

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

---

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

---

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

## Contents

Access to God Through the Mediator .....	97
<b>A Great Salvation (1)</b>	
A Sermon by Alexander Grierson .....	100
<b>The Reformation in Spain</b>	
2. The Seed Sown in Seville and Valladolid .....	106
<b>Murder and Its Punishment</b>	
J G Lorimer .....	110
<b>Egypt, the Wilderness and the Promised Land</b>	
Rev D W B Somerset .....	112
<b>The Prayer of Faith</b>	
John Dick.....	113
<b><i>The Heidelberg Catechism</i></b>	
A Review Article by Matthew Vogan.....	117
<b>A Dying Man’s Testament to His Church</b>	
6. Final Thoughts	
Rev A W MacColl .....	121
<b>Sin Strikes at all God’s Attributes</b>	
Thomas Boston.....	123
<b>Notes and Comments .....</b>	126
<b>Church Information .....</b>	128

***April 2015***

***Vol 120 • No 4***

## The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

**Moderator of Synod:** Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS.

**Clerk of Synod:** Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Avenue, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 020 8309 1623, e-mail: JMacL265@aol.com.

**Assistant Clerk:** Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.

**General Treasurer:** Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283, fax 0141 332 4271, e-mail: wc.fpchurch@btconnect.com.

**Law Agents:** Brodies LLP, 15 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh, EH3 8AH; tel: 0131 228 3777.

**Clerks to Presbyteries:**

**Northern:** Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.

**Southern:** Rev R MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.

**Western:** Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.

**Outer Isles:** Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.

**Australia and New Zealand:** Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel: 02 9627 3408.

**Zimbabwe:** Rev S Khumalo, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo; tel: 00263 9407131.

**Zimbabwe Mission Office:** 9 Robertson Street, Parkview, Bulawayo; tel: 002639 62636, fax: 002639 61902, e-mail: fpchurch@gmail.com.

**Residential Care Homes:**

Ballifeary House, 14 Ness Walk, Inverness, IV3 5SQ; tel: 01463 234679.

Leverburgh Residential Care Home, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520296.

**Website of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland:** [www.fpchurch.org.uk](http://www.fpchurch.org.uk).

## The Free Presbyterian Magazine

**Published by** The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (Scottish Charity Number SC003545). Subscriptions and changes of address to be sent to the General Treasurer, Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283. The subscription year begins in January. Prices are on back cover. One month's notice is required for change of address. Queries about delivery of the magazines should be sent to the General Treasurer, not the printer.

**Editor:** Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA. Tel: 01859 520271; e-mail: kdmacleod@gmail.com. Unsigned articles are by the Editor.

**Editorial Board:** The Editor, Rev N M Ross, Rev D W B Somerset, Mr K H Munro.

**Deadline for sending material to the Editor:** The beginning of the month previous to publication.

**The Gaelic Supplement** (quarterly): Editor: Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0TA. Available free on request.

**Youth Magazine:** *The Young People's Magazine*. Editor: Rev K D Macleod BSc.

## Communions

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

**February: First Sabbath:** Broadstairs; **Second:** Dingwall; **Third:** Stornoway; Wellington; **Fourth:** Lame, North Uist, Zenka.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**November: Second Sabbath:** Glasgow; **Fifth:** Chiedza.

**December: First Sabbath:** Singapore; **Second:** Tauranga. **Third:** Bulawayo, Santa Fe.

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

Volume 120

April 2015

Number 4

## Access to God Through the Mediator

**W**e are sinners. We are guilty before God. How then can we safely enter His presence when life is over? How can we come before Him in this life? If we continue in our natural condition, we cannot possibly expect ever to enter heaven, or to have our prayers heard, apart from a mediator. The fact is that sin separates between God's creatures and Himself. On the human level, the friendship between two individuals may be broken – so seriously that they can no longer speak to each other. Afterwards, even if one party wishes to be reconciled, the other party might forcefully reject all attempts at restoring harmony. The only hope is to find a mediator, a third party who may be able to bring the two individuals together.

The obvious question is: Where can we find a mediator who can restore harmony between the sinner and God? Or, to use the words of Job: Where can we find someone who “might lay his hand” on both God and the sinner? This is a problem that no human being could solve. Only God, with His infinite wisdom, could provide a mediator who would provide for the needs of sinners while satisfying His own justice perfectly – so that sinners might come into His presence in prayer and be accepted and so that, freed from both the guilt and power of sin, they might enter permanently into heaven when they leave this world.

Hear then the call, given in prophecy: “Behold My servant, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth” (Is 42:1), a verse that Matthew (12:18) quotes as fulfilled in Jesus. He is the God-man who, so to speak, can lay a divine hand on God and lay a human hand on sinners. Through Him and His finished work, sinners may approach God, for He is the God-appointed Mediator. Through Him even the guiltiest of sinners may come near to God and have all their needs supplied. Although no fallen human being can have access to God through their own works – through any kind of effort to please God – they may approach Him through Jesus Christ, who was revealed as Emmanuel, God with us, the Mediator.

If sinners are to be reconciled to God, this Mediator must take upon Himself what brought about the separation in the first place – the guilt of Adam's

first transgression – and also what confirms that separation: continuing human transgression, for everyone keeps coming short of the glory of God. The Mediator must take on Him both the guilt involved in original sin and all the further guilt of each individual He came to save, and He must bear it away, through His sufferings unto death. This is what He did, as Peter writes, “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” (1 Pet 3:18). And His resurrection on the third day should assure us that He has indeed taken away all the sin that brought Him to Calvary. Thus sinners are to receive the fact that “whosoever believeth in Him [shall] not perish, but have everlasting life”.

This truth is to be proclaimed by those who have been sent out to preach the gospel. They are to make known that sin is a universal disease which will prevent people from entering heaven. But they are to point to the Mediator who, if they seek Him, will represent them before God the Father. So Paul made repeated journeys from Palestine as one sent out to preach about sin and about the Mediator for sinners. He was one of those who preached in Ephesus; yet he tells the Ephesians that *Christ* “came and preached peace to you” (Eph 2:17). Christ was never physically in that city, but when His ambassadors proclaimed the gospel there, making known that there is “peace through the blood of the cross” – through the death of the Mediator – it was as if He was Himself speaking there personally.

Then Paul goes on to add, “Through Him we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit unto the Father” (v 18). In this verse all three Persons of the Godhead are mentioned, making it an important testimony to the doctrine of the Trinity. But the point of quoting it here is to highlight this reference to Christ as Mediator: sinners may be reconciled to God the Father through the Son, “the one Mediator between God and men”. The verse also draws attention to the fact that it is by the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul that anyone is able to look by faith to the Saviour, who died to make it possible for sinners to be brought into a state of peace with God.

Consider a sinner who is conscious of sin and conscious also that sin separates from God. What is Christ telling to the sinner? He says this in particular: “I am the way” (Jn 14:6). He, the Mediator, is the way to the Father. He also makes clear: “No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me”. Though sinners cannot come directly to the Father, yet Christ calls them: “Come unto Me”. And, through Christ, trusting in Him, sinners may approach the Father. If they do so, their sins will not be held against them, for the Mediator took these sins and bore them away.

Sinners are not to hold back from coming to Christ because of the seriousness of their sins; however great their sins may be, they are to think of the

greatness of Christ's work. They are to remember His words: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men" (Mt 12:31). Sinners may feel that they are not worthy to come to Christ. But let them look away from themselves and consider the worthiness of the Mediator; they are to say, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (Rev 5:12), who is willing to represent sinners like them before His Father. Of course, we are all unworthy, but that is not the point at the moment. The critical matter is the worthiness of the One who stands between sinners and God, pointing to His finished work as what has been accepted on behalf of unworthy sinners.

Even those who are converted and forgiven cannot approach God in prayer apart from the Mediator. In themselves they continue to be unworthy; they are still sinners; they need the Mediator to present their petitions before the Father. There is nothing in themselves that they can point to as a basis for obtaining forgiveness, grace, protection, or any other blessing; Christ is the foundation. And He, says Paul, "is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us [believers]" (Rom 8:34).

David Brown comments on this verse: He is "using all His boundless interest with God in our behalf. . . . But how are we to conceive of this intercession? Not as of one pleading 'on bended knees and with outstretched arms', to use the expressive language of Calvin. But yet, neither is it merely a figurative intimation that the power of Christ's redemption is continually operative . . . . It cannot be taken to mean less than this: that the glorified Redeemer, conscious of His claims, expressly *signifies His will* that the efficacy of His death should be made good to the uttermost, and signifies it in some such royal style as we find Him implying in that wonderful Intercessory prayer which He spoke as from within the veil, "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am" (Jn 17:24). But *in what form* this will is expressed is as undiscoverable as it is unimportant."

Thus we may bring all our needs before God, but we must approach Him through the Mediator. Because those who pray are sinners, there is no other way to approach. Are we afraid to bring all our needs to Him – the greatest as well as the smallest, the smallest as well as the greatest, but our spiritual needs particularly? Even the most afraid should take encouragement from the call: "Let us . . . come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb 4:16). But may we actually come boldly, with confidence? Yes, we ought not to hold back; we must have confidence in the Mediator, who opened up the way to the Father. "For through [Christ] we . . . have access by one Spirit unto the Father." And He continues to intercede with the Father. Thus, however sinful, ignorant and weak we may be, we can be heard – for the sake of the Mediator.

# A Great Salvation (1)<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by Alexander Grierson

Hebrews 2:3a. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?*

A great subject is here introduced, and a solemn question suggested. First, the subject is salvation, the great salvation of the gospel; and second, the question is, How shall we escape if we neglect it? Such are the two topics which are to engage our attention at this time. May the Holy Spirit reveal to each of us personally something of the value of this so great salvation and give us a salutary sense of the fearful guilt and final ruin of all who shall be found at last to have carelessly neglected it.

1. Let us calmly consider this subject: “**so great salvation**”. Its full measure far surpasses the highest conceptions that any of us can form of it in our present state. Yet some elements of its greatness are clearly revealed and, by availing ourselves of them, we may see the accuracy of the Apostle’s description. With this in view, let us consider (1) the nature of man, who is the subject of this salvation; (2) the depth of the degradation and misery that he is saved from; (3) the height of that glory and happiness to which he is exalted; (4) the display of God’s attributes in the whole scheme of salvation; (5) the divine dignity of the Saviour. And we shall, I do not doubt, perceive at every stage that the gospel salvation is indeed a *great salvation*.

(1.) Salvation is great, because it is the salvation of *man* in both parts of his being, having a material and mortal body, and an immaterial, immortal soul. When we speak of salvation, we are apt to think exclusively of the soul. But let us not forget that the body too benefits from redemption. The body is capable, as you all know, of great impressions of pleasure and of pain. All the senses of the body may be inlets of delight, and every nerve and tissue of it may be the source of excruciating pain. Our bodies must indeed soon mingle with the dust, but it is just as certain that they shall be raised up and reanimated at the resurrection, for “there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust”. And our bodies, when thus raised from the grave and re-united to our souls, shall never again be dissolved by death, but shall continue throughout everlasting ages in a state of the highest enjoyment or of the most acute suffering. The doctrine of the resurrection imparts high importance even to “the redemption of the body”.

But man’s body is only the casket; his soul is the precious gem. When God made man’s body of dust, He “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul”. A living soul is an awesome gift from

<sup>1</sup>Taken with editing from the preacher’s *Sermons*. Grierson (1817-1880) was Free Church minister of Irongray, just west of Dumfries.

the living God, for it is a gift never to be recalled. It is immortal; it is destined to an endless conscious existence of weal or woe. And the soul of man has wonderful powers. Its faculties are capable of indefinite expansion. It contains a principle of endless growth. In this respect, what a contrast does our nature present to that of the beasts that perish. Many manifestations of instinct in the lower animals are indeed wonderful. How exquisitely the bird constructs its nest, and the bee its cell. But no progress is made. No new invention or discovery is ever traced among the animals. They follow the laws of instinct implanted by the Creator, without advancing a single step. Instinct is stationary.

But how different is the history of the reasoning soul of man! The history of mankind has been one of progress in knowledge and skills. And are we to suppose that the progress of the soul is arrested after death? The Bible illustrates the expansion of our powers in a future state by contrasting the thoughts of our manhood with those of our childhood: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor 13:9-12).

Let us not forget that intellectual capacity, though a noble gift of God, may be perverted and become a curse, not a blessing; a source of misery, not of happiness. Some who had the highest endowments of mind have been among the most wretched. High endowments allied to depravity only expose those who have them to deeper misery. If the soul of man is capable of great joys and great sorrows during the few short years of this life, who can compute the joys and sorrows of its eternity? The soul's powers will then doubtless be mightily enlarged in endless bliss or endless misery.

O that each of us were awake to the tremendous value of our nature when viewed in the light of the eternity that awaits us! How all earthly matters would, in comparison, dwindle to nothing. The rich are often ready to plume themselves on possessing a little uncertain riches, the poor to be over-anxious about the supply of their daily wants; we are all prone to overvalue the things of time. But "what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" In those bodies of ours when raised from their graves at the resurrection, and in those rational and immortal souls with which we are endowed, each of us has a great heritage of ever-growing happiness or misery. Must the salvation of man not be *great*?

(2.) Salvation is great because of *the degradation and misery that man is*

*saved from*. Healing implies sickness, restoration to life implies death, and the very announcement of salvation to man implies that he is lost.

Christ came to save the lost. I do not need to prove that we are all fallen and sinful creatures. Everyone's conscience tells him so; the Bible proves it, and universal experience confirms it. We all confess that we are sinners. But what does this imply? It implies corruption and condemnation, or spiritual disease leading to eternal death. We need deliverance from both of these unspeakable evils, and the great salvation of the gospel delivers from both – from sin and hell. Christ “saves His people from their sins, and He also delivers “us from the wrath to come”.

Now sin is corruption, it is an abominable thing. The pure eye of Jehovah cannot look on it. Yet it has overspread our whole nature, darkening the mind and depraving the heart. We were created at first in the image of God. But how has the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed! Our comeliness has been turned into corruption. Though children of God by creation, we have made ourselves children of the devil by our apostasy. We have cherished enmity to God in our hearts and manifested that enmity by wicked works. The sinner is very imperfectly acquainted with the fearful depth of his own depravity. This is itself a symptom of the disease. Our blindness to our true condition takes nothing away from its inherent loathsomeness. When that loathsomeness is presented to the saint in the light of God's holiness, he exclaims, “Behold, I am vile”; and when it is set before the sinner in eternity, he will see his vileness when too late. For sin implies guilt, guilt implies condemnation, and how fearful is that condemnation!

As sinners think lightly of sin, so they wish to think lightly of its punishment. But if Scripture is our guide, we must realise that the punishment of the lost in the world to come is appalling beyond description. It is no light meaning that such Scriptural expressions have: “the spirits in prison”; “to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever”; “the cup of trembling”; “the wrath to come”; “shame and everlasting contempt”; “a furnace of fire”; “there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth”; “the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death”; “who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power”; “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”; and “the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever”; “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, for every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt”.

As the roar of falling waters near the wanderer at night warns him that he is on the brink of some abyss, so these words from the lips of incarnate truth



and love are surely fitted to warn us of some real tremendous danger. They present a terrible picture of the future punishment of sin. Does any one say the expressions are figurative? Some of them no doubt are; but is the meaning of these figures less terrible on that account?

But one thing is certain: both body and soul shall share in the punishment of sin, as both have been partners in its guilt. "Fear not them which kill the body," says Jesus, "but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." The lost sinner will have one hell within him; but he will also have another hell without and around him, for John tells us in his vision of the final judgement: "Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Rev 20:14). There are thus two hells, the one moral and the other material, awaiting the impenitent. When these two hells meet and the wicked stand confronted with their just and now-inevitable doom, need we wonder that "their faces gather blackness" and that they call on the mountains to cover them and on the hills to fall on them (Hos 10:8) or to crush them into annihilation?

But the cry will be fruitless. Not only do the Scriptures tell us that their punishment is to be eternal, but the very same term that is used to describe the endlessness of the joys of the redeemed is used to set forth the unending duration of the sufferings of the lost. See Matthew 25:46: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal". In our version, the terms, *everlasting* and *eternal*, are different, but in the original the same word is used to set forth the endlessness of the punishment and of the life. As the life is not mere conscious existence, but one of conscious, happy existence and gracious reward that is to last for ever, so the punishment is not mere non-existence or annihilation, but existence for ever in misery as the just punishment of sin.

Surely those of us who believe these to be the true sayings of God, and ponder their awful meaning, must see that deliverance from such a bottomless abyss of misery is indeed a *great salvation*; while those who have never yet fled for refuge to Christ, if they would only see the danger in which they stand every moment, would be seized with very great trembling and be constrained to cry, "What must *I* do to be saved?"

(3.) Salvation is great because of *the unspeakable value of the blessings* it confers. It not merely delivers from sin and hell; it secures the richest and most precious blessings. It not only delivers from debasement and misery; it exalts to the highest dignity and happiness of which our nature is capable.

From the first moment that the sinner, when convinced of his own guilt and helplessness and of Christ's suitability and all-sufficiency, transfers his trust from himself and his own doings to the Saviour and His righteous-

ness as his only hope before God, he is at once pardoned and accepted – freely, and for ever. Being now justified by faith, he has peace with God, to which he was formerly a stranger. He feels at times as if heaven had begun, and he rejoices with a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

But the Christian's joys are often clouded, and his heart heavy because of many infirmities and temptations. Sin still clings to him, though he longs and struggles to be free; his body too is subject to many diseases and pains, and the fear of death may at times subject him to bondage. But all these ills will only be for a little season. At death his soul shall be made perfect in holiness; at the resurrection his body shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body; and his whole spirit, soul and body shall be presented without spot in the Saviour's presence, whence he shall go no more out.

How glorious is the prospect which the Bible opens up to the believer! It tells us that "if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens". It sets before us a crown that shall never tarnish, an inheritance that shall never fade, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory". All that is most attractive in God's works is used to picture the future glory of the redeemed. At one time it is set forth in colours derived from Eden, where Adam and Eve walked in holy fellowship with God amid scenes of beauty and bliss. We see spread out before us in heaven fountains of joy through which flow rivers of pleasure: "He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 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 8:15-17).

We see the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Its walls are of jasper, its streets of gold, its gates of pearls, and its foundations garnished with all manner of precious stones. Such is the city in which the redeemed are to dwell, and in which is the palace of the great King. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it . . . and there shall be no night there . . . and there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev 21:23-27).

There we see a great multitude which no man can number, each of them wearing a white robe and waving a triumphal palm. After the privations of a long warfare, they now exult in victory and enjoy an endless peace, while

they ascribe all the glory to the great Captain of their salvation. Therefore they joy before Him, “according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil”.

Again, heaven is likened to a great sanctuary filled with holy worshippers praising their King. We listen to their melodious voices as they sing the new song: “Thou art worthy: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests;” while more than ten thousand times ten thousand angels say with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever” (Rev 5:12,13).

Yet again the Saviour’s own description leads us to think of it as a quiet home, the Father’s house of many mansions, where Christ is now preparing a place for His people. There the whole family shall meet around their Father’s table. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of His house, and He shall make them drink of the river of His pleasures.

Such are some of the pictures which the Bible presents of the heavenly inheritance. Many of them are figurative, but heaven itself is a glorious reality. What is the precise nature of the heavenly state and its enjoyments we cannot tell. This is what the revelation of glory alone can disclose. One thing is certain: neither sin nor sorrow can enter there; there will be everything that infinite love and infinite wisdom can contrive, and infinite resources furnish, to minister to the holy happiness of the redeemed. The actual reality will far surpass the highest anticipations of the most saintly mind. For “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him”. And then the crowning excellence of it all is its permanence. The inheritance is incorruptible, the crown unfading, the glory eternal. And enough is surely revealed to show that it is indeed a *great salvation* for lost, polluted sinners, sentenced to the second death, so that they may be restored to perfect holiness and raised to heavenly glory.

---

Whatever temptation a man rusheth confidently upon, he usually falls by. In temptation no believer is safe but the self-diffident and fearful, and fear of temptation acts in praying against it. Peter failed in his fearlessness. His going to the high priest’s hall, after the warning his Master gave him, was rushing on a temptation, and so came on it. It must therefore be a case wherein one is very needy of grace to help that Christ bids us pray against.

*Robert Traill*

# The Reformation in Spain<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Seed Sown in Seville and Valladolid

A man who did much to advance God's work within Spain was Rodrigo de Valer. He was a very fashionable young man, living mostly in Seville, whose time was taken up with horses, sport and entertainment. All of a sudden he disappeared from his previous haunts and shut himself up in his room. He gave himself to reading and meditating on religion. Had he shut himself up in a monastery, no Spaniard of the time would have been surprised. But to act as he did, while neglecting these places of supposed sanctity, could only be explained on the basis that he was mentally disturbed. He had learned a little Latin when he was young; now he applied himself with great diligence to the language so that he could read the Vulgate, the only version of the Bible that was permitted in Spain. In a remarkably short time he became so well acquainted with its contents that he was able to quote almost any passage from memory and to expound its meaning. His system of doctrine was, in substance, Lutheran.

When Valer was satisfied that he had learned the truths of revelation, he appeared again in public. His great hope was that he would be able to communicate these truths to others so that they would impress their minds as they had impressed his own. In particular, he sought out priests and monks, first to argue with them and persuade them; if that proved unsuccessful, he reproved them for their errors. He made the Bible his supreme standard in these discussions as he pointed out the general departure from it in both faith and practice.

Valer did have some success, but for the most part those he accosted rejected his efforts to point them to the truth. After all, he was a layman; he was not a educated man. What right had he to instruct his teachers? the clergy asked. In response, he accepted that he had been brought up in ignorance of divine things; he claimed to have acquired his knowledge, not from the polluted streams of tradition and human invention, but from the pure fountain of revealed truth, through the teaching of the Spirit. He pointed out that "unlearned and ignorant men", the disciples, had convicted a learned Sanhedrin of blindness and called a whole world to the knowledge of salvation. He claimed to have the authority of Christ for warning them of their errors and vices.

One would not expect Valer to be allowed to continue in this way for long. He was soon hauled before the Inquisitors, with whom he disputed on

<sup>1</sup>Last month's article drew attention to some who sowed seeds of scriptural teaching at the beginning of the Spanish Reformation, particularly by their writings and translations. Page references in the text are to Thomas M'Crie, *The Reformation in Spain*, 1824.

such subjects as justification, the Church and its distinctive marks. Some men who had secretly accepted his teachings did their best to have him released. Their influence, together with his high rank in society and the belief that he was insane did lead to a more lenient sentence than was normal for the brutal organisation in whose clutches he found himself. His property was confiscated, but he was released. His friends persuaded him to keep out of public view for a time, and he confined himself to expounding the Epistle to the Romans to them privately. But his zeal could not be thus restrained for long. He resumed his previous activity in the hope that, though he might lose his life in so doing, others would press on after him and so the truth might gain the victory. So zealous was he that he might even interrupt priests during their sermons, to point out their errors.

Not surprisingly, he was a second time brought before the Inquisition and condemned. He was sentenced to be imprisoned for life and to wear a *sanbenito*, an outer shirt which everyone convicted of heresy was required to wear. When, as a prisoner, Valer was taken to church services on festival days, he was still ready to speak out after the sermon if what the preacher said was contrary to the Word of God, to warn the people against the false doctrines they had heard. This would normally have resulted in a prisoner being burnt to death, but his high rank and other factors protected him. Instead, about 1541, he was shut away from contact with the public, in a monastery, where he died aged 50. His *sanbenito* was hung up in the main church in Seville; on it was written: "Rodrigo Valer, a citizen of Lebrixa and Seville, an apostate and false apostle, who pretended to be sent by God" (p 151).

The most distinguished of Valer's converts was Juan Gil, usually known as Dr Egidius. He had achieved distinction as a student at the University of Alcalá for his expertise in the theology of the Mediaeval scholastics, such as Thomas Aquinas. Scholastic theology was the only academic discipline then valued in Spain except among a few who gave themselves to studying the Scriptures in the original languages and were derisively known as *Biblists*. Egidius became a professor of theology and was then unanimously elected canon magistral, or preacher, in Seville Cathedral. But he was not successful in this position and was ready to resign when Valer sought him out and gave him good advice. At last Egidius took the advice and, says M'Críe, "instead of the dry, abstruse and unprofitable discussions which he had formerly pursued, he brought forward the great truths of the Bible; and the frigid manner in which he had been accustomed to acquit himself in public was succeeded by powerful appeals to the consciences and affectionate addresses to the hearts of his auditors" (p 153).

He acted more cautiously than Valer, but he caught the attention of his

hearers, and conversions resulted. These converts were strengthened through Egidius's continued preaching so that, when called to face death because of their faith, they were able to do so joyfully. Two others who profited from contact with Egidius were Dr Vargas and Constantine Ponce de la Fuente. They then co-operated in trying to spread the gospel. Vargas lectured to the more educated, his lectures including expositions of Romans and the Psalms. Constantine sometimes assisted Egidius in preaching. Their zeal aroused suspicion, but it also provoked the hardline Romanists to greater diligence in promoting their superstitions. These latter kept the allegiance of the majority of the people, but those in Seville whose allegiance was to the Bible were growing in number, and small groups of believers were being planted in surrounding districts.

Naturally the Inquisition was watching but, perhaps because of the popularity of Egidius, they hesitated to act. Meantime Vargas died and Constantine was sent to the Netherlands, then under Spanish control, with Philip, the heir to the throne. In 1550 the King nominated Egidius to one of the richest bishoprics in Spain. Now the Inquisition pounced, charging Egidius openly with heresy and sending him to one of their secret prisons. He was charged with errors in relation to justification, human merit, assurance, purgatory and confession. In his defence he produced a statement of his views on justification, the effect of which was to supply the prosecutor with further evidence against him.

The King wrote in support of Egidius, as did colleagues in Seville; there was even a falling out among the judges. But the eventual outcome of the trial, in 1552, was that he was condemned to three years' imprisonment; he must abstain from writing or teaching for 10 years and abjure the propositions for which he was condemned. He appeared among those condemned to do penance at an *auto-da-fé*, literally, an act of faith. This was a ritual of public penance by condemned heretics; others who did not recant might be burnt to death. Presumably Egidius submitted to the penance; he certainly felt extremely discouraged as a result of what seems to have been the unfaithfulness of a friend during the trial.

We next hear of him in 1555 when he was released. The following year he visited Valladolid, in northern Spain, where he found a number of people who had embraced Reformation doctrine. He felt revived in his spirit through his time with them and exhorted them to constancy in the faith. Soon after returning to Seville he took ill and within a few days he died. Afterwards the inquisitors decided that he had died in the Lutheran faith; they ordered his remains to be disinterred and burnt. His property was confiscated and his memory was declared infamous.

But how had the Reformation faith taken hold in Valladolid? A merchant, Francisco San-Roman, had spent time in the Netherlands (then including what is now Belgium). In 1540 his employers sent him from Antwerp to Bremen on business. While there, San-Roman was anxious to learn something about the religion which was so strongly condemned in his own country. He went to church and heard James Sprent, one of the first in the Netherlands to embrace Luther's teachings. The sermon made a great impression on him and he sought out Sprent privately and profited greatly from his contacts with a number of Protestants. Naively San-Roman thought he could easily persuade others to take up the truths which were now so clear to himself; he was extremely anxious to return to Spain to spread the true religion. Sprent tried to restrain him in his enthusiasm, an enthusiasm which he had once experienced himself.

San-Roman's letters back to his employers in Antwerp included references to his new faith. The result was that, on his return to the city, a group of friars were waiting for him. Some Lutheran literature was found on his person and he was arrested. After eight months of severe confinement, he was released; some of his friends claimed that his zeal had now cooled. A friend of his urged him to be cautious in speaking to people, but his caution was short-lived.

San-Roman went to Ratisbon, where a diet of the German Empire was sitting. He was elated to hear that the Emperor was showing considerable favour to the Protestants (this was only for political reasons). He managed to secure admission to the Emperor's presence; there he deplored the state of religion in Spain and begged him to restrain the inquisitors and priests, who were trying to prevent the spread of the true, saving doctrine of Christ. He was encouraged at the mild response he received and sought another audience with Charles. This time, some of the courtiers reacted forcefully and would have thrown San-Roman into the Danube, but Charles insisted that he be sent home to Spain for a proper trial. In chains he was conveyed by a most circuitous route into the hands of the Inquisition in Valladolid.

Brought to trial in 1544, he freely confessed the great Reformation doctrine that salvation is not by human works, merit or strength, but only from God's mercy, through the sacrifice of the one Mediator. And he declared that the mass, confession, purgatory, prayers to the saints and the worship of images are blasphemy. San-Roman endured a long imprisonment with patience; he resisted all the efforts of the friars to make him recant. At the place where he was to be burnt, he refused to confess to a priest, which would have resulted in the mitigation of his sentence.

After the fire had been lit, the friars understood a movement of his head to mean that he was indicating that he now wished to recant and they had

him brought from the fire. San-Roman looked them calmly in the face and asked, "Do you envy my happiness?" He was at once thrown back in the flames and expired soon afterwards. The inquisitors issued a proclamation forbidding the people to pray for his soul or to express a favourable opinion of such an obstinate heretic. His brave death made a strong impression on the spectators and had the effect of strengthening some who had already embraced the Protestant faith; within a few years, they formed themselves into a church and met regularly in private for worship.

---

## Murder and Its Punishment<sup>1</sup>

*J G Lorimer*

Genesis 9:6. *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man.*

The circumstances in which the doom of murderers was thus announced were important. The inhabitants of the world had, for their wickedness, been destroyed in the waters of the flood. Noah and his family were starting anew as the progenitors of mankind. In this situation it was proper to give them various regulations for their guidance. In kindness they were allowed, for the first time, to eat animal food and, lest the memory of the recent fearful destruction of life, by the flood, should lead them to think lightly of life and to treat it carelessly, God specially pointed out its importance.

Though they were to have full use of animals, and were commanded to be fruitful and multiply, yet they were not to abuse God's gifts. They were to treat the blood with reverence, because the life was in it, and it was a type of the sacrifice, or blood, of God's own Son, by which redemption was to be accomplished. If due respect is to be shown to the life of other creatures, the life of man is not to be treated lightly. It is expressly stated that the man who wilfully takes the life of a brother shall thereby forfeit his own life; in other words, he shall be put to death. Though this appointment commends itself to reason— to our sense of natural justice — yet its authority, and also its wisdom and goodness, have lately<sup>2</sup> been called in question.

The divine authority is explicit. Nothing can be clearer. "Whoso", says God, sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." This is no mere prophecy of the future. Even if it was, God's mind would be equally

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from *The Christian's Daily Companion*. Lorimer (1804-68) was minister of St David's, Glasgow, before joining the Free Church at the Disruption.

<sup>2</sup>The book was published in 1845. The law of many countries has obviously changed since then in, but the biblical principles — which national laws ought to reflect — remain the same.



expressed as to the principle, but it was given to guide Noah and his posterity. It was conveyed in the same sort of terms as the permission to eat animal food, and people may as well argue that the one is as much future as the other. Thus it is obligatory for all, Jew and Gentile alike. The law was enacted before the Jews existed as a nation. The reason which is assigned for enacting it was not for them exclusively but is equally applicable to all mankind.

Man's blood is not to be shed lightly, without being suitably avenged, "for in the image of God made He man". His origin and his destiny are alike great; therefore his life is to be sacredly protected and honoured. At the same time, the Jewish nation's law on murder – a law which they received from God – was in perfect harmony with the older, more comprehensive law which we are considering; the argument is thus strengthened. The criminal law of the Jews is particularly explicit on the shedding of human blood. Its general doctrine is that he who smites a man, so that he dies, shall be put to death.

No satisfaction, it was said, shall be provided for a murderer; the cities of refuge are not like churches in many Roman Catholic countries, to be a sanctuary for criminals. No, "if any man hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally that he die, and fleeth into one of these cities; then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him unto the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die" (Dt 19:11, 12). The case of Joab, the celebrated general of David, is an illustration of the strength of the law. Though the royal house had been so much indebted to him and though he was a soldier, accustomed to the rough procedure of these days, yet because he had taken the lives of two men – lives which ought to have been spared – directions are given that he shall, even in the height of his honour, be put to death. There can be no question then as to the divine law in regard to murder and its punishment. It is clear, express and universally-binding. Not a word can be pleaded from Scripture in favour of relaxing it.

But not a few think it harsh and propose to repeal it. They contend that man should never inflict upon man the punishment of death – that in doing so he takes away what he cannot give, and cuts off the hope and the opportunity of salvation. But were not all these things well known to God in making the law? And what do such pleadings amount to, if not to an insinuation that man is kinder than God. Follow out the same false charity, and it will do away with eternal punishment altogether. Surely it will not be alleged that those who hold such views are more concerned for the salvation of souls than those who hold that it is right that murder be punished with death. Besides, it is the command of God.

It should be remembered that, while the claims of mercy are high, those

of justice are no less imperative. The honour of God is involved in the strict vindication of human life, as man was created in the image of God, and the welfare of society demands it. If even with the penalty of death attached to the willful shedding of man's blood, there is so much violence and so many murders, how much more frequent would they be if the punishment were relaxed? Death may have been attached, in human criminal codes, to lesser offences with which it ought never to have been connected; and public sympathy may thus have been outraged. But that is no reason for abolishing it where the law of God most distinctly requires it.

God's forbearance in the case of Cain proves nothing but God's mercy. The case was unique; there was no society, comparatively speaking, to be affected; a father or a brother must have been the executioner. In pity to them the criminal may have been spared.

From the punishment which has been ordained, we may learn anew the high importance of human life. The prodigious waste of it, in all ages, may seem to intimate that as a whole it is of little value; but its strict vindication – requiring life for life – is an impressive proclamation of the opposite. It teaches how much must be suspended on a person's life. Let us make good use of every hour in its fleeting course and, in the meantime, let us rejoice that we not only live under civil government, but also under God's, where life is so sacredly guarded.

---

## **Egypt, the Wilderness and the Promised Land**

*Rev D W B Somerset*

Singing part of Psalm 106 at a recent prayer meeting, the writer was led to reflect on the spiritual connection between believers now and the Children of Israel coming out of Egypt. In the prose version, the words in question read: "We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly. Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of Thy mercies; but provoked Him at the sea, even the Red Sea. Nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake, that He might make His mighty power to be known" (Ps 106:6-8).

The tendency is for believers to distance themselves in their minds from the Children of Israel in the wilderness, because we are told of them that their "carcasses fell in the wilderness" and that they "could not enter in [to the Promised Land] because of unbelief", and believers are warned lest any of

them should “seem to come short” of the promise in the same way (Heb 3:17-4:2). This is most certainly a truth, but it is only part of the use that Scripture makes of the Exodus from Egypt. The unbelief of the Children of Israel is to be a warning to those that reject the gospel, but it also serves to illustrate the continuing struggle with sin and unbelief taking place in the hearts of the people of God. The passage from Egypt through the wilderness to the Promised Land is a picture of the life of the believer, being brought by Christ from bondage to glory, and the smaller incidents, as well as the greater ones, in that passage may be useful to believers.

The major events, such as the Passover, the Red Sea, the marriage Covenant at Sinai, the water from the Rock, and the crossing of the Jordan into the Promised Land have obvious correspondences in the life of the believer, but why should not the smaller events also have their correspondences? We are not suggesting that every believer’s life rigidly follows exactly the path of the Children of Israel; but we are suggesting that a familiarity with the events of the Exodus, and a readiness to relate them to their own lives, will be profitable to the people of God, especially when they are singing the historical parts of the Psalms describing these events.

Far from being barren and irrelevant, believers will find the description of these events to show the Lord’s knowledge of their souls and His loving-kindness towards them, notwithstanding their frequent and grievous provocations. “Many times did He deliver them, but they provoked Him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless He regarded their affliction, when He heard their cry. And He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies. . . . Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto Thy holy name, and to triumph in Thy praise” (Ps 106:43-7).

---

## The Prayer of Faith<sup>1</sup>

*John Dick*

Prayer is offered up in expectation of an answer; and when it is the prayer of faith, it is not presented in vain: “The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers” (1 Pet 3:12). On this part of the subject, let me make the following observations.

1. *God sometimes gives an immediate answer to the prayers of His people.*

<sup>1</sup>Dick (1764-1833) was successively minister of United Secession congregations in Edinburgh and Glasgow; he was also a professor of theology. This extract is taken, with editing, from his *Lectures on Theology*, vol 4.

Many instances of this might be collected from the Scriptures. When the Israelites, in their flight from Egypt, were enclosed by the Red Sea in front, the mountains on either side, and the host of Pharaoh behind them, Moses, in this distress, was pouring out his prayer. The Lord said to him: "Wherefore criest thou unto Me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward" (Ex 14:15). Immediately the waters were divided, and a passage to the opposite shore opened up. When Elijah entreated God to decide, in a visible way, the controversy between Himself and Baal, fire descended from heaven and consumed, not only the sacrifice, but also the stones of the altar (1 Ki 18:38).

These are the words of God about His people: "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is 65:23,24). The idea suggested is the promptitude of the answer. While the petitions are yet on their lips, and before they have had time to express all that they had conceived in their hearts, He will send down from heaven the blessing they desire. No sooner had the Apostles prayed that the Lord would grant unto His servants that, with all boldness, they might speak His word than "the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 4:29,31), who inspired them with heavenly eloquence and undaunted courage.

God gives a speedy answer to the prayers of His people when the case is urgent and delay would prove injurious. And while He thus honours the duty of prayer, and holds out encouragement to persevere in it, He furnishes a proof, by which all should be convinced, that there is profit in serving the Lord. When an audible answer had been returned from heaven to Christ, He said, "This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes" (Jn 12:30).

2. Although God has heard the prayers of His people, *He sometimes delays to answer them*. Whatever conclusion their impatient minds may draw, their petitions are not rejected when the favour asked for is not immediately conferred. David was convinced of this truth, as we see from his exercise recorded in Psalm 130: "Lord, hear my voice; let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications". Afterwards he adds, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning." This is the language of expectation. He did not receive an immediate answer, but he did not sink into despondency. He looked for the blessing as the sick man waits for the morning light; he supported himself by the faithful promises of God, which were the foundation of his hope: "Though [the vision] tarry," says the prophet, "wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Hab 2:3).

While God grants His people full liberty to address Him on every occasion and promises that all their wants shall be supplied, He does not permit them to dictate to Him when He should act. His own wisdom, not their anxiety, is the rule of His procedure. They are incompetent judges, as they know little more than their own feelings and cannot take a comprehensive view of the relations and consequences of His dispensations. It is enough to be assured that God never turns away His ear from the prayer of faith, and that nothing truly good shall be withheld from those who fear Him.

Perhaps they are not yet in a proper state of mind to receive the blessings they ask for, not duly humbled by a sense of their unworthiness, and consequently not prepared to estimate them according to their value or to feel all that warmth of gratitude which would lead them to sincere and fervent thanksgiving. The delay may serve the salutary purpose of awakening their dormant piety, or of increasing its vigour and activity. It will teach them to live by faith, in dependence on His promises, to serve Him in hope, instead of always being impelled by the actual experience of His goodness. It will lead their thoughts more to God, and make their supplications more importunate. Human nature is so constituted that mercies which have been long sought – and sometimes despaired of, but at last obtained – acquire in our eyes a double value and are enjoyed with a keener relish.

For these and other reasons, there is sometimes a considerable interval between the prayer and its answer, but none of those who wait on God shall be ashamed. The prayer was heard when it was presented; it was remembered, although the saint might have been tempted to exclaim, The Lord has forgotten me. And at the proper time, a testimony of God's favour is given, to convince them that blessed are they who wait on the Lord.

3. *The prayer of faith is heard even when the blessing sought is withheld, but another more expedient is bestowed.* When, at their last meeting with the Saviour, the disciples asked Him: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He did not answer. His reason is given in the following words: "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts 1:6,7). But, although He refused to gratify their curiosity on this subject, He promised them what was of far greater value than the information which they were anxious to obtain: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you". He would give them the Spirit, to teach them all mysteries and all necessary knowledge.

When the Apostle Paul thrice entreated the Lord that the messenger of Satan, sent to buffet him, might be removed, he obtained only this answer: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). He was not relieved from his present distress, but he was assured

of grace to support him. God reserves to Himself the power of judging what answer He shall return to the prayers of His people; it is a power in which they should cheerfully acquiesce as it will always be exercised for their best interests. From their imperfect knowledge, they may commit mistakes in their requests, but their petitions are pleasing to Him as expressions of their faith and hope and humble desires. He therefore bestows in return a blessing more suitable to their circumstances and more conducive to their good, which they afterwards perceive to be preferable to what they themselves selected.

4. *God hears the prayers of His people, even when He does not return any direct answer to them.* A Christian may pray, as he is bound in duty to do, for the recovery of a friend who is sick; yet his friend may die. Or he may pray for the conversion of particular people, who may never come to the knowledge of the truth. In such cases a distinction should be made, and we must say that, although the prayers are not heard, so far as this implies obtaining an answer, yet they are acceptable to God when they proceed from a holy heart and are conformable to the general rule of Scripture.

The exercise of grace may be pleasing to God, although behind it there lies a mistake. The love which a saint bears to a hypocrite whom, in charity, he supposes to be a saint on the basis of his profession of piety, is the fulfilment of the law, and receives God's approval as well as any other duty. The unworthiness of the object does not destroy its value because his real character is unknown. Notwithstanding the error of those members of the church in Rome who, not considering that the ceremonial law was abolished, observed a distinction of days and meats from a principle of conscience, we are assured by Paul that the Lord received them (Rom 14:3). We may therefore conclude that, although the people of God may present their petitions for favours which His wisdom does not judge it proper to bestow, yet He is pleased with their prayers because they are founded on the general promises of Scripture. Such prayers ought not to be considered lost. They are among the works of faith and labours of love which God will not forget.

The prayer of faith is always heard. It brings down, sooner or later, the specific blessing, or another of equal value. Even if no direct answer is given, it is still a sacrifice pleasing to God, through Jesus Christ. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb 4:16).

---

When Christ left the world, He made His will. His soul He bequeathed to His Father and His body to Joseph. His clothes fell to the soldiers. His mother He left to the care of John. But what should He leave to His poor disciples, who had left all for Him? Silver and gold He had none; but He left them what was far better, His peace.

*Matthew Henry*

# The Heidelberg Catechism<sup>1</sup>

Matthew Vogan

*A book of true comfort.* It is unusual to contemplate a doctrinal catechism from 450 years ago as uniquely offering true spiritual comfort, but the *Heidelberg Catechism*, so beloved of our Dutch friends, is a unique document. A number of factors underline its importance.

*Its continuing value.* No other catechism from the sixteenth century has the same status and continuity of use, and enjoys such widespread affection. It continues to be used for catechising and for public instruction in Dutch churches every Sabbath. It has been translated into a vast array of languages across the globe. What is it in this document that enables so many to draw so much benefit out of it?

*Its clear teaching structure.* The *Heidelberg* opens with a clear statement of the three things that it is necessary for us to know in order to live and die happily: “the first, how great my sins and miseries are; the second, how I may be delivered from all my sins and miseries; the third, how I shall express my gratitude to God for such deliverance”.

These three have been well summarised as: guilt, grace and gratitude. William Vandoedewaard, who contributes an introduction, notes that, in this, “the *Heidelberg Catechism* follows the pattern of the Epistle to the Romans. It opens with the question ‘What is your only comfort in life and in death?’, and then examines the realities of human sin and misery (Rom 1:1-3:20); salvation in Christ, including faith and repentance (Rom 3:21-11:36); and the Christian life of thankful obedience in response to God’s grace in Christ (Rom 12-16).” In this God’s Word and law are emphasised in the exercises of faith, repentance and prayer.

Zacharias Ursinus<sup>2</sup> wrote: “A knowledge of our misery is necessary for our comfort, not that it of itself administers any consolation, or is any part of it, (for of itself it rather alarms than comforts,) but it is necessary because it excites in us the desire of deliverance, just as a knowledge of disease awakens a desire of medicine on the part of the sick”.

After outlining the truths of salvation in a vital and earnest way, the *Catechism* takes a clear path through further areas of biblical doctrine, with its exposition and application of the Apostles’ Creed, the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord’s Prayer.

*Its Reformation origin.* As its name suggests, it originated in the German

<sup>1</sup>A review article on *The Heidelberg Catechism*, published by the Banner of Truth Trust in their Pocket Puritans series, soft cover, 88 pages, £10.00.

<sup>2</sup>See below.

city of Heidelberg during the Reformation period. Lutheran doctrine and practice generally were in the ascendancy in Protestant areas of Germany. Frederick III (1516-76), who was Elector Palatine, expressed the desire that his subjects might be brought to a “devout knowledge and fear of the Almighty and His holy Word of salvation”. He commissioned a group of theologians and ministers to compose a summary of biblical truth that could be taught and memorised.

His stated objectives are very noteworthy: “This was done so that in the future, not only will our young people be instructed in the Christian doctrine in a godly manner and admonished in unanimity, but also so that pastors and schoolteachers themselves will have a reliable model and a solid standard as to how to approach the instruction of our young people, and so that they will not change one thing or another on a daily basis or introduce a contrary doctrine”. He went on to give a robust defence of its doctrine as “irrefutable” before the Roman Catholic Emperor Maximilian II, at the Imperial Diet of Augsburg in 1566. The final version was approved by the Synod in Heidelberg (1563).

*Its wide acceptance.* The *Heidelberg* is said to have been the most ecumenical of the Protestant confessions. This refers to the fact that it was influenced by the thinking of the Lutheran Philip Melanchthon even though it expresses the Reformed doctrine on Baptism, the Lord’s Supper and Christ’s human nature in heaven. The *Catechism* was produced following a period of controversy in Heidelberg in relation to the Lord’s Supper. Philip Melanchthon was involved in this and, before he died in 1560, produced an irenic statement that had much common ground with the Reformed position. It is now believed that the principal author of the *Catechism* was Zacharius Ursinus (1534-1583) who had studied under Melanchthon in Wittenberg. Comparisons have shown that the Heidelberg has a close connection with, and in some cases dependence upon, Luther’s catechisms.

Reformed theologians were not able to put together an overarching confession which would be accepted by all the different national strands of Reformed Churches in the way that the Lutherans achieved. It is often said, however, that the *Heidelberg* came nearest to this and was very widely received. It was certainly meant to be a statement of confession as much as a manual of instruction. Zurich Reformer Heinrich Bullinger highly praised the *Heidelberg Catechism* as the “best catechism”. Some have argued that Bullinger in fact exerted a stronger influence than Calvin on the document. King James VI gave his approval for it to be printed in Edinburgh and used in Scotland. Robert Rollock lectured on it, and the British delegates to the Synod of Dort expressed their approval of it. Within decades after its publi-



cation, it had travelled far and had been translated into Latin, Dutch, English, Hungarian, French, Greek, Romansh, Czech, and Spanish.

*Its experiential tone.* The famous first question is: “What is thy only comfort in life and death?” The answer given is: “That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ; who, with His precious blood, hath fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil . . .”.

Another precious portion is in the response given to Question 58: “What comfort takest thou from the article of ‘life everlasting’?” “That since I now feel in my heart the beginning of eternal joy, after this life I shall inherit perfect salvation, which ‘eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man’ to conceive, and that to praise God therein for ever”. These expressions were of incalculable value to the martyrs and persecuted Christians of the Reformation.

In a commentary written on the *Catechism* by Zacharius Ursinus, he explains something of the experiential emphasis that pervades it: “No man, however, truly knows what justifying faith is, except he who believes, or possesses it; as he, who never saw or tasted honey, knows nothing of its quality or taste, although you may tell him many things of the sweetness of honey. But the man who truly believes, experiences these things in himself, and is able, also, to explain them to others.” The emphasis upon experience makes it very suitable for devotional reading and the division of the material into 52 Lord’s Days suggests profitable material for reading and meditation on the Sabbath day.

Throughout the *Catechism*, “I”, “me”, “my” and “mine” are continually used in the answers. This is a strength in challenging those who give the answers as to whether it is personally and really true. This strength is also a potential weakness, for it does not seem safe to put words such as the following into the mouths of those that are not converted: “My Lord Jesus Christ, by His inexpressible anguish, pains, terrors, and hellish agonies, in which He was plunged during all His sufferings, but especially on the cross, hath delivered me from the anguish and torments of hell”. This answer relates to the part of the Creed which states that Christ “descended into hell”, which the Westminster Assembly concluded was the state of being buried, but the *Heidelberg* relates it to Christ’s suffering the torments of hell upon the cross.

*Its covenantal teaching.* Although the word *covenant* does not appear frequently in the *Catechism*, its teaching is undergirded by the covenantal doctrine that Ursinus developed. In relation to Baptism, the *Catechism* makes it clear that infants born within the visible Church “are included in the covenant and belong to the people of God”. Baptism is administered to infants “as

a sign of the covenant”, in that they also have the benefits of redemption held out to them in promise. We also hear the echoes of covenantal doctrine in the language of belonging and divine care that is so prominent within the *Catechism*. One would expect that a covenantal framework would lead to a strong affirmation that Christ died for His people alone. The language of the *Catechism* is less than clear, however, in Question 37: “He, all the time that He lived on earth, but especially at the end of His life, sustained in body and soul the wrath of God against the sins of all mankind”.

In the edition that we have been given to review (see further below), this is rendered as “the sins of the whole human race” with a note “or the sins of all mankind”. Reference to the *Commentary* written by Ursinus does not help to clarify greatly since he distinguishes between satisfaction made as sufficient for all and satisfaction applied. Those who use the *Catechism* are, however, primarily committed to the doctrine that Christ died only for His people and explain this in terms of Christ dying for men from all nations.

*Its robust Protestantism.* When it comes to resisting the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation and the blasphemy of the mass, the *Heidelberg Catechism* does not draw back. Answer 80 rejects the “popish mass” as not only “a denial of the one sacrifice and sufferings of Jesus Christ” but “accursed idolatry”. In its exposition of the first three of the Ten Commandments, it is made clear that the first and third commandments forbid praying to, and swearing by, “saints” (Q & A 94,102). It also emphasises, against Rome’s idolatry, the Second Commandment’s prohibition of images: “God forbids to make, or have any resemblance of them, either in order to worship them or to serve God by them”.

*This Edition.* This edition has a tan leather-type cover with a durable binding and a modern, very readable font. It would be beneficial to have a faithful version of the *Heidelberg Catechism* in such an attractive and portable format. Unfortunately, for several reasons we do not regard this edition to be a faithful version.

It is peculiar that on Question 56, it speaks of the righteousness of Christ being *imparted* rather than *imputed*, which is the word commonly used in other English translations. There is a footnote stating that the original German means to give as a free gift. The idea of imparted righteousness is more akin to the way Roman Catholics think about justification.

The editors of this volume have decided to try to update the language and remove all reference to *thee* and *thou*. This has the serious effect of changing the language of the Lord’s Prayer to “you”. On Question 119 it changes the language to “Our Father who are in heaven”; given that this is the plural (as opposed to *is* or *art*), the grammatical problem is overshadowed by a

theological one. The updating of the language is inconsistent and uneven throughout, with some rather less familiar words being retained. It reduces the appeal of this edition for those who would rather have an earlier translation. We think that the *Heidelberg Catechism* is very worthy of our attention but, regrettably, we cannot recommend this particular edition.

---

# A Dying Man's Testament to His Church<sup>1</sup>

## 6. Final Thoughts

*Rev A W MacColl*

In conclusion, we might ask what lessons we can derive from reading the *Treatise on Scandal*. For the sake of brevity, we may point to three areas where Durham's thoughts might be considered of particular interest.

1. What lies at the heart of Durham's book lies at the heart of practical godliness. The proper biblical understanding of giving and taking offence should be a matter of the utmost seriousness to the Christian for it is no less than being stumbled into sin or being a stumbling block to cause others to sin. Durham saw it in this light and so ought we. No doubt the peace and prosperity of individual believers and the Church generally would be greatly enhanced in proportion to our carefulness in this area. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God" (1 Cor 10:31,32).

2. Practical and doctrinal scandals must be dealt with prayerfully and prudently in a way that seeks the glory of Christ and the good of His cause. Both "wholesome severity" and pastoral tenderness are to characterise our dealings in this most trying area of Church life. It would be interesting to know the extent to which Durham's *Treatise* influenced subsequent Presbyterian practice and especially the Form of Process adopted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1707. But this is possibly beyond the scope of historical verification. At the very least we may say that Durham's great care that judicial processes be undertaken in a firm, impartial and careful fashion is worthy of imitation.

3. Church unity. To ascertain how much value Durham's approach to Church unity has in the early twenty-first century is a great question. I would

<sup>1</sup>This is the final section of a Theological Conference paper dealing with James Durham's volume, *A Dying Man's Testament to the Church of Scotland, or, A Treatise Concerning Scandal*. All page references in the text of this article refer to the Naphtali Press edition of the book. The previous article, last month, summarised Durham's views on church union.

suggest that, whatever view we take of Durham's practical steps for reunion, it is a good thing for us to remind ourselves continually of the vision of the Reformers and Covenanters for one national, established, Presbyterian Kirk in Scotland. That is what we are labouring and praying for in our witnessing for the truth in this nation at this time, and that is what we believe the Lord intends to restore to us in His own time.

How ought the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland to seek the furthering of that vision? We might venture to suggest that to lessen, for the sake of mere ecclesiastical unity, our testimony on any point where we differ from other denominations would be sin on our part. If the distinctive elements in the Free Presbyterian witness, especially in the realm of practice, are biblically-based – as we believe they are – then to compromise these elements of our witness would serve only to weaken the Lord's cause in Scotland.

For example, we believe that the law of the Sabbath requires that we abstain from using public transport run in systematic disregard of the Lord's Day, even if used to attend public worship. No other Church in Scotland shares our view of the matter, at least to the extent of withholding church privileges from those who so travel on Sabbath. We cannot, therefore, conscientiously unite with any other Church unless they would be prepared to adopt our position on Sabbath transport, at the very least. It is non-negotiable. Again, the same point applies to the biblical requirements for distinction, in dress and length of hair, between male and female. Sadly, it appears that none of the other Presbyterian denominations appear to be prepared to take a stand on these issues to the extent that unity in practice and discipline would become practicable.

With regard to those other branches of the visible Church in Scotland which are sounder in doctrine and practice than the rest, we still find ourselves unable to join in ecclesiastical communion with them. This is not a matter that gives us any pleasure; on the contrary it is a source of "searchings of heart" for "the divisions of Reuben". We agree with the words of Rev Neil Cameron, that if anyone is not grieved for the divisions of the Church in Scotland, he is not worthy of the name of a Christian.

Yet we fully believe that, without union in government, discipline and practice, no firm foundation can be laid for the Church of Christ in Scotland that we long to see in the future. "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Jesus Christ: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 15:5,6). For all the imperfections of the Free Presbyterian Church as individuals and as a body, we believe that the principles it professes to stand for will yet be vindicated by the Head of the

Church in the day when the watchmen shall see eye to eye. And we can scarcely doubt that if the Presbyterian people of Scotland would prayerfully lay to heart the practical wisdom and the tenderness towards our brethren that *The Treatise on Scandal* exhorts us to seek, the divisions which have marred the face of the Church in this nation would be greatly lessened.

## Sin Strikes at all God's Attributes<sup>1</sup>

*Thomas Boston*

1. Sin is contrary to God's unspotted *holiness*, which is His special glory. Of all the glorious constellations of the divine attributes which shine in the law of God, His holiness has the brightest lustre. God is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works, but the most precious monument of His holiness is the law. It is a true representation of His image and a clear copy of His nature and will. It is the perspicuous rule of our duty, without any blemish or imperfection. See what high praise the Apostle gives it: "The commandment [is] holy, and just, and good" (Rom 7:12). It enjoins nothing but what is absolutely good, without the least mixture of evil. It is a full and complete rule, defective in nothing and superfluous in nothing, but takes in the whole duty of man.

The sum of the law is set down by the Apostle. We are to live *soberly* (Tts 2:12), that is, we are to abstain from everything that may stain the excellency of our rational nature. We are to live *righteously*; this takes to do with the situation where God has placed us in the world to advance His glory. It includes all the duties we owe those to whom we are united by the bonds of nature, of civil society, or of spiritual communion. And we are to live *godly*, which takes in all the internal and external duties which we owe to God, who is the Sovereign of our spirits, whose will must be the rule, and His glory the aim, of all our actions. In short, the law is so framed that its holiness and goodness lay on us an eternal obligation to obey its commands, even apart from the authority of the Lawgiver. Now sin is directly contrary to the infinite sanctity and purity of God; it consists in not doing what the law commands, or in doing what it expressly forbids, and God cannot look on it without infinite detestation (Hab 1:13). He cannot but hate what is opposite to the glory of His nature and to the lustre of all His perfections.

2. Sin vilifies the *wisdom* of God, which prescribed the law to men as the rule of their duty. The divine wisdom shines brightly in His laws. They are all designed to be exactly congruous to God's nature, to His relation to us,

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Boston's *Works*, vol 1.

and to man's faculties before he was corrupted. Thus the divine law is a bright transcript both of God's will and His wisdom; it binds the understanding and will – which are the leading faculties in man – to esteem and approve, to consent to and choose, all His precepts as best.

Now sin vilifies the infinite wisdom of God both as to the precepts of the law, the rule of our duty; and the sanction annexed to it to confirm its obligation. It charges the precepts with being an unequal yoke, as too severe and rigid in restricting our wills and actions. Thus the ungodly rebels complained of old: "The way of the Lord is not equal"; they restrain our liberties and infringe them; they are not worthy of our study and obedience. The rewards and punishments which God has annexed to the law to secure our obedience to its precepts, sin reckons them weak and ineffectual motives to serve that purpose. Thus it considers the wisdom of the Lawgiver to be defective, in not binding His subjects more firmly to their duty.

3. Sin is a high contempt and horrid abuse of the divine *goodness*, which should have a powerful influence in binding man to his duty. God's goodness in creation is hereby despised, which raised us out of the dust of the earth to an excellent and glorious existence. Our parents were indeed instrumental in producing our bodies; but the variety, beauty and usefulness of the various parts, and their union together, were the high design of His wisdom and the excellent work of His hands. Man's body is composed of as many miracles as there are members; it is full of wonders. The living idea and perfect exemplar of it was modelled in the divine mind. This affected David with holy admiration (Ps 139:14-16). The soul, the principal part, has a heavenly original, designed by the Father of lights. The faculties of understanding and choice show indelibly that we have an honour and dignity above the brutes; they make us capable of pleasing our Maker and enjoying Him.

Now, God's purpose in giving us our being was to communicate from His own fulness to intelligent creatures, and to be actively glorified by them (Rev 4:11). No one is so lacking in rational thoughts as not to own that it is our indispensable duty and reasonable service to offer up ourselves as an entire living sacrifice to the glory of God. What is more natural, according to the laws of uncorrupted reason, than that love should correspond to love? As the one comes down with benefits, the other should ascend in praise and thankfulness. Now sin breaks all these sacred bonds of grace and gratitude, which engage us to love and obey our Maker. He is the just Lord of all our faculties of mind and feeling, and the sinner uses them all as weapons of unrighteousness to fight against God.

Again, it is He that upholds and preserves us by the powerful influence of His providence, daily surrounding us with many mercies. All the goodness

which God thus bestows on men, the sinner abuses against Him. This is the most unworthy, shameful and monstrous ingratitude imaginable. This makes forgetful and unthankful men more brutish than the ox or ass, who serve and obey those that feed and keep them. Yes, it sinks them below the non-living part of creation, which invariably observes the law and order prescribed by the Creator. This is astonishing degeneracy. It was the complaint of God Himself: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth . . . I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me" (Is 1:2).

4. The sinner disparages God's *justice*, in promising himself peace and safety, notwithstanding the wrath and vengeance that the Lord denounces against him. The sinner labours to dissolve the inseparable connection that God has placed between sin and punishment, which is not an arbitrary arrangement but founded on what sin deserves and on the infinite rectitude of God's nature, which unchangeably hates it. The sinner sets God's attributes contending, as it were, with one another, presuming that mercy will disarm justice and suspend its power by restraining it from taking vengeance upon impenitent sinners.

Thus sinners become bold and resolute in their impious courses, like the one who said, "I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst" (Dt 29:19). This casts such an aspersion on the justice of God that He solemnly threatens the severest vengeance for it, as you may see in verse 20: "The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and His jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven".

5. Sin strikes against the *omniscience* of God, at least denying it implicitly. There is such depravity adhering to sin that it cannot endure the light of the sun, nor the light of conscience, but seeks to hide under a mask of virtue or a veil of darkness. What is said of the adulterer and the thief is true, in proportion, of every sinner: "If one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death". Hence many, who would blush and tremble if they were surprised in their sinful actings by a child or a stranger, are not at all afraid of the eye of God, though He exactly notices all their sins in order to judge them, and will judge them in order to punish them.

6. Sin bids defiance to God's *power*. This is an attribute of God that makes Him so terrible to devils and wicked men. He has both a right to punish and power enough to revenge every transgression of His law that sinners are guilty of. Now His judicial power is supreme and His power to execute His justice is irresistible. He can with one stroke dispatch the body to the grave and the soul to the pit of hell and make men as miserable as they are sinful.

Yet sinners provoke Him as boldly as if there was no danger. We read of how the infatuated Syrians foolishly thought that God, the protector of Israel, had power only on the hills but not in the valleys. Therefore they renewed the war to their own destruction. Thus proud sinners contend with God and range an army of lusts against the armies of heaven. Being blindly bold, they run on headlong to their own ruin. They neither believe God's all-seeing eye nor fear His almighty hand.

---

## Notes and Comments

### Yoga and Hinduism

An Anglican church in Bristol has recently decided to cancel yoga classes in its church hall. After nine years of leasing out its hall to a yoga practitioner, St Michael and All Angels church has now concluded that "the primary purpose of these buildings is the worship of God as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ". They have come to believe that yoga is "incompatible with the Christian faith" and is linked to "alternative spiritualities". Are they right?

Yoga may appear merely to involve physical exercises. Classes in Hatha yoga (the branch of yoga most common in the West) have mushroomed in halls and gyms across the western world in the last few decades. It claims to reduce stress, emphasising stretching exercises as a means of relaxation, toning muscles and releasing toxins by increasing blood flow; in essence yoga is touted as a fitness solution to the stresses of our manic twenty-first-century lifestyle. There can be little doubt that moderate physical exercise is good for body and mind and, *in that sense*, it can spiritually be a "neutral" activity. Yoga encourages people in the West to accept its physical benefits, while often making no reference to anything spiritual.

However, if we dig a little deeper into yoga's roots we see that the physical aspect is only part of the story. Under the surface lies something dark and sinister. Yoga is religious in its character and is taught within all Hindu sects as a way to earn salvation. They say, "There is no yoga without Hindu and no Hindu without yoga". Indeed they go on: "Divorcing any aspect of yoga from its Hindu roots is dishonest and a grave insult to a great world religion". The word *yoga* comes from a Sanskrit word which means "to yoke or unite with god", found in ancient Hindu texts. (Sanskrit is the classical language of India, used in Hindu rituals.) The stated aim is for the person to unite in spirit with the Hindu god Brahman, claimed to be the ultimate divine reality, considered impersonal and one with nature and the cosmos. This union, it is taught, is a means of redemption from "karma" – the consequences of one's



actions in supposed previous incarnations. The claim is that man and god become essentially one – which is pantheism and self-worship.

So these apparently-innocent stretching exercises are not simply designed to tone the body but are said to help attain spiritual growth and are one part of an eight-stage process on the road to “enlightenment”. The body, it is claimed, is being prepared by physical postures, breathing control and meditation to energise so-called “life forces” or “energy channels”. The mind is “emptied” as one turns inward, seeking “truth” in one’s own consciousness, rather than in the Word of God. For many Hindus, the desire is for a point of stillness in the mind which leads on to a degree of “enlightenment” which brings about “liberation from the cycle of reincarnation”. The *Yoga Journal* states, “Connecting the mind, body, and breath helps us to direct our attention inward. Through this process . . . we learn to recognise our habitual thought patterns without labelling them, judging them, or trying to change them.” This is certainly anti-Christian and leaves the mind open to Satan’s devices.

Hatha yoga claims to provide spiritual balance. “Ha” means *sun* or *right* while “tha” means *moon* or *left*. The sun and the moon and right and left are represented as giving balance to each other, uniting the soul with the divine while releasing energy in the body. Mantras (words or phrases used repeatedly) are claimed to give psycho-spiritual power. One exercise is called “Surya Namaskara”, which means “sun salutation” and consists of greeting and doing homage to Surya, the Hindu sun deity. Some gyms have a time of meditation repeating the word, “Om”, regarded by Hindus as the sound that created the universe, and some may, at the end of a session, repeat the word “Namaste”, which means “I bow to the god within”. These exercises are often dressed up in secular, western terms but the spiritual rituals are deeply symbolic and their aim seems to be to instil false religion into participants.

Tantric yoga, possibly rarer in the West, is at the extreme end of the scale, but still emanates from Hinduism and is alleged to use barbaric practices involving the occult, sorcery, and even human sacrifices and other unspeakable perversions.

Average people in the West, attending a yoga class but ignorant of its background, may not realise that it could have a very dangerous impact on their lives – opening their minds to demonic influences. How we need to look to the Saviour to deliver us from all evil powers, false religions and practices with satanic origins! The myriads enslaved in Hinduism also need Christ to set them free. The church in Bristol was right. Yoga is incompatible with Christianity. The Word of God tells us: “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph 5:11). It also warns: “Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Th 5:22). KHM

### Abortion Vote

In February, the House of Commons voted by 292 to 201 to reject an amendment which would have clarified the law on abortion. MP Fiona Bruce proposed making it explicit that abortion on the grounds of gender (most commonly because the unborn child is female) is illegal. Government parties allowed a free vote while Labour MPs were directed to vote against it.

The Prime Minister was among those who argued that the practice is already illegal; they are probably right, but one questions, especially in the light of this vote, if there is the will on the part of public prosecutors to act. The shadow Home and Health Secretaries have objected to the amendment's use of the phrase "unborn child", claiming that it could have "long-term consequences" which might "undermine the framework of abortion law". They are afraid that anything that would recognise the foetus as a child will endanger the virtually-unrestricted practice of abortion and is therefore to be resisted, even if they might otherwise disapprove of abortion on the grounds of gender. It is amazing the lengths to which people will go to continue the slaughter of millions of unborn children.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal 6:7).

## Church Information

### Rev D J MacDonald

Mr MacDonald passed away on March 8. He was, before retiring, minister of the Dornoch and Bonar Bridge congregation. We extend our sympathy to all the family.

### Kinlochbervie and Scourie Communion

The Communion services due to be held at Kinlochbervie on the second Sabbath of May will be held at Scourie instead, DV, because of work being done at the Kinlochbervie church. (Rev) *N M Ross*, Interim moderator

### General Building Fund

By appointment of Synod, this year's special collection on behalf of the General Building Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during April.

*W Campbell*, General Treasurer

### Acknowledgement of Donations

*Congregational Treasurers* acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

**North Tolsta:** Anon, £40; The late J MacKay, 66 New St, in memory of J MacIver, 41 NT, £100; MacLeod, 59 NT, in memory of J MacIver, 41 NT, £500; Anon, in memory of beloved parents, £20.

**North Uist:** North Uist friend, £200 per Rev DMD.

**Perth:** Anon, Ps 61:5, £1500.

**Portree:** *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10. *TBS:* Anon, £50, £100.

## FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

### Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale: Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, 10 Achary Rd, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nmross2001@yahoo.co.uk.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev N M Ross; tel: 01349 864351.
- Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227.
- Farr** (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.
- Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev Roderick MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Greenock:** 40 East Hamilton Street, Sabbath 2.30 pm.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Thursday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Sabbath 5 pm; **Wick:** Church; **Strathly:** Church; no F P Church services.
- Harris (North): Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm. **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South): Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Sheilebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (as intimated). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh**, **Sheilebost** and **Strond** as intimated. Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Leverburgh, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr A MacRae; tel: 01463 790521.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present. Manse tel: 01571 844484.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist: Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS; tel: 01876 510233.
- Oban:** Church and Manse. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Rev D Campbell; tel: 0131 312 8227.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev I D MacDonald, F P Manse, Achachork, Portree, IV51 9HT; tel: 01478 612110.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 9HY; tel: 01470 562243.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Tain:** Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.
- Vatten:** Sabbath 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). **Glendale, Waternish:** As intimated. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.

### England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Rev K M Watkins, 1 North Street, Barnoldswick, BB18 5PE; tel: 01282 850296.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623.

### Northern Ireland

- Larne:** Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm; Monday 11.00 am. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01282 850296.

### Canada

**Chesley**, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 7 pm; Wednesday 8 pm. Contact: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

**Toronto**, Ontario: Church and Manse. No F P Church services at present.

**Vancouver**, British Columbia: Contact: Mr John MacLeod, 202-815 4th Avenue, New Westminster, V3M 1S8; tel: 604-516-8648.

### USA

**Santa Fe**, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith, 5222 Kendal Glen Court, Rosharon, Texas 77583; tel: 409 927 1564.

### Australia

**Grafton**, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA PhD, 174 Fitzroy Street, Grafton, NSW 2460; tel: (02) 6643 5692.

**Sydney**, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel. (02) 9627 3408; e-mail: sydneyfpchurch@aapt.net.au.

### New Zealand

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

**Gisborne**: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact: Dr G Cramp; tel: 02 7454 2722.

**Tauranga**: Girl Guide Hall, 17th Avenue, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm; Thursday 7 pm. Contact: Mr Dick Vermeulen; tel: 075443677.

**Wellington (Carterton)**: Senior Citizens' Hall, 150 High Street North. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; 3rd Wednesday of the month (not secondary school holidays) 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Hank Optland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743; tel: 02 7432 5625.

### Singapore

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

### Ukraine

**Odessa**: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D Levyskyi; tel:00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevyskyi@gmail.com.

### Zimbabwe

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

**Ingwenya**: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean. Postal Address: Ingwenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo.

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

**New Canaan**: Church.

**Zenka**: Church. Rev M Mloyi. Postal Address: Private Bag T5398, Bulawayo; cell phone: 0026311 765032.

### Free Presbyterian Church Bookroom

133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE Tel: 0141 332 1760

E-mail: fpbookroom@gmail.com Website: www.fpbookroom.org

#### Book Selection

	RRP	Offer
<b>Forty Years in the Wilderness: The Autobiography of . . . John Chandler</b>		
Gospel Standard Trust Publications, 2014, hbk, 288 pp	£12.00	£9.59
<b>Thirza . . . the Work of God's Spirit in a Jewish Family</b>		
David Clemence, 2014, bklt, 32 pp	£1.50	£1.20
<b>A Heart for Africa: The Story of Jean Nicolson – Missionary in Zimbabwe</b>		
by Dolina MacCuish, Free Presbyterian Publications, 2008, hbk, 229 pp	£11.50	£7.49
<b>Holiness</b> by J C Ryle		
Banner of Truth, 2014, hbk, 480 pp	£15.00	£11.99
<b>The Christian in Complete Armour</b> by William Gurnall		
Banner of Truth, 1964, hbk, 1240 pp	£19.50	£15.59

(Postage is extra)

Subscription rates, including postage:

FP Magazine £26.00 (£2.00 per copy) • YP Magazine £15.00 (£1.00 per copy)

Combined £39.00