad roimh lànachd neo-chaochlaidheach, 's e so gòraiche is motha, gòraiche a tha treorachadh gu cuthach; agus gidheadh 's e so gòraiche a chuid is motha de dhaoine. Tha daoine feolmhor, anns na Sgrìobturann bitheanta air an gairm amadain agus cha'n eil an aimaideas air a nochdadh ni's motha na ann an so, 's e sin an roghnachadh chreutairean caochlaidheach roimh'n Dia neo-chaochlaidheach agus gu dearbh, ann an so c'àilt am b'urrain aimeadas ni's motha a bhi? Ann an Lucas xii.19, tha aon a labhairt ri anam, ag radh, "Anam, tha agad mòran de nithean maithe air an tasgadh fa chomhair mòran bhliadhnachan; gabh fois, ith, òl, agus bi subhach." Guidheam oirbh, gabhaibh beachd, cha robh aon fhocal mu Dhia na bheul, agus mar a dh'fhaodas sinn gu tearuinte a cho-dhùnadh, cha robh smuainte mu Dhia na chridhe; ach bha e gu h-uile air a thogail suas le saibhlean, agus toraidhean, agus ionmhasan, agus gidheadh tha e 'g àithne dha anam, a ghabhail fois agus suidhe sìos. Bha Dia mar neo-ni dha, agus be'n creutair na h-uile ni dha. Seadh ciod e'n t-ainm a tha Criosd a toirt dha? Am bheil E toirt dha ainm mnatha na duine? Cha'n eil. Amadain (tha E'g ràdh). Tha Criosd dha ghairm "Amadain," mar a bu mhaith a dh'fhaodadh E, oir ciod e'n aimaideas is motha na so, a bhi air a thogail suas gu h-uile le creutairean bàsmhor agus a bhi dearmad agus a di-chuimhneachadh Dia neo-chaochlaidheach? Seadh, agus a bhi'g earalachadh anam a bhi gabhail fhois mar an ceudna, do bhrìgh gu'n robh e cur thairis le comhfhurtachdan a chreutair. Gu dearbh, na'n robh e air a ràdh, Anam, gabh t-fois bi subhach, tha ionmhasan neamhaidh air a chur suas ann am pailteas air do shon; 's e Dia do chuid, 's e Criosd da chuid, 's e 'n Spiorad beannaichte an Comhfhurtair do chuid, is leat neamh agus beatha mhaireannach, bhitheadh na ni coltach, ach a chridhe bhi air a thoirt suas le nitheamh feolmhor gu h-uile, dha'n roghnachadh

roimh Dhia, agus a bhi'g earalachadh anam fois a ghabhail agus a bhi subhach air chosg na nithean sin, 's e so aimeadachd le fianuis, agus co thoill an t-ainm, amadan, mar a thoill esan?

Ciod a their mi? Tha so, 's e sin, a bhi deanamh roghainn de-n chreutair air thoiseach air Dia, na leithid de dh'amaideas, agus air a cheann mu dheireadh gu'n ruisge e gu naire agus gu masladh gu bràth gach neach a tha ciontach dheth, agus tha'n leithidean sin airidh air crochadh an slabhruidhean mar mhuinntir a tha ciontach de na comharraidhean is àirde air amaideachd agus cuthach. "Feuch so am fear nach d'rinn a neart do Dhia, ach a dh'earb a pailteas a bheartais, agus a neartaich e fein 'n a aingidheachd." Salm 1ii.7. Feuch, is e so an duine a roghnaich an creutair air thoiseach air Dia, a rinn saobhreas, agus cha'n e Dia a chuibhrionn: is e so an t-amadan, an dearbh amadan, an duine cuthaich sin; seadh, co air bith iad a ni so, chi iad mu dheireadh (ged a dh'fhaodas e bhi tuilleadh is anamoch) agus gheibh siad iad fein a bhi 'n an amadain. Aig a chrioch (tha'm faidh ag ràdh mu leithid sin do neach) bithidh e na amadan. Ier.xvii.11. Aig a chrioch bithidh e na amadan. Aig a chrioch bithidh e na amadan! Ciod e! An robh e 'n a dhuine glic aig a thoiseach agus na shuibhal? Ni h-eadh, bha e na amadan fad an t-siubhail. Seadh, ged a bha e ne amadan, bha e dha smuainteachadh fein glic, ach mu dheireadh chi e aimeadachd, chi e gu'm b' fhior amadan e da-rireadh. Agus O cia mar a ni sealladh air a leithid sin de dh'amaideas a chràdh agus a phianadh? Oh fhearaibh, 'n uair a chi sibh sibh fein a dol a mach a dh'ionnsuidh staid neo chaochlaidheach, mar a bhitheas sibh an uine ghearr, cia mar a dh'iteas sibh sibh fien a thabh 'ur n'aimideas, ann a bhi deanamh roghainn de chreutairean caochlaidheach air thoiseach air Dia neo-chaochlaidheach? Labhram, uime sin, ris gach aon agaibh, mar ann an Gnath.xxiii.5. Tha daoine a smuainteachadh gur e'n gliocas is àirde a bhi faotainn beartais, ach, fhearaibh, bitheadh fios cinnteach agaibh gur e aimeadas a tha'n so.

(R'a leantainn.)

Correction

In the July issue of the Magazine on page 195 the fourth line of the first paragraph should read "Of God regards as a gift. Of course the word of God says very emphatically."

Book Review

John Elias — Life and Letters by Edward Morgan. Banner of Truth Trust. Price £2.10. 412pp.

The first 184 pages of this attractively produced volume contain the life of John Elias, a noted Welsh preacher. John Elias was born in 1774 and died in 1841 in the 47th year of his ministry and the 68th year of his life. In a land noted for eminent preachers such as Daniel Rowland and Howell Harris, Elias was himself in the first rank. He belonged to the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists and laboured first in Caernarvonshire, his home county. When 22 years of age he removed to Anglesey and was instrumental in the Lord's hand through his preaching in transforming Anglesey from its spiritually desolate condition to a prosperous and flourishing state.

Elias' preaching was powerful and weighty as the following incidents show. In one place he was preaching in such a descriptive and terrific manner on hell torments that the people were panic-struck, and thought that they were on the point of going there; one man cried out in his distress, 'O that I could hear Richardson of Caernarvon (a very evangelical preacher) but for five minutes'. Another time preaching on the text "That at that time ye were without Christ," there was a feeling of tremendous awe in the hearer's hearts as he described man's wretched condition without Christ. Many were terrified and pale with fear. Elias himself was under the most intense feelings, and could not forbear from tears. "Oh! Oh!" he cried, "the wretchedness of those without Christ! They are naked without clothing! sick without a physician! famishing without the bread of life! guilty without righteousness! unclean without a fountain! lost without a Saviour! damned without atonement!"

The remaining 228 pages of the book are taken up with letters, essays and other papers, and also observations on Elias' writings — all material of a spiritually edifying nature.

Elias took a deep interest in the British and Foreign Bible Society which was founded in 1804 and assisted Mr Thomas Charles of Bala in establishing Auxiliaries and Branches of the Society in Wales. After the death of Mr Charles he took the lead in North Wales in the affairs of the society. In 1831 when the Trinitarian Bible Society separated from the main body, Elias did not see his way to join the new Society but continued to support the larger body. Consequently support in Wales continued at that time with the British and Foreign Bible Society.

We gladly recommend this book to readers of the Magazine and trust that the reminder it gives of better days may prove an encouragement in such a dark day as ours.

D.B.M.

Church Notes

Teacher for Rhodesia

As the readers of the *Magazine* know, Miss R. MacKay returned to her post in the John Tallach Secondary School without her full leave. This is the second time that Miss MacKay has done this and the Committee feel that it is desirable that she should be relieved as soon as possible.

The teacher required to take her place would need to have a Science or Arts Degree as these qualifications are now required by the Education Authorities in Rhodesia. The Committee hope and pray that the Lord will put it into the heart of one of our young people to join the staff at Ingwenya and so fill a useful place in the Lord's work in the school there.

Any one having such a desire should write to the Clerk of the Committee from whom all other necessary information can be obtained.

(Rev.) Donald MacLean, Clerk,
Jewish and Foreign Missions' Committee,
13 Kingsborough Gardens, Glasgow G12 9NH.

Home Mission Fund Collection

This collection is due to be taken in the month of October by authority of the Synod.

The purposes of the Fund are well known as the labours of our lay missionaries are appreciated. The Committee was glad to be in a position to raise their salaries and believe our people feel the rise was much needed in these times. The activities of our Church Extension scheme are also met from this Fund and needs of one kind or another arise continually.

The Committee look to our people to contribute with their usual liberality.

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart so let him give . . . for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver." (II Cor., 9 v 7).

(Rev.) Donald MacLean, Convener,
Finance Committee 1st October 1974

Resignation of Rev. D. J. MacAskill, MA, Uig

At a meeting earlier in the year, the Outer Isles Presbytery regretfully accepted the resignation of Rev. D. J. MacAskill, Uig, from the active ministry on health grounds. The members spoke feelingly of his long ministry of almost 40 years and hoped that he would be spared to enjoy a long and useful retirement. The retirement was to take effect from the end of July 1974.

Request for Newspaper Cuttings

Would readers of the Magazine who read of instances of Sabbath desecration which call for protest from the Sabbath Observance Committee please send newspaper cuttings including name of paper and date in which the report appeared to the Clerk of the Sabbath Observance Committee, Rev. J. MacDonald, Free Presbyterian Manse, Staffin, Isle of Skye IV51 9JX.

Notes and Comments

The Fall from Office of President Nixon

America's prestige has suffered a bitter blow in the fall from power of President Nixon. Only a short time before the Vice-President had been forced to resign so this was really a double blow to such a powerful nation as the United States of America. Of course it was the reasons which led to these resignations which had the most seriously damaging effect on America. Men occupying the highest office in state had failed to grasp that the moral standards required of the citizens of a nation calling itself Christian must be even more clearly reflected in the lives of their leaders. It would appear, too, that they had lost sight of the Scriptural maxim that "righteousness alone exalts a nation and that sin is a reproach to any people." What rendered President Nixon's action doubly reprehensible was his persistent denial of the truth until circumstances eventually forced him to admit it.

These sad events should be a forcible reminder to us of the fallability of man and especially of our need of being kept in whatsoever circumstances we may find ourselves. No one has ground for pointing the finger. "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."

May the new President, President Ford, seek from the Lord, like Solomon, an understanding heart in order to discern between good and bad and rule in righteousness over such a great nation. May he prove more worthy of the trust placed in him than did his predecessor.

Drunkenness Among the Young

A recent report indicated that girls under 20 and boys between the ages of 14 and 17 proportionally contributed most to the increase of drunkenness in England and Wales last year, and we have every reason to believe that matters are no better in Scotland. The above figures given in the report confirm a trend which has been noticeable for some years now, that is, that younger and younger people are becoming addicted to strong drink. Apart altogether from the evil of this particular sin and its effect

upon those who are themselves given over to it, what misery this is laying up in store for families and homes in years to come.

Let our young people give good heed to the solemn warnings of Scripture against the sin of drunkenness and seek the Lord in the days of their youth in order that they may not give their best days to the world, the flesh and the devil. Let them beware of evil companions which is a fruitful source of leading into this as well as many other sins. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgement." (Eccles 11:10).

A New Government

It may well be that by the time this issue is in the hands of readers in this country that the nation will have been called upon once more to elect a new Government. The difficulty facing the electorate in choosing another Government increases with each election as the nation continues on a course of religious, moral and economic decline. Successive Governments have failed to give that moral leadership so urgently needed at the present time.

One hopeful indication we would take of better things to come would be the return to Parliament of an increasing number of Members of Parliament of upright and sterling character. We trust that, under the Lord's good hand, this will be one beneficial outcome of another General Election. Let us pray that the Lord will raise up in the high places of the land men that would fear Him and honour His laws. How quickly then might we see the situation in the nation reversed!

Media Bill in South Africa

In moving the second reading of the Publications Bill, South Africa's Minister of the Interior, Dr C. P. Mulder, said that the Government was determined to maintain the characteristic and conservative character of the South African community. The country, he declared, had to be preserved from the spirit of permissiveness and moral decay.

While we are in no position to give a judgment on the provisions contained in the Bill, it is heartening to read the above sentiments by a Government minister. For too long now our own Government ministers have hesitated from taking any action to stem the tide of licentiousness which has swept over the nation. No doubt fear of being called puritanical and unwillingness to stand up to the outcry which there would be from the

libertine section of the nation that they were infringing people's liberties, has left our leaders paralysed in the face of the flood of iniquity threatening the very life of the nation. May the Lord in His mercy raise up statesmen of high moral character who will not be intimidated in this way, and who will be so high principled as to be prepared to sacrifice popular applause in order to restore the country to its proper path.

Acknowledgment of Donations

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