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The Prince and the Papacy

All who truly have the good of this nation at heart, and especially those who fear God in the land, must surely view with concern the conduct of the Prince of Wales, the first in line of succession to the British throne. The Heir-apparent is well aware of the provisions of the Bill of Rights and Act of Settlement: "*Whereas it hath been found by experience that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant Kingdom to be governed by a Popish Prince or by any King or Queen marrying a Papist . . . Every person who is or shall be reconciled to, or shall have communion with, the See or Church of Rome, or shall marry a Papist, shall be excluded and be for ever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy the Crown or Government of this Realm and Ireland; and in every such case the people of these Realms shall be and are hereby released of their allegiance.*" (Act. 1, William and Mary, cap. 2, sec. ii., 1689). He is, also, familiar with the terms of the Accession Declaration and the Coronation Oath: "*I do solemnly, and in the presence of God profess, testify, and declare that I am a faithful Protestant, and that I will, according to the true intent of the enactments which secure the Protestant succession to the Throne of my Realm, uphold and maintain the said enactments to the best of my power, according to law.*" His familiarity with these enactments is not in question; it is his attitude towards them that causes concern.

It is clearly evident from what one learns from the public press and especially from what one reads in a recent semi-official biography ("The Prince of Wales" by Jonathan Dimbleby) that, as things stand at present, the Heir-apparent does not measure up to being "a faithful Protestant" and to all appearances would not be prepared to take the Coronation Oath in its present form. That is a matter of real concern to loyal Protestant subjects within the United Kingdom. But it is not only the Prince's attitude to these constitutional matters that causes concern; there are, also,

revelations concerning his personal life and conduct which have to taken into consideration.

It is now public knowledge that he is an adulterer and far from acknowledging his conduct as sinful, he, in making it so widely known, appears to glorying in his shame. "He that ruleth over men", the Bible tells us, "must be just, ruling in the fear of God." By that standard, the Prince of Wales, if he were King and still holding the views he espouses at present, would surely be found wanting. His conduct is reminiscent of that of the debauched and perfidious Stuart kings, the last of whom was flung off the British throne in 1688. This was, we believe, in answer to the prayers of the godly among whom was that illustrious soldier and martyr for Christ, Richard Cameron. Preaching somewhere on the moor between the shires of Ayr and Lanark, he paused in the middle of his sermon and we are told that "in the pause he prayed for the restoration of the Jews, for the fall of Antichrist, and for the hastening of the hour when the Stuarts should be swept from the throne." He did not live to see that prayer answered but others were spared to see the last of these petitions wonderfully answered when, in 1688, the secret papist James II was disowned by the British nation. They also saw the very principles set forth so fearlessly in the Sanquhar Declaration, and for which Cameron and a multitude of others died, embodied in the legislation enacted at the Glorious Revolution. It is that legislation that is now being flouted by the Prince of Wales.

We are indebted to Mr John MacLeod, the freelance journalist, for drawing our attention to the fact that there were certain references to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in the forementioned, recently published, biography of the Prince of Wales. Mr Dimbleby was granted full access to the Prince's private papers and among them he came across certain documents in which he took a great deal of interest and to which he seemed to attach considerable importance. They were letters sent to the Prince by our Church's Religion and Morals Committee and by our Synod in 1985.

The background to the exchange of letters was connected with the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to Rome in 1985 when the Prince indicated that he proposed to have an audience with the Pope and, more than that, attend the Pope's "domestic eucharist" within the precincts of the papal private chapel in the heart of the Vatican. These proposals, especially the latter, once they became known, stirred up the opposition of Protestant Churches and other bodies who were concerned over the matter and aware of the serious implications of such actions on the part

of the heir to the British throne. The biography reveals that there was much scheming and plotting behind the scenes in order to facilitate the attendance of the Prince at the papal private mass and the faithless and perfidious conduct of both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in encouraging His Royal Highness to attend the idolatrous service is here laid bare.

By 1985, the Prince's biographer tells us, "relations between the Vatican and Lambeth Palace were warmer than ever. In this climate, the Prince wanted to use his visit to Italy to make a further gesture of reconciliation towards Rome. The Home Office were consulted on the constitutional implication of such a "gesture" and, of course, the Archbishop of Canterbury who favoured a 'special service' in St Peter's to celebrate what would have been the first formal act of reconciliation between the papacy and the royal family since the excommunication of Henry VIII." This proposal was not accepted as it was thought that "for the Prince to 'participate' in a Roman Catholic service would be taken to imply his acceptance of the authority of Rome, while merely to 'attend' such a service might seem patronising to the Vatican. Instead, it was agreed that the Prince and princess should attend the Pope's domestic eucharist in his private chapel. As the Prince would not partake of communion, there would be no breach of his constitutional position as Supreme-governor designate; only 'the extreme minority' who rejected the Pope's spiritual and ecclesiastical position could dissent. Likewise, recognising the force of the Home Office reservations about his original preference, the Archbishop declared that by attending a private mass at the Vatican, the Prince would be far more effective than 'any number of theoretical statements by ecclesiastics' in moving the Pope more firmly in favour of ecumenicism. Moreover, by thus confronting His Holiness 'with Anglican piety and commitment at the highest level', the Prince would cause scandal in Britain only to 'a few on the lunatic fringe'. Crucially, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland also gave his personal blessing to the project."

We are told that "the proposal was duly conveyed to the Vatican, where it was favourably received. Soon afterwards it received the Pope's blessing and the detailed planning for the private mass was put in hand. As part of this process the decision was taken early in April to impose a news 'blackout' on the occasion, which would be lifted only retrospectively. A press statement was even prepared for after the service which was designed to emphasise that the royal couple had attended the papal mass 'without receiving communion'."

The biographer continues: "In the absence of any better explanation for this elaborate curtain of secrecy, it may be presumed that the intention had been to forestall a public fracas with 'the lunatic fringe'. A letter to the Prince from Secretary of the Religion and Morals Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland condemning his planned audience with the Pope (which had been announced before the proposal for the private mass had been finalised) gives some idea of the wrath which lurked in some evangelical breasts:

We would respectfully remind Your Royal Highness that the Pope of Rome was identified by our Reformers, and is still identified as the 'man of sin' revealed in Scripture (II Thessalonians, chapter 2, verses 3 and 4), and that history has confirmed that his emissaries have been responsible for the bloodshed of many in the name of Christianity, of which, he remains unrepentant, at least publicly . . . We affirm that, in our opinion, it is quite unnecessary for Your Royal Highness to visit the Pope of Rome who seeks to deprive us of the liberty of the Gospel . . . we must advise Your Royal Highness against such a proposed visit, against which, if our plea is ineffectual, we most vehemently protest.

"At this juncture," we read on, "only two weeks before the celebration of the secret mass which had been now fixed for the early morning of 30 April (the day after the royal audience with the Pope), the entire plan was suddenly scuppered, to the acute embarrassment of all involved. As this débâcle was reported in *The Times*' Diary on 16 April, 'A request by Prince Charles to attend a papal mass in the Vatican has been refused after a top level decision taken in the past 24 hours, involving Buckingham Palace, Church leaders and the diplomatic corps.' The unnamed source for this carefully placed snippet was the Queen's press office, which had contrived this pre-emptive strike to limit the damage that a less economical version of the truth would have been bound to cause. Guided by the Palace, *The Times*' columnist wrote, 'Besides the fear of protests from Protestant loyalists, I am told objections were raised at the weekend within the hierarchy of the Church of Scotland, although the Moderator, the Right Revd John Paterson is understood to have given the prince his personal blessing. I am told the agreement of the Archbishop of Canterbury was also given.'

"In the weekend press, there had been some exceptionally hazy speculation about the royal couple sharing in an act of worship with the Pope. It is quite possible, therefore, that at this stage some members of the Church of Scotland did indeed voice objections to the support given by their Moderator for the Prince's initiative. However, even if these

doubts had reached the ears of the Palace, they could not have been decisive in the cancellation of the mass. As Paterson himself later insisted, the Church of Scotland neither objected nor applied pressure on the Palace. The first he had learnt of the alleged opposition of his Church was in *The Times*' report which the Palace had instigated.

"What Buckingham Palace had failed to tell *The Times*' diarist was that, until the very last moment, the Queen's private secretary, Sir Philip Moore, had himself not been aware of the private mass. Thus in a serious breach of protocol, the issue had not been raised with the Queen. As a result, with only a fortnight to go, the Supreme Governor of the Church of England had been given no opportunity fully to consider the constitutional implications of her son's attendance at the Pope's mass. In any case, in the days before *The Times* reported the Palace version of why the mass had been cancelled, the Queen had a long meeting with her son. Whether or not the Prince was 'indignant' with his mother, as the press subsequently reported, is a matter of conjecture. The outcome is not. On 15 April, a message was relayed from the Prince's office to the Holy See: the Prince would not after all attend the mass on which he had set his heart so many months before."

There followed an exercise in damage limitation in which the Prince's Private Secretary even tried to conceal the fact that attendance at a papal mass had ever been considered and his Press Secretary went so far as to insist "that the mass had only been cancelled because it had become impossible to fit it into the schedule". This was, of course, so blatantly untrue that, we are told, no one believed it. The Vatican, however, was — no doubt for its own reasons — more forthcoming. Officials there were prepared to tell "any journalist who cared to listen that, but for a last-minute cancellation, the Prince would have taken part in an historic act of reconciliation with the Church of Rome." It was also made known in Rome that "the Queen's decisive opinion that a mass would be 'inopportune' had been relayed to the British ambassador to the Holy See, Sir Mark Heath. He was reported to have been 'surprised and embarrassed by the news' — as well he might have been, given his intimate involvement in the detailed preparations for the event."

"The controversy provoked by the cancellation of the mass was sustained and predictable. Prominent Catholics mourned a missed opportunity, Revd Ian Paisley thundered that any 'communion' between the throne and the See of Rome would be a defiance of the law, and the Archbishop of York, Dr John Habgood, soothingly contradicted him.

"A measure of the Prince's own feelings about the cancellation may

be gleaned from the response to a letter which arrived some weeks later from the Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Revd John MacLeod. Informing the Prince that the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 29, Section 2, says the mass *is most abominably injurious to Christ's one, only sacrifice . . .*, and that 'reconciliation to the see of Rome could jeopardise Your Royal Highness' right to succession', MacLeod vouchsafed on behalf of his Synod that the Prince was being 'ill-advised in spiritual matters by some who have departed from the true teaching of the inspired, infallible and inerrant way(sic) of God.'

The Prince, we are informed, "was moved to draft a reply to this diatribe in forthright language. Reminding MacLeod that the proposed service had only been countenanced after close consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Home Office, he wrote, 'I would like to ask by what divine grace you have decided you have the monopoly of truth in this matter?' Castigating 'bigotry and prejudice in all its forms', he informed MacLeod that these failings were 'the main cause of so much human suffering and misery'. The letter was not despatched. A note on the typed draft from a member of his staff instructed, 'On no account is this letter to be sent.' Instead, the Prince was prevailed upon to allow his private secretary to respond on his behalf in a noncommittal reply rather less calculated to fan the flames of religious intolerance."

The full text of the Synod's letter described in the foregoing extract as a "diatribe" and to which the Prince of Wales took such exception was as follows:

Your Royal Highness,

It was with anguish and dismay that our Synod learned of Your Royal Highness' request and intention to attend a private mass with the Pope of Rome, together with the secrecy surrounding it. It was with a measure of relief that we heard of the cancellation of this event.

We would respectfully remind Your Royal Highness that the noble Protestant Reformers of the Church of England, of which Church Your Royal Highness is a member, described the mass as a blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit (The Articles of Religion, No. 31), while the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 29, Section 2, says the mass "is most abominably injurious to Christ's one, only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of His elect."

We number ourselves among Her Majesty the Queen's most loyal servants. We endeavour by our speech, lives and prayers to uphold Her Majesty the Queen and the Protestant Throne which she occupies. It shocks

and disappoints us that the Heir-apparent to the Throne should consider so compromising Her Majesty the Queen, who by the Bill of Rights of 1689 and the Act of Settlement 1701 is pledged not to be "reconciled to or . . . hold communion with the see or Church of Rome" without relinquishing that Protestant Throne.

It gives us no pleasure to write in such terms to Your Royal Highness, but as duty bound to the Lord Jesus Christ, to our own consciences, and to your Royal Highness' spiritual and temporal well-being, we understand that as the Heir-apparent to the Protestant Throne of Britain, such reconciliation to the see of Rome could jeopardise Your Royal Highness' right to succession and would be inconsistent with the Oath, upon Your anticipated accession, to preserve the Protestant and Presbyterian Religion of the Church of Scotland, as an integral part of the Treaty of Union 1707.

In view of the serious and precarious position, brought about by ecumenical activities, to our Protestant Throne, we feel duty-bound to speak plainly to Your Royal Highness before a situation arises relative to the Protestant Constitution, which is irreversible. We feel that Your Royal Highness is being ill-advised in spiritual matters by some who have departed from the true teaching of the inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God. The Lord says of those who reject His Word, "Lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord: and what wisdom is in them?" (Jeremiah, Chapter 8, verse 9).

We pray God that Your Royal Highness will be brought to a full appreciation of the Protestant faith as a true exposition of "the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (II Timothy, Chapter 3, verse 9).

Readers may judge for themselves whether or not this should be classified as a diatribe. In reminding the Prince of Wales that there are legal enactments in place which sets out what the British Monarchy's relationship and attitude to the Church of Rome ought to be, the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland is consigned to "the lunatic fringe"! When we, as loyal subjects and lovers of our country, express a view which is consistent with what is written of the British Constitution, His Royal Highness sees fit to dismiss it as, "bigotry and prejudice" and refers to our "failings" as being the cause of "human suffering and misery". Had we been given the opportunity we would have repudiated this but that courtesy was not extended to us. We might have taken the opportunity of reminding His Royal Highness that many young men belonging to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland sacrificed their lives in two World Wars in defence of King and Country. We have no desire

to be disrespectful to the Prince of Wales but we think that once the decision was taken not to send the letter, it should have been destroyed and not left to the perusal of all and sundry who, from time to time, gain access to the Prince's private papers.

As to his audience with the Pope, the Prince himself tells us of his journey into the inner recesses of the Vatican. "As we were swept through archway after archway and courtyard after courtyard it was only too obvious that everything was designed to make the visitor feel smaller and smaller and less and less significant as he approached the ultimate presence." His biographer goes on to tell us that after being obliged to wait for a few minutes in an ante-chamber, the Prince and Princess were then "conducted along vast corridors and through great reception rooms, dramatically decorated by huge frescos depicting every kind of biblical and mythological catastrophe, until they finally reached the presence of His Holiness." After being taken into an enormous high-ceilinged room the Pope, having greeted them, seated himself at a desk situated at one end while his visitors were placed in two chairs before him. The Prince noted in his diary: "We then talked about unity between the different branches of the Christian faith, especially the Anglican, and I raised the problem of the 1896 bull which effectively declared the Anglican orders null and void. He thought that was past history. He also said he thought the Anglican Church was in fact closer to the Catholics than to the Orthodox at this present time."

Dimbleby tells us that "after an audience of some forty minutes, the Prince asked the Pope to bless them — 'which he did very briefly by making the sign of the cross over us'." And this is the account we have of the Prince's explanation of his non-appearance at the private mass — "Earlier in their forty-minute audience, the Prince broached a delicate matter which had embarrassed relations between the Vatican and the Palace: 'I apologised to him for the confusion over our possible attendance at his private chapel the following morning and said how much I admired the spiritual leadership he so clearly provided in such a difficult and uncertain world'." How strong is that delusion to which the Prince is given over if he really believes that! It does not surprise us that one result of the Pope's "blessing" has been the break-up of the marriage of those who so foolhardily sought it.

It appears to us that the Prince, following, we fear, in the footsteps of the Stuart kings, and under the delusion that the paganised, Antichristian religion of Rome is genuine Christianity, is determined to do his utmost to bridge the "destructive gulf" between Protestantism and

Roman Catholicism. We are expressly informed that "he has long deplored the schisms within the Christian Church and has been scathing about the exclusive forms of evangelism represented by Protestant sects like the Free Presbyterians." We shall be happy to wear that label for we believe that it carries with it the honour of bearing "the reproach of Christ" and if we have His approbation then it matters little what the Prince of Wales thinks of us.

Christ Always Present

(The following extract is taken from Dr Hugh Martin's "Christ's Presence in the Gospel History," a remarkable work into which this eminent servant of Christ poured some of the richest treasures of his gifted mind and loving heart).

I take up the biography of Jesus — so different from all other biographies, in that never any but He hath said to me, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world"; and I turn, let us say, to the record of that woman who pleaded with Him so marvellously for her little daughter (Matt. 15: 22), or of that other woman who touched in faith the hem of his garment (Mark 5: 25). Have I the same unquenchable desirousness with these my fellow-sinners? Have I a case like theirs? Have I a longing heart like theirs? Have I a pleading cry to raise — a trembling experiment to try, like theirs? And would my Lord's word, and will, and work to themward suit my case, and save me, as it so exactly suited theirs and so graciously saved them?

Ah: then, let me come and stand with them before Him. It is no illusion of the fancy when I try to do so. It is no ideal scene I conjure up, and no ideal part I essay to enact in it. It is no mere effort of imagination. It is not a mere accommodation of the passage. It is not a mere pious improvement of the incident. No. I have there the biography of Jesus, and what He willed, and said, and did to them; and, lighting it all up with perpetual life and power, I have the promise, "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." I may seem, therefore, to stand afar off from the company surrounding Jesus — adown the course of time full eighteen hundred years and more. But that word of Christ, which gave life and salvation, hope and healing, unto them — life a ray of light, springing forth as from a central source; yet, not like material light, decreasing by the distance — comes streaming onward in the might of the Eternal Spirit through all time, down even to me this day, unimpeded, undiminished, undecaying, in its passage. And, as that unchanging ray, in meeting anything where in all its course a medium similar to what it

first struck upon, is reflected, or refracted, or gives forth its tints, or imparts its efficacy, precisely as it did at first; so, let me only take up — as in a far-off circle, yet having the self-same centre, though the eighteen centuries between — an attitude of spirit as in the very line or sympathy of these broken-hearted suppliants, or, say, of that poor leper who cried, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" and then, onward to me, over all that lapse of centuries, unaltered and undecaying, fresh, and gracious, and omnipotent and faithful, as when spoken first, there travels, till it reaches me, the majestic word of mercy, "I will; be thou clean."

For really, with the story of the leper's cure in my hands, and the sore consciousness of the leper's disease in my heart; with the leper's misery and feelings and attitude and prayer, my own; his Lord, also mine; up from the page of the biography I have only to look to Him of whom it testifies, and to hear him saying, "Lo! I am with you also alway;" and why should I not by faith take home the Lord's work as spoken, now also, and to me — immediately and presently to me: "I will; be thou clean?"

O thou stricken one, whom thy sins have stricken, and who canst not look the Lord in the face, yet fain wouldst be allowed to wash His feet with thy tears, behind His back, permitted but unseen! Come thou to the house of Simon the Pharisee. Jesus is there. Lo! Jesus is here as He was there; here now, as He was there then; Jesus, the same, the same considerate, loving, forgiving Saviour, considerate, tenderly, even, towards thy feelings and thy shame. For, see how He shields thee, how He commends thee, how He forgives thee: "Woman, thy sins are forgiven thee; they faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Yes! go in peace; in love also. And prove thy great Defender true when He saith to all around thee: "Her sins which are many are forgiven" — evidently forgiven — "for she loveth much" (Luke 7: 36-50).

O thou hardened one, whom thy sins have hardened; living still without the Christ; living still under all the Father's wrath; loving still thy divers lusts and pleasures! Come thou to the Mount of Olives. Jesus is there. Lo! Jesus is here also alway, as He was there then. Jesus, the same; the same yesterday, today, and for ever; the same weeping Saviour. Come, and see His tears flowing fast for thee. Come, and hear His sorrowing heart breaking open its griefs over thy perdition. And substitute, in silent terror, thine own lost name for the name of lost Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23: 37, 38).

O, thou anxious one, searching the Word in thy closet, calling on the Lord beneath thy fig-tree! Come forth, O Nathaniel, at Philip's call; come forth and meet the Master. For, behold already He speaketh of thee to those that are around His person, and commendeth thee to His followers' love as "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Askest thou, "Whence knowest thou me?" By token of thy broken-hearted prayers He knoweth thee, and owneth thee as His own. For hark! "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." He hath known thy soul in adversity, He hath considered thy trouble, and hath not shut thee up into the hand of the enemy. The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous; His ears are open to their cry. Dost thou not say to Him, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." And shalt thou not see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man — heaven and earth knit together in peace and good-will, and glory in the highest, by His mediation? (John 1: 45-51).

Art thou overmastered by some strong corruption — strong as a devil that will not resign his power over thee? Come thou to this excited group as they stand in wonder round the Lord and the twelve. Come, and say, if yet thou canst say nothing better, "Lord, if thou canst do anything, help me." For hear what Jesus says: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." And under strong pressure on the right hand and on the left — pressed by the anguish that corruption works for thee, and thy terror lest it finally undermine and make void thy salvation; pressed, also, and quickened by the glorious proffer of deliverance and victory most full and sure, if only now in the day of visitation thou canst believe — wilt thou not cry out with tears, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief?" Oh, then, thou shalt never fall a prey to the power of thine adversary. Mighty and resistless is thy Lord's voice unto him: "I command thee that thou come out of him." And though the devil tear thee, and leave thee as it were dead, thy soul shall be saved in the day of the Lord; thou shalt enter the kingdom, be it so as by fire.

Art thou quite at sea in thy many fears and sorrows? Art thou embarked on a troubled ocean of cares and trials? Hath the Master constrained thee to get into the ship and go to the other side, over against Bethsaida: And the evening being come down, and the ship in the midst of the sea, and the wind contrary, is the Master alone on the land? Art thou apt to grudge that He is landed in safety, peace, and glory; as if He had forgotten His appointment of a dangerous and stormy voyage for thee? Ah! He is looking on. He seeth thee toiling and rowing. And now, when thy fear is at its height, and thy danger imminent, about the fourth watch of the

night He cometh unto thee, treading on the waves, and mastering all the tempest. Hark, his voice! For, lo! even thus also, as on Galilee's lake, He is with you alway. "Be of good cheer! It is I; be not afraid."

Art thou weeping bitterly thy miserable fall — thy base denial of thy Lord? Or art thou gone back in dull despondency to thy nets again? (John: 21 13). Thy first love forsaken, thy steadfastness mournfully fallen from, scarcely dost thou dare to hope for liberty of heart to say again the truth, "I love the Lord?" Hast thou ceased to feel thy wonted interest in His cause and kingdom? Is thy heart relapsed to thy worldly cares and worldly interests, and centred chiefly now on them? Ah! and art thou toiling at thy task and finding nothing; spending money for what is not bread, and labour for that which satisfieth not? Yea; and having tasted truer joy, how canst thou ever again on Galilee's shores find happiness without the Lord and His love? Well; be it that, in the sad wreck that has occurred, no sign of love in thy heart to Jesus now remains; and conscious of the past and all its sin, thou art ashamed to whisper even to thyself, "I love the Lord." That miserable fall stifles even the question, "Do I love the Lord or no?"

Be it so. Questioning thine own heart may bring no response of grace. But the Lord Himself draweth near to ask. Behold He cometh after thee. He findeth thee at thy weary task. He takes thee as He finds thee — weary, toiling, restless, dissatisfied; making nothing of it; no candle of the Lord shining on thy head; no joy of the Lord thy strength. Just as thou art He taketh thee in hand to deal with thee again. And He cometh, the same as ever; the same gracious Lord unchanged, the same yesterday, today, and forever. Behold! He calleth thee by name: "Simon, son of Jonas!"

Look up into His face, and read whether He hath come in wrath or love. That face! — burning tears ran down there for sinners; sinners such as thou art; for the very chief of sinners; for "Jerusalem sinners"; for men that hated Him, and spit on Him and scourged Him and slew Him, and sealed and watched His grave, that He might be buried out of sight and out of mind — that they might be troubled with Him no more for ever. Great drops of blood, too, flowed down there, down to the ground, where He lay in weakness, with supplications, and strong crying, and tears, bearing the guilt of sinners whom He loved. The heart-melting look of grief, rebuke, astonishment, unquenchable affection, shone there, and melted the heart of him that denied Him. Look up into that face of Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and for ever; the same to thee as to Simon Peter on the shore of Galilee's lake. He is returned from the cross of woe; He is returned from the cold embraces of the grave. He is the heir, too,

of all things; He is the Lord of glory. From His grave He has come, and from His glory He is tarrying, to seek and find thee; to say, “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?”

By His very voice to Peter — a voice not yet dead; living and abiding for ever; living in the power of the Spirit; living on the page of the blessed biography; with you alway to the end of the world; thus truly, lovingly, with present power and love — seeking thy love, yearning for it, ready to be gratified by it, ready to rejoice in it, very gracious and ready to own thy sincerity, readier far than thou art thyself — thus does Jesus say unto thee, even now, “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?” Questioning thyself could bring out no clear response. But shall Jesus fare no better when He takes up the question? In the absence of thy loving Lord, it may be thou couldst not firmly, clearly, distinctly, with any consciousness of truth, assert, “I love the Lord.” To thine own inquiry — to a fellow-creature’s question — it may be thou art wisely silent. Doubts and hesitations strengthened greatly by thy fall, oppress thee. And for the very truth’s sake thou mayest refuse to answer the question even as thou wouldst desire to do. But hark to the gracious words that proceed from His mouth. It is love’s own question. And love itself — infinite and incarnate; a consuming fire, as of the God-head’s glory, yet a gentle flame, as in a brother’s bosom — is dealing with thee, anxious for thy love, wooing thy love. Shall it not win thy love? Ah! doth not that love of His to thee, which His very question proves; which has anticipated and been beforehand with thy love; which says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you”; that love of which Paul hath said, “The love of Christ constraineth us”; and John hath said, “We love Him because He first loved us”; doth not such love of His to thee enable, decide, constrain thee to answer as between the omniscient Saviour and thine own moved and melted heart — thy heart broken open, won over, gained for ever: “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee?”

“The Lord was with Joseph”

The following was extracted from “Lectures on the History of Joseph” by George Lawson, D.D., who was the Professor of Divinity to the Associate Secession Church from 1787 to 1820. We quote from the Preparatory Note: “Intelligent readers of these Lectures cannot fail to be struck with the original thinking discovered in them, the author’s knowledge of human nature, and his singular talent for generalising moral instruction. Mr Spurgeon has said of him: ‘Dr Lawson had a fertile mind, and a heart alive both to the human and Divine side of truth. He writes with a pleasing simplicity of style.’ ” What follows is the author’s comments on Genesis 39; vv 1 to 9:

Joseph was sold and bought as if he had been a beast, or a captive taken

in war. How improbable was it that he should ever be the lord of his brethren, or the Lord of Egypt! But God provided a master for him, in whose house he was to enjoy a respite from his sufferings. All the ways of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and His eyes are upon His people for good at the very times when they seem to be forgotten.

The Lord was with Joseph; and if the Lord was with him he was a happy man, although his fond father was not with him. He was a stranger in a strange land; he was also dependent on the caprice of a haughty master, and yet he was blessed; for he enjoyed the presence, the protection, the favour of the Lord.

We are too ready to doubt of God's favour if we meet with unprosperous accidents, or if we are not speedily delivered from afflictions; as if outward prosperity were a sign of God's favour, and adversity a sure sign of His hatred. But do not the Scriptures declare that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth? The Lord was with Joseph, and could easily have restored him at once to his father's bosom, yet He did it not, but left him many years in a state of slavery. Cease then to judge God's ways by man's ways — For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so God's ways are higher than man's ways. He shows His love, and manages His affairs according to His own infinite wisdom, and not according to the plan which our weak understandings could prescribe. Shall we presume to teach wisdom to the Father of Lights? If Joseph had been at this time raised to all that dignity which he afterwards possessed, where would the glory have been which he obtained by his unequalled continence and meekness, his extraordinary wisdom, his constant patience? The crown of Egypt would not have been so bright an ornament to Joseph's head as the glorious virtues which God enabled him to show forth in a suffering condition, and which his sufferings fitted him to display in his exaltation.

But Joseph was not left in his servile condition without manifest tokens of the love of God; for the Lord made him to prosper in all his undertakings and labours, so that he soon obtained the esteem, the love, and the confidence of his master. Prosperity is not always a sign of God's special favour, yet prosperity undoubtedly comes from God, and is a fruit of God's love to His people, when He sees that prosperity is better for them than adversity. But how did God show Himself present with Joseph by making him to prosper? Was not Joseph's prosperity more properly his master's than his own, when all the business which he transacted was his master's and the profit rebounded to him? It is true that Joseph's prosperity was, to outward appearance, his master's

advantage rather than his own. But as the little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked, so the benefit which Joseph derived from God's kindness to him was far greater than his master's. He saw the love of God mitigating and sweetening his sorrows, and recommending him to his master's favour, that he might spend even the days of his banishment and humiliation with comfort. The more clearly we can discern the love of God in any prosperous incidents, the more pleasure we can take in them. A breathing in bondage with the love of God is worth more than all the prosperity which godless men can enjoy.

The blessing of God upon Joseph's labours was so conspicuous, that his master himself observed and acknowledged it. Great was the honour that God put upon a poor servant, when a great man in the court of Egypt honoured him with his attention and his respect, and acknowledged him to be blessed of the Lord. When men are precious in God's sight they are honourable, whatever be their station in life. If they are at present despised by men, they are honoured by angels; and when God makes it known that He loves them by signal proofs of his favour, He will make them honourable in the eyes of those who formerly despised them. When Laban saw that the Lord was with Jacob, he courted him to abide in his service. When Potiphar saw plainly that the Lord was with Joseph, he made the young man the overseer of his house, and the manager of all his business. It is good to have those for our friends and for our servants who are beloved by the Lord. His kindness towards His people overflows to all with whom they are connected. Pious stewards, or pious servants of any kind, are a blessing to their masters, because they are faithful, and manage all their affairs in the fear of the Lord. But they are a blessing likewise on another account, because the Lord makes all they do to prosper, Ps. 1: 4; and we are sure that no skill or industry will be of any use to men without the blessing of God.

The blessing of the Lord was upon everything that belonged to Potiphar, as far as Joseph was concerned in it, before he was advanced to the stewardship; but after Joseph became Potiphar's steward, the blessing of the Lord was upon everything that he had, whether in the house or in the field, for Joseph's sake. Great was the favour that was now conceived for the young slave, and an entire confidence was reposed in him. Potiphar saw that he had no more occasion to trouble himself with anxious cares about anything that belonged to him. He was sure not only that every business would be managed with care and fidelity, but that good success would attend all his affairs. Potiphar now knew nothing of all that he had, save the bread which he did eat; all was left in the hands of Joseph,

who never betrayed his master's confidence.

The ancient patriarchs were rich and great men; yet, through the wise providence of God, they are placed in circumstances which furnished them with opportunities for setting an example to men of the lowest station. Joseph, like his father Jacob, is an example of contentment, industry, and fidelity to servants. It is true, servants cannot command success, and God does not bind Himself by an absolute promise to grant success to the best conducted affairs. But it is undoubtedly the duty of servants to take the most likely means to promote the prosperity of their masters, and to seek the divine blessings upon those affairs that are committed to them. By such behaviour, they are likely to prove blessings to their masters, and to attain that favour and confidence which they take pains to deserve. But if they should be ungratefully treated by their masters according to the flesh, they have a Master in heaven who will by no means suffer them to want their due reward.

Masters may likewise learn from this passage what treatment is due to faithful servants. They ought to trust, to honour, and to love them. Potiphar was a stranger to the family of Israel, and yet he loved Joseph for his fidelity, and honoured him as the instrument of God's providential blessings to himself. Christian masters have far stronger motives to honour Christian servants, whom they know to be not only servants, but above servants, brethren, partakers of the same heavenly blessings and dignities with themselves. Thus masters who do not honour faithful servants endeavour to make Solomon a liar, for he says that "as he who keepeth the fig-tree shall eat the fruit thereof, so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured."

Joseph spent his time comfortably in the house of his master, for the Lord made his yoke easy, and his burden light. He might now have waited patiently for his exaltation, which he was sure would come in due time; but he needed other severe trials to prepare him for it, and to make way for its coming to him. God only knows what degree of trouble is necessary for His people, and how long it is proper they should continue under its pressure. It was Joseph's comfort that he was beloved by his master, but it was his misfortune that he was too well beloved by his mistress. He had a lovely face, which his mistress could not behold without conceiving a regard for him, which proved for a time prejudicial to Joseph, but infinitely more prejudicial to herself.

Beauty of person and face is a quality which gains love, and ought to make the possessor of it thankful; yet let not the fair pride themselves in their lovely features, which may prove a snare to the beholders, or to

themselves. Sarah's beauty pleased the eyes of Abraham, but cost him many anxious thoughts, and sometimes instigated him to use dishonourable methods for the preservation of his life. Joseph's beauty was a dangerous snare to his mistress, and procured him the misfortune of a tedious confinement. Hast thou beauty? trust not in it, but be modest and cautious. Dost thou want beauty? be content, and thankful that you are free from those snares which often attend it. Dost thou behold a beautiful face in the other sex? beware of being too much charmed with the lovely aspect. Remember that “favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain”. “Lust not after the beauty of the strange woman,” says Solomon to his disciple, “neither let her take thee with her eyelids.” That the other sex may stand in need of like admonitions is too plain from the story of Potiphar's wife.

She saw Joseph, she loved him, and said unto him, Lie with me. Her eyes ensnared her heart, and she lost her modesty, as well as every other virtue. She must have been lost to all sense of shame when she so barefacedly tempted Joseph to violate her chastity. Joseph was now in a dangerous situation. Few young men could have resisted the strong temptation which he was enabled to encounter. How easily did his brother Judah, in a more advanced period of life, fall before a temptation, which, in the comparison, was very small. We may say of Joseph, that there were few like him in all the earth. Sin spread out, before him its strongest attractions — pleasure and profit. It drew up the most formidable terrors in battle array, but none of all these things moved Joseph. He held fast his integrity, and would not let it go, for his heart was mightily fortified by the fear of God, and he was powerfully supported by that grace “which is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of the divine glory with exceeding joy.”

He not only refused to comply with his mistress, but gave her his reasons for refusing; and these reasons were well adapted to cure her of her madness, if it had not been incurable. “Behold,” said he, “My master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath into my hand: there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”

If a man has not a lively sense of important benefits conferred upon him, he is worse than a brute. Even lions, we are told, have testified a grateful disposition for benefits conferred on them; and we know that the dog and the horse, and even the stupid ass, are very far from being

insensible to kindness, Joseph, we find, was penetrated with a sense of the favours heaped upon him, and would not behave in a manner unworthy of them. And if Joseph, a poor slave, had such a grateful sense of Potiphar's favours, how monstrously ungrateful was the wife of his bosom, who wished to repay his love with the blackest stain to his honour!

Confidence will always beget in a well-disposed mind a disposition to repay it with fidelity; and one who betrays trust is regarded as an enormous transgressor of the laws of society. Joseph was trusted with everything by his master, and therefore he resolved to observe inviolable fidelity. Such motives to honest behaviour were strong, though not the strongest that governed his soul. He proposes them, however, at greatest length, because the force of them would be best understood, and perhaps felt by his mistress. How base was her conduct, when she tempted his favourite servant to betray him in the most cruel manner, and to repay the greatest favours with an irreparable shame.

"He hath withheld nothing from me but thee, because thou art his wife." These words ought to have pierced her heart like daggers. She was his wife, and a man's wife ought to be his alone, and not another's with him. The servants that have everything else put into their hands, the friend that is to a man like his own soul, must consider the wife of their master or friend as his exclusive property. The more favoured they are in other respects, the more careful must they be to maintain this property inviolable. A man's wife is a part of his own flesh. To separate between a man's soul and body is not a much greater injury than to separate a man's wife from himself.

"How then can I do this great wickedness?" Joseph speaks as if it had been impossible for him to bring himself under the guilt of such atrocious ingratitude, injustice, and impurity. It would have been impossible for him to commit a crime so black and complicated, without divesting himself of humanity as well as piety. He found an unconquerable reluctance in his heart to such baseness, and endeavoured to convey his own way of thinking into the heart of his tempter, by setting before her eyes in few words the complicated horrors of that iniquity to which she wished to seduce him. Adultery is not only a sin, but a great wickedness. It is perjury and impurity in their highest degree. It is, in any circumstances, a great wickedness, abhorred by heathens as well as Christians, and judged by many nations to deserve a painful and ignominious death.

When Joseph was tempted to this sin, he placed before his own eyes, and endeavoured to place before his tempter's eyes, its extreme malignity. It is one great misery, that in a time of temptation, we lose the benefit

of our knowledge, by a temporary forgetfulness that seizes upon our hearts, and renders us an easy prey to the devil. We are often surprised that men and women should make themselves, in one fatal moment, miserable for life, with their eyes open. But their eyes were not open at the time when they gave such a fatal stab to their fame and peace. The God of this world found means to shut their eyes, till they had done his work, and then their eyes were opened to see the shame of their nakedness. Whenever you find yourselves dangerously tempted to any iniquity, beware of forgetting what reason, what experience, what the Scriptures tell you concerning it. Pray to God that you may be enabled to retain just apprehensions of its malignity in the hour of darkness. When your corrupt hearts would fix your eyes upon present pleasures, turn your thoughts to the vileness of the sin, to the intolerable misery which it brings, and to those mighty arguments which ought to steel us with unshaken resolutions to keep ourselves pure.

Turn your thoughts to God the great Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. "How shall I do this great wickedness," says the holy patriarch, "and sin against God?" If the excellences of God, the relations in which we stand to Him, the account we must give to Him, the sure vengeance denounced by Him against the workers of iniquity, were always present to our minds, temptations to rebellion against Him would lose much of their strength. "I have kept thy precepts, and thy testimonies," says David, "for all my ways are before thee."

"How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" The offence against Potiphar would have been very inexcusable, but it was a small thing compared with the offence which would have been given to God. God is our Maker, and our Judge. He is infinitely glorious, and His laws are worthy of Himself. To sin against Him is to sin against our own souls, for He can kill both soul and body.

Under the Gospel, we see in the light of the cross of Christ what it is to sin against God. He would not suffer the least sin to escape unpunished. For all sins that have been, or shall be pardoned, full satisfaction was made by Christ. He endured all the horrors of the curse of God, that all rational creatures might know how evil and how bitter a thing it is to sin against the Most High. If, in the most ancient times, those who knew the Lord said, "How can we sin against God?" how much more will those, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified, tremble at the thought of transgressing His commandments, unless they are under the bewitching influence of the devil!

Beware of sinning against men, because in doing so you sin against God.

Our fellow-men are entitled to our regard, and we ought to render unto all their due; but let us ever remember that our chief regard is due to God, and that we ought to discharge our duty to men in the fear of God, and under deep impressions of His authority. The transgressions of the wicked said in David's heart, that the fear of God was not before his eyes. By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil. If we felt upon our spirits past transgressions of His majesty and glory, what manner of persons would we be in all holy conversation and godliness!

It is not enough for us to resist one, or two, or twenty temptations to any sin. We ought to continue steadfast and unmoved amidst all the terrors and all the allurements that are spread out before our eyes. God is ever the same, His love is ever the same, and our duty is ever the same, whatever Satan may suggest, whatever bad men may say to us, and whatever corrupt motions we may feel in our own spirits. Samson refused for a long time to satisfy Delilah's insidious questions concerning his great strength, but at last the mighty man was conquered by the tears and importunities of a fair woman. He revealed the fatal secret, and his indiscretion cost him his eyes and his life. Thus sinners startle at the first proposal of a temptation. They refuse for a time to comply with the great enemy of their souls, but at last, tired of resistance, they yield to the destroyer, and bring that guilt and misery upon themselves which the devil, with all his wiles, could not have brought upon them without their own consent. They forget the important words of our Lord: "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved; and he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations."

New Year Lecture

The following are brief notes of a lecture given by the Rev A B Ndebele, Ingwenya, on the 2nd of January, 1995.

"Jesus said unto the Jews which believed on Him: If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed: And ye shall know the Truth and the truth shall make you free." John 8 vv 31, 32.

1. Classes of the hearers of the Gospel at all times. Some believe and some believe not what they hear. Those who believe are taught and led by the Holy Spirit unto the Saviour. Man in his natural state does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. They are foolishness unto him.

2. The mark of the working of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a gospel hearer, or the mark of the living and invisible Church of God: they continue steadfast in the Word of God. But he that will endure unto the

end, the same shall be saved. A keeping to the Word of God, the Bible, is a great gift of the elect.

3. The reward which God gives to those who hear and believe the Gospel and continue in it is knowledge. The biggest weapon which Satan uses to destroy mankind is ignorance. Man is born ignorant of God, ignorant of the Lord Jesus Christ, the alone name given among men whereby we must be saved. He is ignorant of the damage which sin has inflicted upon his whole personality. He is ignorant of the deceitfulness of his own heart. Man does not know that the wages of sin is *death*.

But those whom God has chosen from the foundation of the world, He grants them knowledge of Himself, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. He gives them knowledge of themselves as poor needy sinners on the way to eternity. He grants them an alert ear so that they hear the Word of God and receive it into their souls.

4. The effects of the knowledge which comes into the heart of the redeemed is as a light that comes into a dark room and generates:

- (a) Freedom from the power of sin, as it was with Joseph: "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God."
- (b) Freedom from the attractions of natural religions.
- (c) Freedom from the fear of the majority.
- (d) Freedom from the loneliness of the narrow path.

5. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." If the Lord Jesus has freed a sinner from the guilt of sin, its influence in the heart, its power of darkness, its corrupting effects, *that sinner* is free indeed.

Obituary

The late Rev. John Angus Macdonald

The Rev. John Angus Macdonald was born in Drinishader, on the Isle of Harris, on the 16th August, 1910. His childhood was spent in his native isle to which he had a life-long heart's attachment. His mother, Mary Ann MacLeod, was a communicant member in the Harris congregation, so that he received an early training in the way of godliness¹. As a schoolboy he was greatly influenced by a bed-ridden relative, a godly woman whom he visited after school. The writer is unable to ascertain how old Mr Macdonald was when he was born again by the Spirit of God, but his childhood acquaintances remember that a spiritual change took place at

1. *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Vol. 58, p.21.

a very young age, some saying he may have been converted in his schooldays, although too young to become a member; others concurring that he was changed before he went to sea.

Two ministers were instrumental in his early spiritual pilgrimage. The minister in Harris at that time was the Rev. Donald N Macleod who was inducted to Tarbert, Harris, on the 3rd August, 1911, and who remained his minister until translated to Ullapool on the 9th July, 1924. In those days Harris was one undivided charge, and Mr Macleod's later years of service to the church proved the sterling quality of the minister whom the young John Angus heard in his youth. Mr Macleod was instrumental in the saving change wrought in his mother. Mr Macdonald later acknowledged his indebtedness to this saintly minister, under whose ministry it is possible that he obtained the liberty of the Gospel. He was very fond of the Rev. D N Macleod, who later moved to Ullapool, and Mr Macdonald once said: "What a prize the people in Ullapool got". His minister molded him another way. In 1948, Mr Macleod said at Synod: "There is no going back my friends, for the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. So far as I understand things, it was not nearly so necessary in 1893 for the Church to make the stand she did, as it is now. Things have gone from bad to worse every day." This emphasis upon the scriptural testimony of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland was also to be found in the Rev. John Angus Macdonald to his dying day.

But it appears that he did not obtain the sense of the liberty of the Gospel under Mr Macleod's preaching. While under concern for his soul, he would listen to Mr Macleod, but when he closed the book at the end of the sermon, there was no change in the young John Angus. The other minister who had an early influence on Mr Macdonald was the Rev. James MacLeod. As the minister of Glendale, Mr MacLeod was the interim Moderator of Harris after the Rev. D N Macleod moved to Ullapool. At some point during this period, Mr MacLeod preached from the Song of Solomon chapter 2, verse 1: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys". A fellow-student and lifelong friend of Mr Macdonald says that he spoke of this sermon in such a way that he concluded that it was on this occasion that he got the liberty of the Gospel. His love for the Rev. James MacLeod was lifelong; later he was to marry Mr MacLeod's niece.

John Angus left school at 14 years old. He went to the whaling station in Harris, then to the seasonal salmon fishing on the river Tay. Then, like many young people from the islands, he found employment in the seafaring way of life. His cousin Donald John MacKillop was the captain of Sir

Thomas Sopwith's yacht, the *Vita*. John Angus was employed on it as a steward for a few years until his decision to enter the ministry, and his twin brother, Roddy, was also on the yacht as a sailor. The scriptures declare: "Who go to sea in ships, and in great waters trading be, within the deep these men God's works and his great wonders see." (Ps. 107:23). This was true of John Angus Macdonald who was to learn the value of having a captain on board who would be able to navigate the ship through storms. In the spiritual realm, he saw his need of the Captain of salvation, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, if he was to be brought to the glory of heaven. "That blessed yacht" he called it because of the spiritual fellowship he obtained with the Saviour while on it.

During this period, Mr Macdonald was accepted as a communicant member at Tarbert on the 9th March, 1929. However his mind was being drawn towards the preaching of the everlasting Gospel. While still a teenager, he was impressed by the triumphant death of his godly older sister Catherine when she was a mere 17 years old². His burden to preach the Gospel can be seen by an entry in the Kirk-Session record, dated the 6th November, 1930. "John A Macdonald and Wm Morrison appeared craving permission to hold Prayer meetings in Meavaig meeting house. Granted." By August, 1931, he had made up his mind to apply to study for the ministry. He appeared before the Harris Kirk-Session on the 13th of that month, was granted his disjunction certificate, and proceeded south to Glasgow. Here his character and godliness won the confidence of such stalwarts of the faith as the Rev. Neil Cameron, Glasgow. On the 25th January, 1932, he was accepted by the St Jude's Kirk-Session and he was recommended to the Presbytery as a student for the ministry. On Mr Cameron's recommendation he was accepted at the Southern Presbytery on the 27th January, 1932, the day after the induction of the Rev. James MacLeod to Greenock, and just six weeks prior to Mr Cameron's passing to his heavenly reward. Mr Macdonald ever held Mr Cameron in high esteem.

Mr Macdonald's retentive memory aided him in commencing his studies at Skerry's College where he applied himself with diligence and perseverance to his studies. From 1933 until 1936 he gave years of valuable service to the London mission while continuing his studies at the University of London. During this time, London was raised to a sanctioned charge, and his last duty to the growing congregation was to obtain additional names for the Call to the Rev. J. P. MacQueen who was inducted there

2. *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Vol. 89, pp. 358-9.

on the 26th December, 1936. At this stage, we see his tenacity in improving his education and furthering the London mission at the same time; he showed great perseverance in all the difficulties he encountered.

In 1936, he began the church's three year divinity course. There were a considerable number of divinity students at this time, and two of those with whom he concluded his course in 1939 left the church afterwards. Some of the friendships he formed at this time lasted unbroken till the end of his earthly pilgrimage.

He was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Outer Isles Presbytery on the 5th July, 1939. Shortly thereafter, he was ordained and inducted to the pastoral charge at Uig, Lewis, on the 12th September, 1939.

Although he was a cheerful Christian, Mr Macdonald experienced sorrow as a young man. Not only did he witness the death of his elder sister, but his twin brother, Roddy, died from tuberculosis while still a young man. Another sister Joanne also died young. Then, while at Uig, Mr Macdonald's wife, Margaret, passed away shortly after the birth of their first son. Marrying for a second time, his next child died shortly after birth. Ministers of the Gospel need to be tried, and Mr Macdonald learnt to bear these trials by casting himself upon the Lord Whom he was to follow through his long life. He was a devoted father to his family of three sons and two daughters who are spared to the present, with whom we sorrow and to whom we would again commend their father's God.

Mr Macdonald served several congregations of the Free Presbyterian Church. After eight years in Uig, he was translated to Applecross on the 10th September, 1947, then to Raasay on the 26th August, 1954, and finally to Fort William on the 14th December, 1960, where he remained for 27 years until his retiral on the 23rd February, 1988. In these places he was a faithful pastor, visiting the people regularly. He built up his congregations numerically and spiritually, and in most of them he obtained a new place of worship or upgraded the existing church building.

He served the church in other capacities also. He was Moderator of several Presbyteries, he was Moderator of Synod in 1950 and 1972, and he was Convener of more than one Committee of the church. He also contributed obituaries and devotional articles to *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* and *The Young People's Magazine*.

Upon retiral Mr Macdonald moved to the Free Presbyterian Home of Rest in Inverness. He became a member of the Northern Presbytery at the 1989 Synod. Thus his jubilee year in the ministry found him still active in the affairs of the church. Only months before his jubilee, the church had experienced the schism of former colleagues in the ministry and the

eldership. Therefore when he took his seat on the Northern Presbytery on the 6th June, 1989, it was the first and depleted Presbytery after the A.P.C. secession. He was duly appointed Moderator, and for the ensuing year. During this critical period of the Presbytery's history, the Presbytery was heartened to have Mr Macdonald's presence.

A loyal Free Presbyterian minister, who lived for the Cause of Christ in our midst, Mr Macdonald frequently referred to the faithful Protest of the Rev. Donald Macfarlane in 1893 for maintaining a witness to the truths of the Gospel and for preserving the constitution of the old Free Church of Scotland in the present Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Therefore it gave him great pleasure to be able to attend the church's centenary commemoration in May, 1993. Although far from fit, he made the journey to Edinburgh to be present in that place where "the godly Mr Macfarlane" made his historic stand for the truth.

Increasing infirmity in his latter years, due to the effects of a car accident sustained in early 1970, began to take its toll. Having sustained the protracted illness of his cheerful and capable wife, Barbara, and her subsequent decease on the 9th April, 1994, Mr Macdonald succumbed to illness and passed away to his everlasting rest on Thursday evening, the 16th June, 1994, in Ballifeary Home of Rest where he had been tenderly cared for until the end.

Mr Macdonald's passing is the first death among the ministerial brethren of the home church since the secession. This is therefore an occasion for us to pray more earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into the harvest. It is also an occasion for us to be thankful for those who have served Christ faithfully to the end, and to "remember them which . . . have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." (Hebrews 13:7,8).

Although his latter days were crowded with troubles, he will be remembered by those who knew him through his life as a faithful pastor, a happy Christian, a devoted husband and father, and a man with wonderful charm. He was an affectionate man who lived to extol the love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

His love for the Gaelic language was well-known. With feeling he often referred to the Gaelic translation of Psalm 107:30:

"Then are they glad, because at rest and quiet now they be:
So to the haven he them brings, which they desir'd to see."

As one used to the dangers of the sea, having experienced the storms of the Bay of Biscay, he would explain that the "haven" in Gaelic is a

delightfully peaceful place after the dangers of the open sea. As he spoke, his mind was evidently set upon the "rest which remains to the people of God." We believe that our departed friend, father and counsellor, has now his heart's desire in the haven above, enjoying the beatific vision of the saints in glory assembled around the throne of God, beholding the Lamb Who is in the midst of the Throne. "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (Rev. 7:16). "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." (Isaiah 25:8).

His funeral took place in Inverness Church on the 21st June, 1994, and tribute was paid to his lifelong years of service to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. He often said: "There is nothing dearer to me under heaven than the Cause of Christ." His mortal remains were laid to rest in the Kilvean Cemetery, Inverness, where his wife was buried just ten weeks before. The Rev. D. B. Macleod, who has so recently been taken to heaven, addressed the mourners at the grave.

Obituaries appeared in the national press. At the next meeting of the Northern Presbytery, on the 28th June, the Presbytery placed on record its deep sorrow at his passing. A tribute was placed on record and copies were sent to his family and relatives, to whom we extend our sympathies.

The memory of the just is blessed. (Proverbs 10:7). "Help, Lord, because the godly man doth daily fade away; and from among the sons of men the faithful do decay." (Psalm 12:1). **Donald M. Boyd**

Notes and Comments

Religious Liberty under Islam

The intolerance and fanaticism associated with Islam was recently very clearly demonstrated in connection with the sentencing to death of a fourteen year old Pakistani boy and his uncle, both of whom had been charged with blasphemy. The boy, thought to be illiterate at the time of the offence, was accused of having written on the wall of a mosque certain words which were regarded as blasphemous by Islamic fundamentalists. The boy is reputed to be a Christian. After the conviction the boy's lawyer stated that the blasphemy laws had now reached "their ultimate conclusion, by unleashing religious terrorism, allowing people to take the law into their own hands and undermining the legal system by scaring off judges." On appeal to a higher court the sentence was revoked but this was to be attributed more to the adverse publicity and world-wide condemnation

which the case had stirred up than to any real change of heart on the part of those responsible for passing it. Even Pakistan's Prime Minister refused to intervene to save the boy's life and she flatly refused to initiate any move towards changing the country's blasphemy laws. Last year, we are told, the militant Muslims put a high price on the head of the law minister when he proposed minor amendments to the blasphemy legislation and the Government were forced to retreat. When this present case was heard in the Court of Appeal Muslim fanatics demonstrated outside threatening to kill the two accused if they were freed and several thousand demonstrators were on the streets of Lahore and other cities in the Punjab demanding that they be put to death. These events indicate what would happen if Islam ever gained the ascendancy in our nation and the fact that so many mosques are springing up all over the country should move us to pray all the more earnestly that the Lord would hasten the time when the kingdoms of this world — Pakistan included — will have become "the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ."

Scientific Search for the Origins of the Universe

The search is on for a particle of matter which — it is claimed — once found, will at last explain how the universe originated. Leading the search is Professor Peter Higgs, Professor of Theoretical Physics at Edinburgh University and the proposal is to build a huge machine which will "recreate the incredible heat and conditions of the first million millionth of a second of the beginning of time and The Big Bang that gave birth to the universe." The folly of nineteen European states spending a total of £1000 million on this research project will be apparent to anyone who believes the Bible to be the Word of God. It is inexpressibly sad that men of such intellectual abilities should be wasting their time and energy looking for what is not there. We can only surmise just how great the advances shall be in such fields of scientific knowledge when learned men shall take as their starting point: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

Condoning of Sodomy

It is with a sense of revulsion that any true Christian reads of homosexuals or sodomites — to give them their Scriptural name — being treated with deference and given a place in society as if their conduct was not, after all, unspeakably vile and unnatural. It is for our instruction

and admonition that it is left on record that, under the eye of heaven, "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." The Divine attitude towards such behaviour remains the same as it was and that nation or community which tolerates and condones it is surely wringing judgment from the hand of the Almighty. It would seem that such vile men are becoming so numerous and influential that even in Scotland we find the so-called national Church publishing a discussion document in which it is declared "that many homosexual Christians were in committed relationships and viewed their sexuality as a positive aspect of their lives." The document further states "Many committed gay and lesbian Christians do not see their disposition as evil. They see it as a positive, though minority, gift of God to be enjoyed as part of the fullness of life which heterosexuals are entitled to enjoy. . . And some do commit themselves to a relationship as permanent and monogamous as the best marriages." The framers of this document are really in spiritual darkness if they accept that such people are worthy of the name Christian. In our view, any Church which welcomes and tolerates within its communion men and women whose behaviour God has pronounced abhorrent in His sight, is apostate; it has degenerated to such an extent that it is become no church of Christ but a synagogue of Satan. The publishing of this document follows the issuing of a statement by Cardinal Hume and which the press described as "a remarkably humane and tolerant in praise of homosexual friendship and love." This was supposed to clarify the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on homosexuality. To us, it appears to be the production of a man who is trying to speak with two voices at one and the same time. What can one expect when the so-called priesthood of that body which he represents has in recent times drawn such attention to itself on account of having within its ranks — world-wide — many who are living in the very sin condemned. And now we have an Anglican Bishop belonging to the Diocese of Ripon but formerly the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway openly revealing that he is a sodomoite and that he has been one for a considerable time. His action in coming out into the open has been described as "brave" and "courageous" and his immediate superior, the Bishop of Ripon, expressed his appreciation of "the ministry he exercises in the diocese." "I have made it clear", the same man said, "that clergy who are homosexual are among the best of our clergy". Who can possibly describe the fearful depravity and wickedness of men who speak and act in this manner and yet claim to be servants of Christ? What, we may well ask, shall the end of these things be?

The Situation in Ulster

Our Government seems to be determined to press on with a policy towards Northern Ireland which is detrimental to the interests of our Protestant brethren there. Romanist-Jesuit pressure is being exerted both in the Republic and in the United States and our Government seem to be unable or unwilling to resist. The press reports that one Roman Catholic priest in the United States who was caught with "part of the loot from a £4.5m armoured-car robbery" was sent to prison for over four years notwithstanding appeals for mercy by 100 clerics and friends. It is thought that more than half the money had already found its way into the hands of the IRA. The goal is that of a united Ireland and the break-up of the United Kingdom but our politicians are acting as if their ability to see or hear was seriously impaired. The majority view seems to be ignored. Our hope and prayer is that the Lord will yet overturn the schemes and counsels of men however well-laid in their own estimation.

Mission News

The Church deputy, the Rev D A Ross and Mrs Ross returned from our Mission in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Kenya at the end of February. They spent three weeks in Zimbabwe and Mr Ross travelled widely holding services and meeting ministers and elders.

In addition to having enjoyable visits to Mbuma and Zenka, Mr and Mrs Ross travelled to Binga by the small M A F plane and Mr Ross took two services there. At Zenka, Mr Ross took the prayer-meeting when there were over 900 present, including 600 school children.

Mr and Mrs Ross spent a week-end in Bulawayo where Mr Ross held services in Lobengula Church. His visit was anticipated with pleasure as he was pastor there for six years. The Church was full to capacity, and forty had to remain outside. The young men who were in the congregation when Mr Ross was minister there, were now mature, married men with their children seated beside them in church. A good number of the men are professing Christians and useful members of the congregation.

Louise Leiper had been to Harare to secure her Work Permit. On her return to Bulawayo, she and Mrs Ross went to Ingwenya for the week-end which they much enjoyed. They were impressed with the large number of young people present. Mr Ross went for that week-end to New Canaan for the Communion.

At the end of January, Mr and Mrs Ross travelled by plane to Malawi

where they spent two weeks. They made their headquarters at the little mission house in Blantyre. Mr Mziya, the Administrator in Bulawayo, had arranged to go to Malawi to visit relatives. However, he combined this visit with assisting Mr Ross in taking services at several of the outlying centres. The roads are very rough, and there are long distances between each centre. A day's visit was paid to Mocambique and services were held in Mutarare and Rotarare. There were seventy to eighty people present. The people had built a small thatched church at one centre. They gave a warm welcome to the deputy. On their return to Malawi, after they crossed the border, they visited the former refugee camp where there are still some people who did not return to Mocambique. They were worshipping in an old grinding mill. Mr Ross held a small catechetical class there and the people were able to answer fairly well. A small supply of food was left with them as the people are in poor circumstances.

Then Kenya — the last place to be visited. Mr Ian MacLean had done tremendous work during the limited time at his disposal. The church building at Sengera was ready for use. An official opening service was held on the 19th of February, when Mr Ross preached. There was a large congregation and the singing was beautiful. It is hoped that the hospital will be ready in a few weeks' time. The work on the interior walls, the ceiling and the verandah has been completed.

Mrs Goldby and the three children left for Scotland in the company of Mr MacLean. Mr Goldby will leave, the Lord willing, towards the end of March. It was good to receive news of the friends in Kenya and elsewhere. We trust that they will all be preserved in good health and in full assurance of the promise: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

J.N.

Return of the Rev John Goldby

The Rev John Goldby returned safely to this country on the 15th of March after spending six months labouring in our African mission field in Kenya. As mentioned by Miss Nicolson, his wife and children arrived back in February. It is a matter of thankfulness to the Most High that they were all sustained in health of body and mind over their period of absence from home. Mr Goldby reports that our staff at Sengera are fully occupied in finalising the arrangements for the opening of the hospital. The final touches are being given to the buildings, staff are being employed and all necessary medical equipment is being installed. It is hoped that its doors will be open to admit patients at the beginning of April (D.V.).

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings:

Skye: At Portree on 11th April at 11 a.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 13th June at 1 p.m.

Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland Wills

“The Finance Committee would recommend to any persons who have drawn up a Will prior to June, 1989, naming the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland as a beneficiary, that they make an addition to such a Will, stating that it is the Church continuing to be called the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland which is to benefit under the Will. It is important that this addition should include the date on which it was inserted. Such a step would help to stop these Wills being contested by parties no longer in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.”

Eastern Europe — Rev D A Ross

It is planned once again to visit Eastern Europe, and to engage in the usual work of distribution and preaching in the places we have formerly worked in. It is hoped for this visit that the Rev G G Hutton and Mr A MacRae will undertake the work. The date of departure is not finally fixed, but probably it will be on the 17th of April, returning on the 4th of May. Once again it is asked that this mission be remembered at a Throne of Grace. The true prayer for the prosperity of the gospel in Eastern Europe will be accompanied, I believe, with our tithing towards the work. We trust the liberality which has been shown in the past will continue, and should that be so, there is every hope that this small activity of spreading the gospel in Eastern Europe will continue.

Staff for Zimbabwe and Kenya

There is a vacancy for a “handy-man”, who should be able to turn his hand to a variety of tasks, in both Zimbabwe and Kenya. The Foreign Missions Committee would be pleased to hear from any suitable applicant who should apply in the first instance to the Clerk:

Rev J R Tallach
Free Presbyterian Manse
Raasay
Kyle IV40 8PB

Binding of Magazines

Readers who desire to have past issues of *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* and *The Young People's Magazine* bound in volume form should send magazines (complete volumes only) to the Bookroom. The cost of binding, which is done by Mr Neil MacLean, remains the same as it has been for a number of years — £5 per volume.

The Reverend Donald John MacAskill MA 1909-1995

We are sorry to note the death of another of our ministers in the person of the Reverend D J MacAskill MA. He suddenly passed away in our Harris Home of Rest on Tuesday, 8th March. Mr MacAskill was a life-time friend and fellow-student of the Rev J A MacDonald whose obituary appears in this issue. A fuller notice will appear in due course.

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer Mr R.A. Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6LE, wishes to acknowledge with thanks the following donations:

Bookroom: "Because of the Truth", £20.

Eastern Europe Fund: Anon., Glasgow, £60.

Foreign Mission Fund: J & M Henderson, £850; Ullapool Friend, £1000; Anon. (Canada) (Jan.), CAN\$100; Anon. (Canada) (Feb.), CAN\$100; Anon. (Mozambique Famine), £100.

The Treasurers of the following congregations wish to acknowledge the following donations:-
Breasclete: Friend of the Cause, £30; Anon., £30; Friend of the Cause, £30; Anon., £20; all for Sustentation Fund: Friend of the Cause, £20; Anon. £20; Friend of the Cause, £20; Anon., £10; all for Door Collection: A.M.D., £20; for Property Fund.

North Uist: From the Estate of the late Miss Jessie Mary MacDonald: £500 per Anderson, MacArthur & Co., Solicitors: Anon., £20, "Where most needed", per Rev A. M.

Larne: Dumbarton Congregation, £50 for pulpit supply.
Portree: Tunbridge Wells Friend, £20; per Rev F.M.; Friend, £10; Friend, £10; both per S.Y.M., all for Congregational Purposes; Anon., £60 (envelope in plate); for Pulpit supply expenses.

Bracadale-Strath: A Friend, £100; "Where most needed", per Rev G.G.H.; Carbost Friend, £50; "Where most needed"; Anon., £20; Where most needed, both per D.J.M.