

CHRISTIAN WATCH

A PROTESTANT BIBLICAL WITNESS

NEWSLETTER

"And what I say unto you
I say unto all, Watch"

APRIL 2009

April 2009

CHRISTIAN WATCH

To all Members of Christian Watch

Dear Friends,

Greetings, in the most sacred and blessed name of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We have recently passed through the time of Easter, at which we profess as Christians to more particularly remember all that the dear Lord endured to atone for the sins of those He died to save from an eternity in hell. How often the question occurs, as in the hymn composed by Isaac Watts,

Was it for crimes that I had done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! Grace unknown!
And love beyond degree.

We are travelling through the passage of time and soon "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" *2Cor.5:10*. A most solemn and serious responsibility is upon all who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, particularly in these degenerate times when public iniquity is constantly on the increase. None can deny that there continues to be a rapid forsaking of the biblical standards upon which our nation - and others who adhered to them - prospered. The Apostle Paul, in referring to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth, says, "for that day shall not come, except there **come** a falling away first" *2Thess.2:3*. How undeniably evident is the falling away in our churches, chapels and the nation. One of our esteemed Members recently wrote to me expressing his concern for our country and said, "*Every day, I pray for a mighty outpouring of God's grace in revival, but I fear it is to be judgment, as this Nation has never seen before*". May the Lord have mercy upon us.

We include an article entitled **Christianity Marginalised Again** taken from information supplied by the organisation, *Christian Concern For Our Nation*. It is good to know that the Archbishop of Canterbury on some occasions is willing to contend for Christianity. The particular incident referred to in this article is the probable appointment by the BBC of a Muslim as head of religious programmes. You are encouraged to write to your MP and the BBC to express your concern and details are provided at the end of the article.

The strategy of the Muslim community does not change. They use every opportunity to progress their aim to achieve national and international domination, which will allow them to impose their Sharia law. We include an article by Ashley Mote MEP entitled, **WE ARE NOT ALONE. ISLAM IS INVADING SWEDEN TOO**. We fear that what is currently taking place in Sweden is a sample of that which will increasingly be experienced in the United Kingdom and other countries which are nominally Christian. It is an indisputable fact that the Muslim community are making positive progress in establishing the universal acceptance of their Islamic religion at the expense of Christianity. This is illustrated in the article *by UN WATCH* entitled, **Proposal at United Nations to criminalize 'defamation of Islam'**. The resolution involved is being circulated by Islamic states and aimed at preventing any opposition to their religion by claiming it to be defamatory. If the United Nations approve this resolution, it will be the target of Muslims living in those countries which are UN members, to achieve national adoption of the same law. How can we remain silent in such solemn circumstances when we witness our religious freedom being threatened?

Another area of much concern is the way in which our children and young people are being indoctrinated and encouraged to become involved in sexual practices. We include a disturbing report, which featured in the Daily Mail, entitled, **GPs to get bonuses for giving teenagers contraceptive implants and jabs without informing parents**. Little wonder that the illegitimate birth rate in the United Kingdom is the highest in Europe. The fact that it is planned to keep parents ignorant of what is being done to their children in itself proves **its illegitimacy**. It is important for the sake of the dear children and young people that we ask them to inform their parents of any such proposals at their schools.

In parallel with the foregoing we include an article entitled, **Turning our Schools into Abortion Referral Centres** *by John Smeaton, National director of The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children*. The statistics and other information contained in this document reveal the horrifying situation that presently exists in our schools. Mr. Smeaton has included a follow up section under the heading **A Christian Response** in which he emphasises the duty and responsibility of parents to ensure **that** they are aware of what their children are being taught.

The current devaluing of the Reformation, which began in the fourteenth century in England, is illustrated in an article entitled, **Statue to Commemorate Destruction of the Shrines** by *Simon Caldwell*. The statue to be erected outside the entrance of the Church of Our Lady of Willesden, north London, is supposed to portray Mary and the child Jesus. It is claimed to be erected in commemoration of the Marian shrines which were destroyed during the Reformation. What would John Wickliffe, Martin Luther, Thomas Cranmer and many others say, if they were to witness what is taking place - particularly the lack of opposition by professing Protestant Christians.

Because of our concern about the state of our Nation and the inevitable consequences if we continue as at present, we have arranged a meeting to be held, God willing, in the House of Lords on Wednesday evening 13 May. Details of this meeting are included under the title, **CHRISTIAN WATCH MEETING IN PARLIAMENT**. We earnestly request your prayerful support.

Previously we referred to the organisation **Christian Concern for our Nation**. We recently had a meeting with Mrs. Andrea Williams, who is Director of CCFON to discuss possible areas of cooperation. Because of the importance of the legal work carried out by CCFON, we were particularly concerned to learn how the ever increasing requests for their assistance, by Christians experiencing employment and other difficulties, is now exceeding their ability to cope within the parameters of their present financial resources. Consequently, we consider it important to bring this matter to your attention in the article entitled, **About the organisation CHRISTIAN CONCERN FOR OUR NATION**.

Finally, we include an article entitled, **JOSEPH – The Goodness of God and The Triumph of Faith** by Dr. Alan C. Clifford. We trust you will find it spiritually profitable as it exercises the mind in those matters which relate to our own personal souls experience.

We wish you the Lord's blessing.

Yours in His service,



David Crowter

Management Committee

Mr D Boyd; Mr M Brockes (Hon Treasurer/ Co Secretary); Mr A Busk; Mr D Crowter(Chairman);
Mr I Henderson; Mr R Jupp; Mr D Lawson; Mr M de Semlyen; Mrs J Cummins (Secretary).

Christianity Marginalised Again

The Archbishop of Canterbury has challenged the Director General of the BBC not to turn his back on Christianity. In a private meeting at Lambeth Palace Dr Rowan Williams confronted Mark Thompson, BBC Director General, about the decline in religious programming on the BBC World Service. Talks follow a reorganisation of managements posts within the corporation that look set to replace former head of religious programmes, Methodist preacher Michael Wakelin, with Aaqil Ahmed, a Muslim who is commissioning editor for religion at Channel 4.

Michael Wakelin, 47, is the fourth out of seven executives in the corporation's religion department to be made redundant in the past year. He produced *Songs of Praise* for five years subsequent to his appointment as Head of Religion and Ethics at the BBC in August 2006. He is also responsible for establishing Radio 2's *Faith in the World* week, which is now in its 17th year.

Ahmed is the favourite to succeed Wakelin in the renamed job of Commissioning Editor, Religion and Head of Religion and Ethics. Ahmed has campaigned in favour of a greater Muslim presence in the media, as well as being a trustee of the Runnymede Trust, a pressure group that fights for multiculturalism.

Senior members of the Church of England have voiced concerns that the BBC is downgrading its religious output to give preferential treatment to minority religions. Indeed, Mark Thompson caused outrage last year by **advocating a more sensitive approach to Islam over Christianity**. This attitude, along with the recent appointment of a Sikh, Tommy Nagra, to produce *Songs of Praise*, has raised alarm within the Church that the Christian voice is being muted. Tommy Nagra is also said to be a candidate for the post. The Times reports that last year Mark Thompson said that Christianity should be central to the BBC's religion coverage.

As a public broadcaster, the BBC is required to provide religious programmes. Since 2001, however, the programming on the BBC World Service has been reduced from 1 hr 45 mins to a mere 30 mins in 2009. Williams has declared that this is a significant loss. In all the censuses a very large proportion of the British population identifies itself as Christian. Under new management, nevertheless, the future of religious broadcasting is threatened.

The Churches' Media Council, an umbrella organisation, states that it is concerned that no senior member of the religious programming department has an academic qualification in religion. The BBC disputes this. The Churches' Media Council believes that Christians are now significantly under-represented at the BBC.

Christina Rees, a member of the Church of England's executive body, the Archbishops' Council, said, "The established Church has a special role in the country. We actually remit for everyone in the whole country. The BBC is a public service corporation. Licence payers fund it and part of the broadcaster's duty is to represent the population. If it ignored Christians and the church it would be negligent."

Please pray that the Church continues to use its media influence wisely. Pray for the Rt Rev Graham James, the Bishop of Norwich, who will be meeting senior BBC and Church figures next month to discuss faith issues. Christians are now significantly under-represented at the corporation and there is an increasing tendency for bias in favour of Islam and minority faiths that could shake the bedrock of our country's core values. Media outlets, particularly corporations such as the BBC, hold a powerful influence over national values.

Please write or e-mail to your MP and the BBC in this pressing issue which could include some of the following points in your own words:

- I am concerned that a Muslim or Sikh may soon be appointed as head of religious programming at the BBC.

- The BBC should not marginalize Christianity, the BBC has a duty to uphold and serve the public interest, particularly the interest of licence payers, many of who hold Christian beliefs. The BBC should not make such an unrepresentative appointment.
- I strongly object to the appointment of a person who does not belong to the Christian faith, as such an appointment would be un-representative of the beliefs of the majority of licence holders.
- As at least 70% of the population consider themselves to be Christian (according to the last census) it would seem logical to appoint a Christian to the role. Presumably the proportion of Christians who own a TV Licence is also around the 70% mark.
- How can a non-Christian accurately reflect the Christian faith to a BBC audience? Surely the nature of the role requires the holder of such a position to be a practising Christian.
- Appointing a Muslim to head religious programming for a still largely- Christian country ignores the public responsibility of the BBC. Already Channel 4 programmes show an Islam influence. Are we now to expect the same from the BBC.

With Acknowledgements to ccfon (Christian Concern for our Nation)

C W Note: We would strongly urge our readers to write to both your local MP and to the BBC expressing your dissatisfaction to such an appointment and the marginalisation of Christian broadcasting within the BBC.

The address for the BBC is:

BBC Complaints, PO Box 1922, Glasgow. G2 3WT.

BBC e-mail address: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/complaints>.

Send your letter addressed to your local MP by name to:

The House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA.

WE ARE NOT ALONE

ISLAM IS INVADING SWEDEN TOO

By Ashley Mote, MEP – Independent – South East England

Muslim disturbances are becoming the norm in ‘peaceful’ Sweden. Malmö, one of the largest and most stylish cities in the south of the country, now has the highest percentage of resident Muslims anywhere in Sweden. And trouble is now commonplace.

Recently, a Swedish sports fan posted the following comments after violence at a tennis tournament between Sweden and Israel, held in Malmö: “Gentlemen, your lovely and peaceful country is overtaken by savage barbarians tragically aided by hallucinating radical left wingers at their side. Sports should never mix with politics, certainly not with violence.”

“When will you realize that your liberty and way of life are threatened by those to whom you, foolishly, gave asylum? If you do not react your life will be hell on earth – nothing less. You are not masters in your own home country! Your surrender to the hordes is not a badge of honour.”

The trouble started when some five thousand Muslims, aided and abetted by left-wingers, demonstrated against the tournament. Several hundred tried to attack the police outside the venue and break through the police barricades. Some of the militants tried to climb onto police vehicles and trash the blue lights. Others climbed lamp posts to smash or remove the bulbs. Yet others, masked and dressed in black, shot fireworks and threw paint on buildings and people.

Another posting on the web afterwards came from a man admitting, “I am ashamed to be a Swede. The demonstration against the tennis match between Israel and Sweden wasn’t about tennis, of course, it was about hating everything Israel is, lying through their teeth about what Israel has and hasn’t done, and advocating support for Hamas.”

“Left wingers and Muslims side by side once again. One Arab group started chanting slogans in Arabic, calling for the return of Mohammed. The Swedish police did what they usually do – nothing. The police have their hands tied by the politicians and, in turn, the politicians are left-wing, pro-Arab, anti-Israel, all of which makes this mess what it is.”

No wonder even the so-called ‘Moderate Party’ in Sweden is now demanding a knowledge of the Swedish language before migrants are granted citizenship, and the right of the state to withdraw citizenship from those who gained it on a false premise, for example by bribery, threats or false identity.

The party wants the state to contract with newly arrived migrants, any breach of which would jeopardise their right to benefits. And if migrants chose to live in areas classed as “over established”, all rights to benefits would be forfeited. Those foreign citizens convicted for serious crimes would be automatically deported.

The party also wants the Swedish authorities to invalidate passports that have been reported as lost. They claim some 200,000 Swedish passports are “adrift in the world”, many of them being traded as commodities.

Swedish politicians from the left have been quick to respond to this initiative and, unsurprisingly, offered heavy criticism.

Kalle Larsson, the Socialist spokesman on immigration policy in Sweden, described such a policy programme as “more xenophobic rhetoric” in an interview with the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*. The Greens, Social Democrats, and the governing Alliance party were all equally critical. Only the Liberals saw some merit in what was being proposed, but still had doubts, while the Christian Democrats claimed the Moderate Party had pinched their policy on citizenship.

Meanwhile, the dilution of Swedish identity in Malmo and elsewhere goes on unchecked, disturbances continue based on the slightest pretext, and the Swedish government continues to abide by EU immigration controls – or the total lack of them.

Proposal at United Nations to criminalize ‘defamation of Islam’

Geneva, March 2009

A new UN resolution circulated by Islamic states would define any questioning of Islamic dogma as a human rights violation, intimidate dissenting voices, and encourage the forced imposition of Sharia law.

UN Watch obtained a copy of the Pakistani-authored proposal after it was distributed among Geneva diplomats attending the current session of the UN Human Rights Council. Entitled “Combating defamation of religions”, it mentions only Islam.

While non-binding, the resolution constitutes a dangerous threat to free speech everywhere. It would ban any perceived offence to Islamic sensitivities as a “serious affront to human dignity” and a violation of religious freedom, and would pressure UN member States – at the “local, national, regional and international levels” – to erode free speech guarantees in their “legal and constitutional systems”.

It’s an Orwellian text that distorts the meaning of human rights, free speech, and religious freedom, and marks a giant step backwards for liberty and democracy worldwide.

The first to suffer will be moderate Muslims in the countries that are behind this resolution, like Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Pakistan, who seek international legitimacy for state-sanctioned blasphemy laws that stifle religious freedom and outlaw conversions from Islam to other faiths.

Next to suffer from this UN-sanctioned McCarthyism will be writers and journalists in the democratic West, with the resolution targeting the media for the “deliberate stereotyping of religions, their adherents and sacred persons”.

Ultimately, it is the very notion of individual human rights at stake, because the sponsors of this resolution seek not to protect individuals from harm, but rather to shield a specific set of beliefs from any question, debate, or critical inquiry.

The resolution’s core premise – that “defamation of religion” exists as a legal concept – is a distortion. The law on defamation protects the reputations of individuals, not beliefs. It also requires an examination of the truth or falsity of the challenged remarks – a determination that no one, especially not the UN, is capable of undertaking concerning any religion.

Tragically, given that Islamic states completely dominate the Human Rights Council, with the support of non-democratic members like Russia, China, and Cuba, adoption of the regressive resolution is a forgone conclusion. EU diplomats hope at best to win over a handful of wavering Latin American states to the dissenting side.

By *UN WATCH* - *Monitoring the United Nations and Promoting Human Rights*

JOHN HARPER of the TITANIC

John Harper, born in May 1872, at Houston (west of Glasgow) was led to know the Lord at the age of 13yrs 10 months. He began preaching the gospel at the early age of 18, it was said of him that every street corner was his pulpit. His ministry was wonderfully blessed and used, to the conversion of souls. The Word of God was his doctrine, and was not bound to any particular creed save Calvinism. It is recorded that he would often spend whole nights in prayer, his prayers were very special having nearness and access to God. During his relatively short life he was Pastor to a Baptist church at Govan (500 members) and then was led to Walworth Road Church, London (900 people). There came an invitation to preach in the Moody Church in Chicago, this he did with much profit. A few months later he received another invitation and thus it was that he was on the so-called unsinkable ship the TITANIC. It was on the night of April 14th 1912 that the Titanic hit the iceberg that caused the ship to sink resulting in the loss of 1522 lives (712 were saved). As the dark, freezing waters of the Atlantic crept slowly up the decks of the Titanic, John Harper shouted, "Let the women, children and the unsaved into the lifeboats". Harper took his life jacket- the final hope of survival - and gave it to another man, pleading with the man to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved". After the ship had disappeared beneath the dark waters, he was heard urging those about him to put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus died the Titanic's last hero.

GPs to get bonuses for giving teenagers contraceptive implants and jabs without informing parents

(Daily Mail 13 February 2009)

By Daniel Martin and Laura Clark

GPs will be paid bonuses for persuading teenagers to have long-lasting contraceptive implants and jabs without their parents' knowledge, it has emerged.

From next year, doctors are to receive the payments for encouraging young women to use long-acting methods of contraception rather than taking the Pill each day.

They will be pressed to tell those prescribed the morning-after pill that an injection or coil would be better to prevent pregnancies.

'Bribes': GPs will be paid bonuses for getting teenagers to use long-lasting contraception via implants and jabs

Ministers say the move is necessary as many teenagers fail to take the Pill regularly and do not use condoms properly.

But campaigners condemned the payments as bribes. They warned that the measures would lead to thousands of underage girls being given contraception without the knowledge of their parents.

They said the contraceptives would encourage promiscuity and fuel the rise in sexually-transmitted infections.

The plans were revealed by Health Secretary Alan Johnson and Schools Secretary Ed Balls as part of a strategy on the young.

Ministers believe traditional contraceptive methods have had little impact on the teenage pregnancy rate, which remains the highest in Western Europe.

Instead, they want teenage girls to use contraceptive jabs and implants or intra-uterine coils, which can last between three months and five years.

Ministers say those aged 16 to 24 accounts for nearly of all diagnosed sexually-transmitted infections, despite making up just 12 per cent of the population.

The document said: 'We have evidence that young people have very limited knowledge of contraceptive methods – particularly the safe and very effective, long-acting, reversible methods of contraception (LARC) – to prevent repeat abortions or births.'

Some £27million a year will be invested to improve access to contraception. Identified priorities for this funding include teenage pregnancy 'hotspot areas'.

"We have made clear that this funding should be used to ensure that all young people have easy access to high quality contraception advice, including LARC, and to improve training of health professionals in providing contraception. From 2009-10 onwards, GPs will be given greater incentives, through the *Quality and Outcomes Framework*, to provide advice on sexual health – specifically advice on contraception, particularly long-acting methods."

GPs receive about a third of their salary, which is performance-related, through this framework. From next April, they will be paid every time they give a teenager advice on sexual health, particularly on long-acting contraception.

Doctors will be given the money if they achieve three indicators. Each point is worth about £124 for the practice.

They receive four points for producing a register of women prescribed contraception at least once in the last year. Another six are awarded if 90 per cent of those who have taken the morning-after pill, or are on the Pill, are given advice on long-acting contraceptive methods.

Under guidance from the General Medical Council, GPs are allowed to give such advice to young girls without the knowledge of their parents.

They are likely also to be able to give under-age girls the injections without consent from parents, as they can the Pill.

Norman Wells, of the charity *Family and Youth Concern*, said: "Parents of girls under 16 will be alarmed to think that doctors are going to be given financial incentives to provide their daughters with contraception behind their backs".

"It is tantamount to bribing doctors to facilitate underage sex. The more the Government has invested in schemes to promote contraception among teenagers, the more young people have become sexually active and the higher rates of sexually-transmitted infection have risen."

There are also concerns about the side-effects of long-term contraception. Possible side-effects of the implant include irregular periods, acne, weight gain, headaches and abdominal pain. Some have excessive bleeding.

Some coils can make periods very heavy and carry a risk of infection. Concerns have been raised that the contraceptive injection can lead to brittle bones.

Jackie Fletcher, of the anti-vaccine group *Jabs*, said: "Giving a doctor a monetary gain to promote a product is abhorrent, especially if it is a vaccine with possible side-effects.

'I am also concerned that girls will have this jab, continue to have sex and then pick up a sexually-transmitted disease."

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Turning our Schools into Abortion Referral Centres

*By John Smeaton, National Director,
The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children
(SPUC)*

In Britain we now kill over 200,000 unborn children every year by abortion. Many of these abortions, about one in ten, are carried out on girls who are under the age of 18; still minors in law. In 2007 the abortion rate for girls under the age of 18 was 19.8 per thousand (the highest rate ever), and for girls aged 13 to 15 it was 4.4 per thousand. What is more, it is government policies that are fuelling these tragic statistics, and our schools are being used to promote abortion among vulnerable teenagers.

This is happening in a number of ways. Firstly, there is sex education. In October last year it was announced that sex education was to be made a compulsory part of the curriculum in all primary and secondary schools, with no opt-out available. Already in many schools sex education lessons include information about where to obtain an abortion, and this is set to become normal policy. In its annual report last year, the Teenage Pregnancy Unit (part of the Department for Children, Schools and Families) called for sex and relationships education to make explicit links to 'sexual health services' (i.e. abortion and contraceptive services) and to teach young people how to access those services.

Secondly, there is the government's remit to school nurses and advisers to refer girls for abortions. The Department of Health's guidance to school nurses and others explicitly warns that such referrals should be kept secret from parents, even when the child concerned is under sixteen. Many schools use personal advisers from 'Connexions', the government's principal young people's advisory service, which promotes helplines and organisations that provide contraception and abortion to children under the age of sixteen. Again, they will not pass information to parents (or teachers) in these circumstances.

Then there is the move to establish a sexual health clinic in every secondary school and sixth form college in the country. Already about a third of secondary schools in England have these, and the Sex Education Forum is pressing government ministers for 100% coverage. Recent research has shown that increases in teenage pregnancies have been higher where there is greater access to such contraceptive services. The provision of these services makes sexual intercourse among teenagers more likely, and pregnancy and abortion rates rise accordingly.

In all of this, we must bear in mind that the official statistics, terrible though they are, only deal with recorded abortions. To these must be added the countless unborn children whose lives have been destroyed by contraceptives that can also act as early abortifacients, preventing the newly-conceived embryo from implanting in the womb. The 'morning-after pill' is one such contraceptive.

A Christian response

We must surely be appalled at what is happening. Children are a gift from God, and parents are therefore responsible before Him for the protection and nurture of those He has given into their care. We should be thankful that the State has for many years given assistance in this, not least with the provision of free schooling to help with the responsibilities of educating our children. There is, of course, a legal obligation on parents to ensure that their children are educated, and in practice the great majority meet this obligation by sending their children to school, in most cases a state school. This places great power into the hands of those who control the education system.

It is deplorable, then, when this power is used to subject our children to the vilest and most pernicious influences. They can be exposed to extremely explicit material, sometimes at a very young age (SPUC gives some examples in its Open Letter to Concerned Parents); all too often there will be

no recognition of the unique and exclusive context for sexual intimacy that God has ordained in marriage. As the sexual health industry asserts its presence within schools, and its thinking pervades the curriculum, our children suffer the consequences.

Parents, then, have a primary duty to enquire what is happening in their children's school and to do all that they can to ensure that it is wholesome. SPUC has produced a leaflet to help parents with this, as part of their Safe at School campaign.

School governors, who are responsible for their school's overall policy and direction in these matters, should resist the anti-life agenda by, for example, opposing the introduction of a Connexions office or personal adviser into the school. Members of staff ought to take a principled stand against participation in teaching that devalues human life or in assisting pupils in accessing abortions, even if this means putting their jobs at risk.

Whatever our involvement in schools, we can use the influence we have to seek respect for human life and to speak out against the promotion of abortion, especially to young people. At present there is a petition to the Prime Minister against the promotion of secret abortions in schools, and circulating the forms for this (SPUC can supply them) is one very direct way of doing this.

Most of all, we should be earnest in prayer that God, in His mercy, may stem the advance of anti-life forces in our schools, and give His protection to our children.

Each time a girl under 16 is sent for an abortion without telling her parents, she is left to cope with the physical and emotional consequences without their support. Her young life is scarred forever, and her defenceless baby is killed.

Further information on The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children can be obtained from the Society at:

*3 Whiteacre Mews, Stannary Street,
London SE11 4AB*

Tel: 020 7091 7091 Email: information@spuc.org.uk

Web: www.spuc.org.uk

STATUE TO COMMEMORATE DESTRUCTION OF SHRINES

By Simon Caldwell

One of Britain's leading sculptors is to erect a statue of Our Lady and the Child Jesus on the site of London's medieval Marian shrine.

Paul Day will spend a year creating the work, called Mary Most Holy, outside the front entrance of the Church of Our Lady of Willesden, north London. It will commemorate the Marian shrines destroyed during the Reformation.

The sculpture was originally intended to stand on land alongside the River Thames at Chelsea where King Henry VIII ordered the statues taken from 64 Marian shrines to be burned on huge bonfires in 1538.

But Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council denied planning permission at the last minute, forcing the Art and Reconciliation Trust, the charity that commissioned the work, to look elsewhere.

Brent Borough Council has now formally approved the plans.

"As we couldn't have Chelsea the next obvious place was at Willesden," said Frances Scarr, chairwoman of the trust, which was set up to promote awareness of the negative effects iconoclasm can have on culture. "It is a medieval shrine dating back to 939," she said. "It is one of the original shrines. It was the only shrine to Our Lady in London at that time. It even pre-dates Walsingham".

"We now all agree actually that where it is going is more appropriate and will also foster a great deal more prayer. If it had been at Chelsea it would have been in a garden with a lot of other statues but now it is outside a church and a very active church at that."

She said that she was seeking £500,000 in donations to help to pay for the work. "If all goes to plan Paul Day will start on the memorial this September," she said.

"It will take about a year. When we get started I will be able to think of a date and I would like it to be on a feast of Our Lady. It is too early to start thinking about that yet."

Previous works by Mr Day includes a memorial of the Battle of Britain on [the Victoria](#) Embankment, Westminster, and the Meeting Place at St Pancras Station, London. His latest work was a statue of the Queen Mother unveiled in February on the Mall outside Buckingham Palace.

The proposed statue of the Virgin and Child will be a bronze triptych on a granite plinth. A "beautiful" Virgin Mary holds up the Child Jesus against the backdrop of ruins and two side panels show reformers beheading and smashing up the statues of saints and destroying a crucifix.

When he first unveiled a model of the statue Mr Day explained that the "ruined setting evokes rather than represents the dissolved monasteries of England."

Devotion to Our Lady at Willesden can be traced back to the late Anglo-Saxon period. Willesden means "spring at the foot of the hill" and there was a well with supposedly miraculous properties.

The well and the Marian shrine that grew around it were connected to the Church of St Mary that was mentioned in a 10th-century royal charter. By 1249 there were two statues at the shrine, one of which was a Black Madonna encrusted with gold, silver and precious jewels.

During the medieval period pilgrims travelled in their thousands to pray at the shrine. St Thomas More was a regular visitor and made a pilgrimage just months before he was arrested for refusing to take an oath attached to the Act of Succession.

Willesden became an active shrine in the late 19th century following the establishment of a Catholic mission at nearby Harlesden. A replica Black Madonna was made and blessed by Cardinal Herbert Vaughan in 1892. The Romanesque – now Grade II-listed – church was opened in 1931.

When Pope Pius XII declared in the “Marian Year” of 1954 that every diocese should have a Marian shrine, Willesden was chosen as the centre of Marian devotion for the Archdiocese of Westminster.

For most Catholic Londoners the Marian Year culminated in a Mass at Wembley Stadium in which 94,000 people saw Cardinal Bernard Griffin crown the Black Madonna.

A total of 60,000 pilgrims visited the Willesden shrine that year.

In 1958 the shrine would also be visited by St Josemaria Escriva who reconsecrated his organisation, Opus Dei, to the Virgin Mary at the church on the August 15 Feast of the Assumption in 1958.

Acknowledgment to The Catholic Herald

Footnote by Christian Watch

How sad and solemn it is that our nation is permitted to erect such shrines in veneration of Mary the mother of Jesus, who was a sinner just like us and dependent upon the all prevailing mercy of our Lord to save her soul from everlasting ruin.

CHRISTIAN WATCH

MEETING IN PARLIAMENT

In view of our concern over so many issues being instigated by our Government in recent years, Christian Watch called a meeting last year and invited all Protestant organisations to attend. As a result of the discussions that took place, a decision was made to attempt to arrange a meeting in Parliament, at which the concerns expressed could be addressed.

We are pleased to advise that we have now arranged a meeting to be held, God willing, on

Wednesday, 13 May, at 7pm,
in
The Moses Room at the House of Lords

An address will be given by

Mr. Bob Graham, *Bsc(Soc) LLB MA MBA*
(A Christian Watch Member)

**“Why Parliament needs the
Christian Faith”**

All Members of the House of Lords and Commons have received a personal invitation.

If any CW Member wishes to attend this meeting – there are a limited number of places available – please apply to:

Christian Watch (Resources)
PO Box 3268, Leamington Spa, CV32 6YA
Email: jean@christianwatch.net

About the organisation

CHRISTIAN CONCERN FOR OUR NATION (CCFON)

Christian Concern for our Nation is an organisation that exists to serve the Church by providing information to enable Christians to stand up publicly against a tide of unchristian legal and political changes in the United Kingdom. It brings together focused legal, policy and media expertise and strategic intervention in order to secure favourable legal and political outcomes in areas of concern. In addition, the organisation acts as a rallying point for those concerned with these issues and a place where individual members of the public and organisations are able to seek assistance and advice.

CCFON was established to inform and empower Christians to speak with a coherent and cohesive voice against ungodly and unjust laws, and to speak up for righteousness and justice. This is for the benefit of the nation.

CCFON draws on the skills and expertise of lawyers, but is dependent on the support of thousands of Christians in churches across the UK who want to see the nation turn back to God.

The desire of CCFON is to enlarge their network and see Christians act and respond together in unity so that the Christian voice, rooted in prayer and the Word of God, will influence the political and legal landscape in this nation.

The demand for their help and services constantly outstrips their ability to respond to such needs. When they deal with a major topical issue, they receive anything up to 150 e-mails a day requesting guidance on how to lobby effectively, asking for speakers to address churches, or wanting to clarify how the law will affect Christians in a given scenario. Trying to respond to these e-mails, as well as accurately analyse the law, provide politicians with constructive legal briefings, and run an effective media campaign, is often beyond their current team. They want to expand to meet this demand.

In order to continue and develop their work they are in need of additional funding.

If you are interested in making a donation, please call Andrea Williams on 07712 591164 or e-mail andrea@ccfon.org.

JOSEPH

The Goodness of God and The Triumph of Faith (Genesis 49: 1-33)

Introduction

Before he died, Jacob gathered his sons together to bless them (*vs. 1-2, 28*). As a prophet of God, he pronounced a verdict on their characters and declared something of their future in the land of Canaan. Reuben, Simeon and Levi received just judgments for their moral weaknesses and personal failure (*vs. 3-7*). However, Judah is highly praised for strength and integrity of character (*vs. 8-12*), Jacob prophesying that Christ would descend from him (see *Heb. 7:14*). While little of significance is said of Zebulun (*v. 13*), Issachar (*v. 14-15*), Gad (*v. 19*), Asher (*v. 20*), Naphtali (*v. 21*) and Benjamin (*v.27*), Dan clearly had a strong faith in God (*vs. 16-18*). Even more outstanding is Jacob's colourful commendation of Joseph, rich in prophecy and Messianic significance (*vs. 22-26*). Indeed, in a series of vivid allusions, Joseph is seen as a type of Christ.

1. CHRIST THE VINE

Jacob describes Joseph as 'a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough [or vine] by a well (or fountain); whose branches run over the wall' (*v. 22*). This clearly describes the great success and prosperity attained by Joseph in Egypt. During the famine, his wise and fruitful administration secured the well-being of the entire population. Indeed, he was the sole source of their survival. In like manner, our Lord Jesus Christ described Himself as 'the vine', true believers being the living branches (see *Jn. 15: 1-8*). As the people depended on Joseph, so Christ is the sole source of spiritual life: 'without me ye can do nothing' (*Jn. 15:5*). Thus our salvation is all of God's grace. Disciples or true believers are fruitful in godly character and service (see *Eph. 2: 8-10*).

2. CHRIST CRUCIFIED

Describing all his earlier sufferings, Jacob says of Joseph: 'The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him' (*v. 23*). Thus Joseph was 'pierced' and 'wounded' by the hatred, jealousies and cruelties of his brothers and others. So he was humiliated before he was exalted. The parallel with our Saviour's sufferings is too obvious to miss. He was 'wounded for our transgressions' (*Isa. 53:5*). David prophesied of the crucifixion in similar terms (see *Ps. 22:7-8, 16, 21*). Of course, while neither Joseph nor Jesus were *literally* pierced by arrows, the Lord Jesus Christ who 'endured such contradiction of sinners against himself' (*Heb. 12:3*) was *actually* pierced by the crown of thorns and with nails in His hands and feet. Even then, his spiritual agonies were greater than his physical ones when, His sacred soul bearing the guilt of our sins, God the Father punished His dear Son for our sakes (see *Isa. 53:4-6; Mk. 15:34; 1 Pet. 3:18*).

3. CHRIST TRIUMPHANT

Despite Joseph's humiliation, Jacob states: 'But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob...' (*v. 24*). In short, since 'the Lord was with Joseph' (*Gen. 39:21, 23*), he did not collapse under the weight of his troubles. All-sufficient grace triumphed over vulnerable nature. As with Joseph, so with Jesus. Indeed, contrary to His crucifixion experience, God the Father did *not* forsake His beloved Son (see *Ps. 22:24*). The arms stretched out in weakness on the cross were the mighty arms of Divine compassion for a lost world. As surely as Joseph was lifted from the depths to be Lord of Egypt, so the Saviour of the world rose in power as the resurrected Lord of glory!

4. CHRIST THE REDEEMER

While Joseph is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, we must remember that in reality Christ was among God's people in Old Testament times. He was 'the Angel of the Covenant' (see *Gen. 48:16; Exod. 23:20-23*). In saying that his God upheld Joseph in all his trials, Jacob also says that from 'God's hands' would come and 'from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel' (v. 24). 'Under this type, the image of Christ is depicted to us, who, before he should come forth as the conqueror of death and the author of life, was set as a mark of contradiction (*Heb. 12:3; Lk. 2:34*), against whom all cast their [arrows]' (*John Calvin*). The 'Shepherd of Israel' (*Ps. 23:1*) is 'the Good Shepherd' of the New Testament (see *Jn. 10*)! The Apostle Paul says that the 'Rock of Israel' was our Lord Jesus Christ (*1 Cor. 10:4*)! Thus Jesus was Israel's guide and sure support. He was Immanuel – 'God with us' (*Matt. 1:23*) – even prior to His incarnation. In all His dealings with Israel, God always revealed Himself through the pre-incarnate Redeemer. In short, Jesus existed before Bethlehem. He was from all eternity the only-begotten Son of the Father. When He became man, He did not cease to be Who He always was. Thus Joseph is like Jesus because it was Jesus who made Joseph what he was!

5. CHRIST ALL-SUFFICIENT

Jacob now says that 'the Almighty' (Hb. *El Shaddai* = God All-sufficient) would bestow three blessings on Joseph (v. 25). Through God's favour upon him, he would be a channel of all-sufficient blessing to Israel in Egypt, blessings which would grow in future abundance in the land of Canaan. *First*, 'the blessings of heaven above' would be fine weather and adequate rainfall for the famine, and later in Israel – good crop-growing conditions. *Second*, 'the blessings of the deep that lieth under' indicate mineral riches to be later found in Israel. *Third*, 'the blessings of the breasts and of the womb' prophesy the unusual population growth of the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, Joseph's two sons (see *Josh. 17:14*).

In these three respects, Joseph is a vivid type of Christ. 'God in Christ' (*2 Cor. 5:19*) is an all-sufficient Saviour. *First*, as the King of the Church, Christ pours out the Holy Spirit upon His people in every generation (see *Jn. 14:16-18; 26-7*). The rainfall of spiritual blessing provides life, strength, comfort, peace and joy during our pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world. *Second*, as Prophet of the Church, Christ instructs and enriches us with the truth of the Word of God. 'In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily...in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge' (*Col. 2: 9, 3*). Thus we may mine in the Scriptures and gain spiritual wealth from 'the riches of His grace' in the Gospel. *Third*, as Priest of the Church, Christ by His sacrifice and death has brought dead sinners eternal life and salvation. As surely as the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim would grow prolifically, so the Church in all ages and places would become 'a great multitude which no man could number' (*Rev. 7:9*). Just as through Joseph, the blessings enjoyed by Jacob and Israel exceeded those of his ancestors, Abraham and Isaac, they would be eternal as well as abundant, even 'unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills' (v. 26). This prophecy points beyond the promised land to the coming of Christ and his kingdom. Even more wonderfully, the sacrifice of Christ has brought about abundant and eternal life to both Jews and Gentiles (see *Jn. 3:16; 6:51; 10:10*).

6. CHRIST PRE-EMINENT

Lastly, Jacob uses royal language to describe the pre-eminence of Joseph 'who was separate from his brethren' (v. 26). How perfectly this depicts our Lord Jesus Christ (see *Heb. 7:26; Col. 1:18*). His pre-eminence in grace and power reminds us that His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom (see *Isa 9:6-7; Rev. 19:6*). May we trust only in Him and glory only in Him, commending Him to a lost and desperately-needy world!

7. CHRIST OUR FUTURE

When the Bible includes 'rebukes' among the 'blessings' (v. 28) there is a vital lesson here for us (see *Rom. 8:28*), as Matthew Henry reminds us:

"Whatever rebukes of God's Word or providence we are under at any time, yet as long as we have an interest in God's covenant, a place and a name among His people, and good hopes of a share in the heavenly Canaan, we must account ourselves blessed."

Before his death, Jacob was careful to confirm his funeral arrangements (vs. 29-32). As for Jacob's death, when he 'gathered up his feet into the bed' (v. 33) is, as Calvin rightly says, '*not superfluous*' since Moses wished to describe the peaceful passing of 'the holy man'. What a difference does the Judeo-Christian view of death make! Calvin adds:

"It is the effect of a good conscience, to be able to depart out of the world without terror...Moreover, in order that a good conscience may lead us peacefully and quietly to the grave, it is necessary to rely upon the resurrection of Christ; for we then go willingly to God, when we have confidence respecting a better life. We shall not deem it grievous to leave this failing tabernacle, when we reflect on the everlasting abode which is prepared for us."

May we enter glory in this peace!

Dr. Alan C. Clifford – Norwich Reformed Church

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