

CHRISTIAN WATCH

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'And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.'

Mark 13:37

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DATE FOR YOUR DIARY:

4 & 5 March, 2020

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HE FAILETH NOT

“Their heart failed them” (Gen. 42:28)

“Mine eyes fail” (Psa. 69:3)

“The money faileth” (Gen. 47:15)

“The waters failed” (Josh. 3:16)

“My flesh faileth” (Psa. 109:24)

“They all shall fail together” (Isa. 31:3)

“HE FAILETH NOT” (Zeph. 3:5)

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(Some articles may not necessarily reflect the opinions and beliefs of Christian Watch but are included for information only and not as an endorsement.)

Dear Friends,

Greetings once again in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Political crises are not new. From time to time situations have arisen which have challenged those in authority – Brexit being the most obvious ‘headache’ in past years – and particularly since the British people voted on 23rd June, 2016. A report in the Daily Telegraph a few months ago indicated that George Soros, the American-based Hungarian financier, was financing and orchestrating a campaign to prevent Brexit happening. Since his announcement, a previously unknown ‘businesswoman’ named Gina Miller mysteriously appeared on the scene and challenged the Government’s Brexit preparations in the courts; then several MPs who had been elected as Conservatives under the Party’s 2017 Manifesto which promised to enact Brexit defected – thereby robbing the Government of its Parliamentary majority; followed by the unelected High Court taking the unprecedented step of making a political decision and over-ruling Government policy. Hence the need for a General Election on 12th December. As we approach this election, let us consider prayerfully how to cast our vote, always remembering, of course, that God is in control and that He is truthful (Titus 1:2); He is faithful (1 Corinthians 1:9); He is omniscient (Psalm 139: 1-4); He is omnipotent (Psalm 103:19) and He is omnipresent (Psalm 139:8-10). What a great God we adore (see Numbers 23:19)!

I came across an extract from a sermon recently by Rev. Lazarus Seaman (1607 – 1675) – a friend of Oliver Cromwell - on Solomon’s request for wisdom, which was preached in 1644 to the House of Commons on a day set aside for public fasting during a time of political crisis. He said this: *“The trust committed to supreme rulers is great. They have to govern many people with different situations, attitudes and opinions. There is a mixture of contrary inclinations in them all. That which pleases some, others abhor. One person’s rise is from another’s ruin. The aims are to be high and noble, but the means are not easy to identify and are often unsuccessful. The lack of a little wisdom prejudices not only the reputation of those in authority but also the success of their affairs.”* Interesting comments indeed!

David Cameron – now that name rings a bell – has published his memoirs. Apparently, he is proud of re-defining marriage and has no regrets. In an excerpt, the former Conservative Prime Minister concedes that same-sex marriage was one of the most divisive policies he pursued, but argues that *‘people should be able to enter into a legal union with the person they love...love is love, commitment is commitment...whoever you are and whatever your sexuality.’* On the same subject, the Methodist Conference held in the summer of 2019 voted overwhelmingly (247 votes to 48) to permit the marriage of same-sex couples on Methodist premises by Methodist ministers. They endorsed a Report

– *God in Love Unites Us* – and the recommendations are to be submitted to the wider Church for consultation with a final decision due to be made in July, 2020. I wonder if these people ever consider “what saith the Scriptures?” Genesis 2:24, Proverbs 18:22 and Jeremiah 29:6 all come to mind.

Let us encourage ourselves with the words of Rev. James Smith, Rev. C.H. Spurgeon’s predecessor at New Park Street, London until 1848. He said the following:

“Beloved, there is no standing still in religion; we are either going forward or going back. Our Captain’s command is – ‘Go Forward’ (Exodus 14:15). This is our direction.

Go forward in the Lord’s way, in the Lord’s work, to the Lord’s Kingdom. The command contains great encouragement.

Go Forward, remembering the Lord’s wisdom, trusting in the Lord’s power and believing in the Lord’s love.

Go forward in union with the Lord’s people, with zeal for His glory, until summoned into your Master’s presence.

Go forward, notwithstanding difficulties, fears and discouragements.

Go forward, because God has bidden you; He has promised to go with you; He will crown your journey’s end.

*Let us imitate ardent and holy Paul, who said – “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.” Let us look for, and hasten to, the coming of the day of God. There is nothing behind us worth a thought, if compared with what is set before us by the gospel. Be then this our daily motto: **Forward, forward.**”*

Much in sorrow, oft in woe,
Onward, Christian, onward go;
Shrink not, fear not, dare not yield,
Never quit the battlefield.
Forward press and win the prize,
Then to endless glory rise.

Please remember that your subscription is due on 1st January for 2020. The annual subscription remains at £12 and we look forward to hearing from you as you renew your membership.

May I take this opportunity to wish you the compliments of the season as we come to the close of another year and trust that the Lord will continue to bless you in 2020.

Yours in His service,

Ian Henderson

Ian R. Henderson
(Chairman)

EXPOSITION OF LUKE 2, VERSES 1-7

by J.C. Ryle (abbreviated)

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1. And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.
 2. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria.)
 3. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.
 4. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)
 5. To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.
 6. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.
 7. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.
-

We have, in these verses, the story of a birth – the birth of the incarnate Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Every birth of a living child is a marvellous event. It brings into being a soul that will never die; but never since the world began was a birth so marvellous as the birth of Christ. In itself it was a miracle – “*God was manifest in the flesh*” (1 Tim. 3:16). The blessings it brought into the world were unspeakable – it opened to man the door of everlasting life.

In reading these verses, let us first notice ***the times when Christ was born***. It was in the days when Augustus, the first Roman Emperor, made “*a decree that all the world should be taxed*.”

The wisdom of God appears in this simple fact. The sceptre was practically departing from Judah (Gen. 49:10). The Jews were coming under the dominion and taxation of a foreign power. Strangers were beginning to rule over them. They had no longer a really independent Government of their own. The “*due time*” had come for the promised Messiah to appear. Augustus taxes “*the world*” and at once Christ is born.

It was a time peculiarly suitable for the introduction of Christ’s Gospel. The whole civilised earth was at length governed by one master (Dan. 2:40). There was nothing to prevent the preacher of a new faith going from city to city and country to country. The princes and priests of the heathen world had been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome had all successively proved that “*the world by wisdom knew not God*” (1 Cor. 1:21). Notwithstanding their mighty conquerors and poets and historians and architects and philosophers, the Kingdoms of the world were full of dark idolatry. It was indeed “*due time*” for God to interpose from Heaven and send down an Almighty Saviour. It was “*due time*” for Christ to be born (Rom. 5:6).

Let us ever rest our souls on the thought, that times are in God’s hand (Ps. 31:15). He knows the best season for sending help to His church and new light to the world. Let us beware of giving way to over anxiety about the course of events around us, as if we

knew better than the King of Kings what time relief should come. "Cease Philip, to try to govern the world," was a frequent saying of Luther to an anxious friend. It was a saying full of wisdom.

Let us notice, secondly, ***the place where Christ was born***. It was not at Nazareth of Galilee, where His mother, the Virgin Mary, lived. The prophet Micah had foretold that the event was to take place at Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). And so it came to pass. At Bethlehem Christ was born.

The over-ruling providence of God appears in this simple fact. He orders all things in Heaven and in earth. He turns the hearts of Kings whithersoever He will. He over-ruled the time when Augustus decreed the taxing. He directed the enforcement of the decree in such a way that Mary must needs be at Bethlehem when "*the days were accomplished that she should be delivered*." Little did the haughty Roman Emperor and his officer Cyrenius think that they were only carrying out the eternal purposes of the King of Kings. Little did they think that they were helping to lay the foundation of a Kingdom before which the Empires of this world would all go down one day and Roman idolatry pass away. The words of Isaiah, upon a like occasion, should be remembered - "*He meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so*" (Isa. 10:7).

The heart of a believer should take comfort in the recollection of God's providential government of the world. A true Christian should never be greatly moved or disquieted by the conduct of the rulers of the earth. He should see with the eye of faith a hand over-ruling all that they do to the praise and glory of God. He should regard every King and potentate - an Augustus, a Cyrenius, a Darius, a Cyrus, a Sennacherib - as a creature who, with all his power, can do nothing but what God allows and nothing which is not carrying out God's will. And when the rulers of this world "*set themselves against the Lord*," he should take comfort in the words of Solomon - "*There be higher than they*" (Eccles. 5:8).

Let us notice, lastly, ***the manner in which Christ was born***. He was not born under the roof of His mother's house, but in a strange place and at an "inn." When born, He was not laid in a carefully prepared cradle. He was "*laid in a manger, because there was no room in the inn*."

We see here the grace and condescension of Christ. Had He come to save mankind with royal majesty, surrounded by His Father's angels, it would have been an act of undeserved mercy. Had He chosen to dwell in a palace, with power and great authority, we should have had reason enough to wonder; but to become poor as the very poorest of mankind and lowly as the very lowliest - this is a love that passeth knowledge. It is unspeakable and unsearchable. Never let us forget that through this humiliation Jesus has purchased for His people a title to glory. Through His life of suffering, as well as His death, He has obtained eternal redemption for them. All through His life He was poor for their sakes, from the hour of His birth to the hour of His death; and through His poverty His people are made rich (2 Cor. 8:9).

DOING THINGS GOD'S WAY

by Rev. Ivan Foster (Rtd.)

"And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people. So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjathjearim. And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjathjearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it. And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart. And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets. And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and He smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God. And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perezuzza to this day. And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me? So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obbedom the Gittite. And the ark of God remained with the family of Obbedom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the house of Obbedom, and all that he had"

(1 Chronicles 13:3-14).

This passage of God's Word was part of my Bible reading today (19 November) for I follow the Robert Murray McCheyne's Bible Reading Calendar. The passage is most familiar but as ever the case with God's Word, it brings forth out of its treasure things new and old.

As I looked at the verses, I was struck by one very relevant application to today's contemporary worship scene. Before I come to that, let me point out:

1. Good ideas are often spoiled by ignorance.

It was a most admirable idea on David's part that the Ark of the Covenant be brought to its proper place. "*And let us bring again the ark of our God to us.*" The Protestant religion is one 'ever reforming'! There is a Latin phrase, dating back to the Reformation - *'Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda'* - the church reformed, always reforming. It refers to the conviction of certain Reformed Protestant theologians that the church must continually re-examine itself in order to maintain its purity of doctrine and practice.

The Lord often describes His people as 'sheep'. Sheep ever go astray. That is their nature! "*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way*" (Isaiah 53:6). That being so, we are ever in need of being brought back to the right paths and to that ordered by the Lord for our good.

The state of religion when David came to the throne was in great need of reformation.

By that we mean, it needed to be brought into line with the commands and decrees set down by the Lord as to how He was to be worshipped. The worship of God is not something decided by what men may consider good and proper and profitable. No, the whole scheme of worship has been laid down by the Lord!

When Israel was led out of Egypt toward the promised land, the Lord issued His Law regarding not just civil life but, more importantly, how He was to be approached in worship. When *“the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD commanded Moses,”* then the Lord was pleased and His blessing was upon them.

The central holy artefact used in the worship of God was the ‘Ark of the Covenant’. It was designed by the Lord and made under His supervision (Exodus 25:22). Because of the apostasy of Eli’s two sons and his failure to deal with their sins, Israel had suffered a great defeat at the hands of the Philistines and the Ark was taken away by them. However, the Lord afflicted them most severely and they were forced to return the Ark to Israel, but it had not been restored to its appointed abode, the Tabernacle, rather it had been housed in the home of Abinadab and Eleazar his son looked after the Ark of the Lord.

There the Ark remained for some 20 years, though back in Israel; it was not where God had ordained it to be, within the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle. This David was aware of when he came to power and he is to be commended that one of the first things he thought about was restoring the Ark of the Covenant to its rightful place. Would that we had rulers with such a mindset!

All Israel supported David in his plan. *“Let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people”* (verses 3-4).

However, in the execution of his plan, David displayed the degree of ignorance there was in the ranks of Israel. *“And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart”* (verse 7). That was the Philistine’s mode of transporting the Ark (1 Samuel 6:7-8), but it was not the way ordained by the Lord. *“And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, **which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD**, and unto all the elders of Israel”* (Deuteronomy 31:9). Even the thinking of so great a man as David may be ‘polluted’ by the notions of the Philistines!

2. There can be no doubt that David and Israel were most earnest in their seeking to restore the Ark.

*“And David and all Israel played before God with **all their might**, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets”* (verse 8). They put everything into their worshipping and honouring the Lord that day.

Here is where we may learn something that is very relevant to that which is a growing phenomenon in religious circles today. Many believe they can enjoy much more of the Lord's blessing and power if they but with enthusiasm engage in forms of worship that display their fervour. Thus we have professing 'fundamentalist gatherings' which feature much music and singing with great energy in the mistaken belief that such will make up for the sad but undeniable deadness found amongst the congregations of many true believers!

This is but seeking to restore the Ark on a new cart! It is not God-approved!

Despite all the religious excitement displayed by David and Israel that day, the Lord was not pleased with what was taking place and the earnestness of the Israelites did not pacify the Lord or placate His anger at their activities. I am sure that all in that gathering were filled with a sense of 'religious well-being' but it was a fleshly thing, a delusion.

"And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and He smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God" (v. 9-10).

Again, take note. Uzza was a good man, motivated in his actions by the highest considerations of God's honour; YET what he did was forbidden in the Law of God and he was judged accordingly. None were permitted to touch the Ark. *"And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation"* (Numbers 4:15).

Being 'sincerely' wrong does not alter the character of our sin. The reaction of David that day was, sadly, a fleshly one. *"David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza"* (verse 11). David was 'angry' with God! He felt that God had done wrong! Is that not a common response to the pressing of the claims of the Bible upon those who are determined to go their own way in matters relating to the worship of God and the things that should be believed amongst us. They rail against what the Lord has commanded us to observe and keep!

It would appear that David quickly adopted a wiser and more proper attitude. *"And David was afraid of the LORD that day"* (verse 9). A reverence and godly fear fell upon David as a proper realisation of what had happened that day came into his mind and heart.

Dear Christian, God will not take with our tampering with His 'order' in His worship. Such tampering will not bring good, but sorrow in the end. The excitement seen today in many places of 'contemporary worship' will undoubtedly give way to a harvest of misery and shame. Doubtless, that harvest will not attract the same attention as did the stir created by the antics in the worship gathering, for the devil does not want his dupes to see the dire consequences of being deceived by him, but the grief will come about

and the wise will observe it taking place and learn!

3. In the end, David did bring the Ark back to its rightful place when he observed God's law on the matter.

"And David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent. Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever. And David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD unto his place, which he had prepared for it ... And said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it. For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order. So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the LORD. And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of musick, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy" (1 Chronicles 15:1-3, 12-16).

Please note the words, **"we sought him not after the due order"** (verse 13). The Lord wants EVERYTHING *"done decently and in order"* (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Let us learn that lesson today and enter into the 'joy of the Lord'. *"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy Name, O LORD God of hosts"* (Jeremiah 15:16).

The Bible is the Book of *"good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people"* (Luke 2:10) if it is but believed and obeyed.



SINCERE, BUT SINCERELY WRONG

It is greatly to be feared that there are multitudes in Christendom who verily imagine and sincerely believe that they are among the saved, yet who are total strangers to a work of grace in their hearts.

It is one thing to have clear intellectual conceptions of God's truth; it is quite another matter to have a personal, real heart acquaintance with it.

It is one thing to believe that sin is the awful thing that the Bible says it is, but it is quite another matter to have a holy horror and hatred of it in the soul.

It is one thing to know that God requires repentance; it is quite another matter to experimentally mourn and groan over our vileness.

It is one thing to believe that Christ is the only Saviour for sinners; it is quite another matter to really trust Him from the heart.

It is one thing to believe that Christ is the 'sum of all excellency'; it is quite another matter to LOVE HIM above all others.

It is one thing to believe that God is the great and Holy One; it is quite another matter to truly reverence and fear Him.

It is one thing to believe that salvation is of the Lord; it is quite another matter to become an actual partaker of it through His gracious workings.

By: A.W. Pink

THE CROOK IN THE LOT

Based on and adapted from the writings of Thomas Boston.

The text is taken from Ecclesiastes 7 verse 13: *“Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which He hath made crooked?”* We take up the text under three heads: *First*, whatsoever crook there is in our lot, it is of God’s making. *Second*, what God sees fit to make crooked, no man can make straight. And *third*, to enquire why the Lord makes crooks in the lot of all His people.

First then, whatsoever crook there is in our lot, it is of God’s making.

It is true, of course, that all crooked things came into the world by sin: they are due to the Fall; but in the over-ruling providence of an all-wise God, He has appointed a certain train or course of events to every one of us during our life in this world. That is our lot and it is of God’s making. This train of events is widely different according to the will of God, but for each of His people it will contain some crooked things. The ungodly have crooks as well as the godly – but there is a vast difference in how we behave under them, whether they are sanctified to us or whether we rebel against them. And do not think that your neighbour’s lot is less crooked than yours. This is a false verdict, for our lot, whatever it is, is of God’s appointment and He knows what is most needful for each of us. Remember also that Christ Himself has said, *“In the world ye shall have tribulation.”* Peter also, *“Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you.”*

In the Scriptures there are many instances of those who had severe crooks in their lives. How varied they were! Each of the Patriarchs had crooks in their lots such as Jacob being deceived for so many years by Laban and Joseph having to bear the evil jealousies of his brethren. The want of children was for a long time the crook in Rachel’s lot. The crook in Abigail’s life was a surly and ill-tempered husband. Eli’s crook was the wickedness of his sons. Timothy’s was a weak constitution – the Apostle Paul exhorted him to take a little wine for his stomach’s sake and *“thine oft infirmities.”* Mephibosheth had a physical crook in his lot – he was lame on both his feet because his nurse dropped him when he was an infant. And some crooks, like his, have to be carried right through life. Others are for a time only, such as Hannah’s. A person – Peninnah – was the crook in her lot, but later she was favoured to have children and be the mother of Samuel. Asaph’s crook was that he was envious at the prosperity of the wicked – it nearly brought him to give up his religion altogether – until he went into the sanctuary of God. Sometimes just one unexpected circumstance – perhaps in the family or in the church of God – can change a person’s whole life and bring a permanent crook in the lives of God’s people. And so we might continue.

But second, what God sees fit to make crooked in our lot, no man or woman will be able to make straight.

God has a Divine purpose in everything which He permits to come into our lives and, if we are His people, He over-rules all of them for our final good, even though we may not always be able to see this. How important it is, therefore, that we should seek for submission to God’s will under every crook – not chafe or rebel under it or give way to self-pity. In some

instances it may not be wrong to ask God to remove the crook in our lot – He is able – and sometimes does – make *“crooked things straight and rough places plain”* but, remember, that when the Apostle Paul had a thorn in the flesh, though he besought the Lord thrice to remove it, God’s answer was *“My grace is sufficient for thee”* and dear Paul was made submissive to it.

Consider this too: that the Lord’s people oftentimes are troubled to find that their greatest cross lies just in the very place where they hoped to find their greatest comfort. If there is any one part of your life in which you are most disposed to nestle down, or hope to find comfort in, it is this very thing – in the place where you are least able to be touched because it is so tender – that you may find your hardest crook. And why? Because in that very place lies the greatest competition with Christ for your soul’s love and affections. Do you not see that, if you are His, it is in His infinite wisdom that the Lord has decreed that your crook should fall in the tenderest place? Ponder this well!

“If sick, or lame, or poor,
Or by the world abhorred,
Whatever cross lies at thy door,
It cometh from the Lord.”

Thirdly, it remains to enquire why a compassionate and loving God makes or permits such crooks in the lot of His people?

There are many, many reasons, but one reason beyond all others is to wean us from this world and cause us to look for our happiness in the Lord Jesus Christ and in the other world. There will be no crooks in Heaven! No tears, no sorrow, no pain, no curse, no death! Finding a pricking thorn whenever we lay down our heads in this life, we are constantly reminded that, however hard we may try, we will never find true happiness in this world or in our closest relationships in it; and is it not just this that doth most result in us setting our affections on things above?

Finally – and for your comfort – consider the question put to Job by Eliphaz - *“Are the consolations of God small with thee?”* Job knew the answer to this; and so did David when on his death-bed he said - *“Although my house be not so with God, yet hath He made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.”*

How wonderful to have this consolation laid deep in our hearts and, in the midst of all our trials in this life, to feel, as our hymn-writer says, that *“The joy prepared for suffering saints, Will make amends for all.”*

“Thou givest me the lot
Of those that fear Thy Name;
If endless life be their reward,
I shall possess the same.”

*J.A.W. – Gospel Standard Magazine,
December, 2001*

CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION REPORT

The CRE (Christian Resources Exhibition) took place at Sandown Park in Esher, Surrey between 15th and 17th October, 2019 and the Lord mightily blessed and answered prayer as those manning the stall had to stand for 8 hours or more each day in order to deal with a steady stream of enquirers.

Many people visited the stall and appreciated the vast array of literature on display, including Gospel tracts and pamphlets written by Bishop J.C. Ryle (the first Protestant Bishop of Liverpool) and many of the old Divines. The stall was adorned with banners portraying Huss (on the left), Luther (in the centre) and Tyndale (on the right), which created much comment. 300 British Church Newspapers were distributed, together with 300 calendars (with Gospel texts) and 300 Christian Watch newsletters, incorporating application forms to join with us. The leaflet – 'D-day and the Providence of God' – written by Christian Watch Committee Member, Rev. Peter Simpson, attracted considerable interest.

There was – as there always will be – many who call themselves Christian, who clearly have little understanding of the things of God but, nevertheless, the banner of the Lord was lifted up to His honour and glory and we give Him all the praise.



News and Current Affairs



Leading Climate Professors unite to tell U.N.: “There is no Climate Emergency”

From British Church Newspaper, 25 October, 2019 edition

In the past two years, the numbers of individuals and groups challenging the ‘man-made climate change’ scare has mushroomed.

The internet is awash with credible information sites which show, *inter alia*, that increasing CO₂ is the result of, not the cause of, warming; that recent warming is most likely related to heat output from the sun; that claims of ocean level and temperature rises have been grossly exaggerated, based on manipulated data; and that every prediction to date, based on faulty computer-based climate modelling, has failed by huge margins.

A new impetus to what might be termed the ‘climate change-sceptic’ lobby has been given by a recent (23 September) appeal by several leading Professors direct to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN).

The leading signatory is Professor Guus Berkhout of the Netherlands. His letter is headed: ‘There is no climate emergency’ and ends with an appeal for a high-level UN ‘climate conference’ in 2020 to discuss their evidence that ‘climate disaster’ fears have been grossly exaggerated.

More than 500 ‘knowledgeable and experienced scientists’ in climate and related fields have published the ‘European Climate Declaration’, which holds that “the general-circulation models of climate on which international policy is founded are unfit for purpose.”

They add: “It is cruel and imprudent to advocate squandering of trillions of dollars based on results from immature models” and call for “a climate policy based on sound science, realistic economics and genuine concern for those harmed by costly, but unnecessary, attempts at mitigation.”

The other leading signatories of the letter are Prof. Richard Lindzen (USA), Prof. Reynald du Berger (Canada), Prof Ingemar Nordin (Sweden), Prof. Fritz Vahrenholt (Germany), Prof. Jeffrey Foss (Canada), Prof. Benoit Rittaud (France), Prof. Alberto Prestininzi (Italy), Terry Dunleavy (New Zealand), Jim O’Brien (Eire), Viv Forbes (Australia), Morten Jodal (Norway), Rob Lemeire (Belgium), Lord Monckton (UK).

The internet encyclopaedia site, Wikipedia, now has long lists of climate scientists who:

- Question the accuracy of IPCC climate projections.
- Assert that global warming is primarily caused by natural processes.
- Contend that the cause of global warming is unknown.
- Argue that global warming will have few negative consequences.

The climate change-sceptics face an uphill struggle to promote their views given an effective international media blackout on even airing the sceptics' views. All media appear to view them as 'deniers', fearful of a fierce backlash from powerful advocates of man-made CO₂-induced, global warming.

Academic freedom to air sceptic views is limited, as the case of Dr. Susan Crockford of Victoria University, Australia, illustrates. In 2017, she published a balanced and well-researched paper demonstrating that, contrary to warmists' claims, polar bears are currently thriving and are at no risk of extinction from climate change. She was sacked, describing what happened as "an academic hanging without a trial, conducted behind closed doors." She will visit London and four other capitals this autumn to explain her research.

For evidence challenging the 'Extinction Rebellion' climate scare, the internet site 'Global Warming Policy Forum' is an excellent starting-point.



Sharia banking in the UK

English Churchman 8 & 15 November, 2019

Several of the highest returns on savings accounts in the UK are from Sharia compliant Islamic banks. Islam has to jump through hoops to make it appear that interest is not being charged when it plainly is, calling it an 'expected profit rate' rather than interest.

Regrettably Britain cannot do enough to make society conformable to the false laws of Islam but with abortion, homosexuality and Sabbath desecration being encouraged, little regard is given to God's laws.

China: Brain-wash camps and Hong Kong democracy vote highlight growing religious persecution — Release International, 25 November, 2019

Brain-washing camps are the 'tip of the iceberg' believes Release International (RI), as Hong Kong eyes religious persecution and votes for freedom.

The overwhelming pro-democracy vote in Hong Kong and revelations of brain-washing camps highlight growing intolerance in China towards religious minorities.

It is not just the Uyghur Muslims who are facing a crackdown. Reports from China indicate Christians are facing the worst persecution since the Cultural Revolution, say partners of RI, which supports persecuted Christians around the world.

The *Panorama* programme on BBC1 (25 Nov) exposed leaked documents revealing the systematic brain-washing of hundreds of thousands of Muslims rounded up in a network of high-security prison camps.

China claims the camps are for voluntary re-education and training. However, the documents reveal a brain-washing regime that has been likened to the Nazis, where detainees are controlled with iron discipline and kept in order with electric shock batons. According to the BBC, about a million mainly Muslim Uyghurs have been detained without trial. 'But partners of RI believe that could just be the tip of the iceberg', warns RI CEO, Paul Robinson.

According to RI partner Bob Fu: "In China's north-western Xinjiang region, between 1-3 million people from Turkic minority groups have been rounded up and imprisoned in internment camps. Camp survivors have reported starvation, forced labour and torture. If a child's parents have been taken to the camps, then the child is placed in an orphanage and forced to speak Mandarin instead of their native language, effectively erasing their identity."

A leaked Communist Party memo shows that far from being places of 'voluntary re-training', China's internment camps are designed to break the will of detainees and control their minds. Human Rights Watch describe them as places of 'psychological torture'. The leaked memo calls for 'discipline and punishment...repentance and confession and full video surveillance.'

Although the media spotlight is on China's treatment of Muslims, the authorities are also cracking down on Christians.

"Persecution has been rising since 2018, when China imposed tough new religious restrictions," says Paul Robinson. "Freedom of faith is guaranteed under Article 36 of the Chinese constitution, but, in practice, the authorities bulldoze churches, tear down crosses and imprison pastors. Lawyers who speak up for them in the courts simply disappear – and it's getting worse. It used to be just the unofficial churches that were targeted. Today China is pulling down State-registered churches and persecuting their pastors. The authorities have banned Christians from holding prayer meetings in their homes. Hosts

risk having their houses demolished or taken from them. China has also banned Christians from sharing religious messages with anyone under 18.”

In July, officials raided a church in China’s southern Guizhou province. When church-goers asked what law they were supposed to have broken, they were told: “It is illegal for you to teach your children to sing hymns and to spread [Christian] thoughts.”

And in echoes of the all-pervading video surveillance in the Uyghur camps, China is installing face-recognition cameras in churches to spy on congregations and preachers.

“Is it any wonder the people of Hong Kong have just voted overwhelmingly for democracy?” asks Paul Robinson. “When Hong Kong residents look at mainland China they fear they are seeing into their future. Release International is pressing China to repeal its anti-religion laws and grant freedom of faith for all its people.”



Vatican gimmick snares the young and gullible

English Churchman, 25 October & 1 November, 2019.

The Vatican is hoping to keep its young people under its power with the launch of an ‘eRosary’ bracelet. The gadget, which costs £85, features 10 black agate and hematite rosary beads, alongside a silver ‘smart cross’ which detects movement.

It is connected to the ‘Click to Pray eRosary’ app, which is designed to help users pray for world peace and contemplate ‘the gospel.’ The app tracks a user’s progress and contains visual and audio explanations of the rosary.

The traditional rosary is used in Roman Catholic prayer and meditation. The beads are counted as prayers are recited.

Users can choose from the standard rosary, a contemplative rosary or a thematic rosary, none of which is either necessary, helpful or Biblical. The Lord Jesus said that true worshippers will worship in spirit and in truth.

The Christmas Message from Hell

Letter by David Fleming to the Christian Press

Walt Disney films have traditionally been synonymous with Christmas worldwide, enhancing the innocence of children as they sit around the fire with Mum, Dad, Granny, Granddad, brothers and sisters. Often, they take place before or after the Queen's Message, a traditional family gathering of belonging, not PC 'inclusiveness'. All of this is changing rapidly at Disney as Christmas gets hijacked further by the forces of diversity.

Disney Plus now features a disclaimer on some of its older content with a warning on outdated footage. Warnings are now given at the start of animated films that some contents viewed are now culturally inappropriate.

A lead example is Peter Pan! Wendy and her brothers embark on fantastic adventures with the hero of their bedtime stories...Peter Pan. The wording at the start is - *'This programme is presented as originally created! It may contain outdated cultural depictions'*. Other characters under scrutiny are 'Dumbo', presumably not to typecast people with special needs. The 'Aristocats' are targeted, a feasible PC explanation being that it is bourgeois and offensive to the proletariat, contravening the "values" of one size fits all. The Jungle Book does not escape, as this is considered ethnically insensitive to those who are embarrassed by the colonialism of earlier generations.

However, Walt Disney has gone from the incredulous to the sinister with a recent insidious spread into its productions. They now feature LGBTQ characters in their childrens' movies and shows. They have even been hosting "Pride" events for their community at amusement parks. They want similar parades in every Disney Park globally. Now the LGBTQ lobby is taking it a step further and pressurising Disney to further indoctrinate children by making Elsa from the distinguished film 'Frozen' a lesbian.

They are twisting the arms of Disney management to turn some of its beloved characters into an indoctrination syndrome to promote their lifestyles to impressionable children. They have also introduced the first "Boy-Princess on their XD element in the series - 'Star v the Forces of Evil'.

Directors at Disney Headquarters in California are discussing the following options for 2020:

1. Introducing new homosexual and transgender cartoon characters in movies and other Disney television shows.
2. Scrapping the existing child-friendly events and replacing them with increased "Pride Parades".
3. Creating more "inclusiveness".

This sub-culture and its allies see this as a progression of their brain-washing by morphing the minds of children. They have seemingly inexorable influence in Western Governments, educational authorities, universities and the establishment. Control of Walt Disney is the ultimate capture where millions of children can be robotised worldwide.

Ephesians 6:12: *“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”*

What have Christians and decent people done about this? Virtually nothing! Typical examples are apathy and fear of losing children and grandchildren by being politically incorrect. Social Engineering goes back more than in recent years. Edmund Burke once said - “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing.”

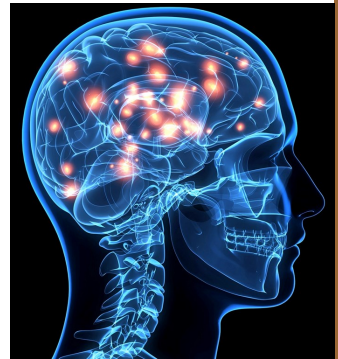
Abbreviated

God has hard-wired many differences between men and women’s brains

A highlight from the recent Creation Mega Conference as reported by British Church Newspaper, 8 November, 2019

Biologist Dr. Georgia Purdom explained that right from the creation of Adam and Eve on the 6th Day of the Creation Week, God had hard-wired into them many differences in how their brains and bodies work, making a nonsense of the whole idea of people being able to ‘change’ their gender.

For example, she said that male bodies tend to divert energy more to muscle than to fat. This was important for female fertility, as women tended to need a certain amount of fat to promote fertility. Likewise, male absorption of food tended to give them ‘spurts of energy’, inducing them to ‘take more risks’ while, in women, food tended to promote endurance and, in general, a better immune system. A higher red blood count in males tended to promote more rapid bleeding.



Women’s brains had better integrated connectivity, which tended to promote social awareness and helped promote ‘multi-tasking’. Men had more ‘laterised’ connections, which tended to make them more single-minded and focused.

She added that, in young children, the respective design of boys and girls meant that there was a perfectly natural tendency for “boys to build and girls to play with dolls”.

Men have greater spatial ability and sense of direction; women’s brain connectivity enables them to ‘read’ body language and facial expressions better than men.

Recently, she told Conference delegates, scientists had made claims that “same sex mice can have babies”; but they had failed to highlight the fact that to achieve a birth from two females, one of the females had had male genes artificially added. Dr. Purdom added, however, that scientists were making rapid advances in this field and that it was not inconceivable that technology could one day enable same-sex couples to reproduce.



Prayer by AMBROSE SERLE (1742 – 1812)

as he recollected his outward conversation and conduct toward others


My Heavenly Father, when I calmly look back upon my conduct to others in this world and consider how sadly I have failed in all my known duties to men, against Thy Holy Word and against the peace of my soul, I am humbled to the dust before Thee. I have nothing to say for myself, but, with Thy prophet, Unclean! Unclean!

I have not loved my country as I ought, because I have not prayed for its best welfare as I ought. Intent enough I have been upon its vain glory, its outward pomp, its carnal dignity and its carnal prosperity; but O how little have I been earnest with Thee for the greatest of all blessing, that religion and piety might flourish in the land, without which no true happiness or welfare can be found.

I humbly implore Thy blessing upon my Sovereign, his family and his government; beseeching Thee to grant, with all outward good, the inward mercies of Thy grace and, in Thy due time, the life for evermore. Pardon me also for any failures of my duty on this account.

In obeying those whom Thy providence hath set over me, O teach me to see how I may best obey Thee, and glorify Thy goodness for a just Government, good laws and all the liberties I enjoy. If those in authority seem to fall into errors (for what man is he that sinneth not), keep my tongue from reviling and direct my heart into praying for them, that Thy wisdom may rectify what human ability could not apprehend or foresee. Deliver me from sedition and selfishness; from all the evils of political passion and resentment; and give peace, I beseech Thee, in my time, O Lord!

Enable me to conduct myself towards Thy church, Thy ministers and all who profess to know Thee, so as to give no just cause of offence in anything to any man. I pray Thee to heal all divisions among Thy children, which may bring sad and deep reproach on Thy gospel, or lay dismal snares and stumbling blocks in the ways of men. O that they might love and pity each



other, considering what infinitely tender pity and love Thou has manifested for them.

Help, O help me to fill up all my relations in life to Thy honour and glory and forgive me in the numberless instances wherein I have failed. Let the blood of Jesus cleanse me from all my sins to others; and do Thou forgive as Thou has enabled me to forgive, all their transgressions against myself. Grant me larger measures of grace in the days to come, that I may praise Thee more and more throughout my whole life and conversation and thus live and die to the edification of others and above all to Thy glory.

Keep me from all unreasonable and faithless grief, when Thou art pleased, with equal wisdom and goodness, to remove the friends of my heart, or the outward comforts of my life. Enable me to give them up without reserve to Thee, knowing that no good thing shall be lost either for them or myself, but that all things shall work together for our mutual, our real, our everlasting good.

Having these hopes, help me to be more and more purified from all uncleanness of flesh and spirit and to endeavour even to perfect holiness in Thy faith and fear. Lord, I am a feeble worm and of mine own self can do nothing that is good. O do Thou therefore work in me to will and to do of Thy good pleasure, that I may neither be barren or unfruitful in Thy Word or work among the children of men. Help me to bear wrongs patiently, to speak every truth meekly, to carry as much as possible my whole conduct unblameably, with respect to others, that Thy Holy Name may be exalted and they themselves be encouraged to seek the way of Thy salvation.

O Lord, I give up myself, all I have and all I am, into Thy blessed protection; beseeching Thee to do for me and for mine, in all respects and at all times, exceedingly abundantly above all that I can ask or think, for the sake of Christ Jesus, my Lord and my God; to whom, with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O blessed Spirit, three persons in one, and the same Jehovah, be all honour, grace and glory ascribed, both now and for evermore. Amen.

From: The Christian Remembrancer
By: Ambrose Serle

THE DESIRE OF THE SOUL

How sweet and expressive is the phrase, *"The desire of our soul"*! How it seems to carry our feelings with it! How it seems to describe the longings and utterings of a soul into which God has breathed the spirit of grace and mercy! *"The desire of our soul"* – the breathing of our heart, the longing of our inmost being; the cry, the sigh, the panting of our new nature; the heavings, gaspings, lookings, longings, pantings, hungerings, thirstings and ventings forth of the new man of grace – *all* are expressed in those sweet and blessed words, *"The desire of our soul"*! And what a mercy it is, that there should ever be in us *"the desire"* of a living soul; that though the righteous dealings of God are painful and severe, running contrary to everything nature loves; yet that with all these, there should be dropped into the heart that mercy, love and grace, which draw forth the desire of the soul toward the Name of God.

This is expressed in the words: *"With my soul have I desired Thee in the night!"* If you can say no more about the work of grace upon your heart than *that* – can you really use these words as descriptive of feelings experienced within, *"With my soul have I desired Thee in the night"*? Is your soul longing after the Lord Jesus Christ? Is it ever in the night season panting after the manifestation of His presence? Hungering and thirsting after the dropping in of some word from His lips, some sweet whisper of His love to your soul? These are marks of grace. The carnal, the unregenerated, the ungodly have no such desires as these; there is nothing in their heart corresponding with *"the desire of the soul"* unto the Name of God. But it is the case with all the righteous, for *"the desire of the righteous shall be satisfied."*

And what do you desire when you can say, *"The desire of my soul is to Thy name"*? Is it not, that He will manifest Himself to your soul with some sweetness and blessedness; and thus give you power to lay hold of Him and bring Him into your heart that you may clasp Him in the arms of faith and affection, be enabled to breathe forth the language of your bosom into His ear and say, *"My Lord and my God. Thou art mine, and I am Thine, and shall be Thine when time shall be no more"*?

Now this is having the desire of your soul to the Name of God – a longing after the Lord Jesus Christ in the manifestations of His Person, blood, work and love. I never can believe there is such a desire in the heart of a hypocrite. There may be and is, perhaps, in him a desire to escape *"the wrath to come"*; but a single, simple, secret, fervent, heart-felt, panting desire – when no eye sees, no ear hears but the eye and ear of Jehovah – I cannot think that such a simple, sincere, filial breathing is to be found in any but a regenerated heart.

At any rate, it is set forth in the Word of God as the experience of the church: *"The desire of our soul is to Thy Name"*! Lord, we want Thee; none but Thee; nothing short of Thee; Thyself, in Thy beauty, in Thy loveliness, in Thy preciousness; for nothing short of Thee can make the soul happy or holy. Without Thy presence, there is no solid peace; without Thy smiles, there is no real happiness; without Thy favour, all is darkness and death; and therefore, *"the desire of our soul is to Thy Name"*; for, in having Thee, we have everything that can satisfy, bless, comfort and save.

By: J.C. Philpot



“But one thing is needful.”

Luke 10:42; Psalm 73:25

Samuel Medley

Jesus, engrave it on my heart,
That Thou the one thing needful art:
I could from all things parted be,
But never, never, Lord, from Thee.

Needful art Thou to make me live;
Needful art Thou all grace to give;
Needful to guide me, lest I stray;
Needful to help me every day.

Needful is Thy most precious blood;
Needful is Thy correcting rod;
Needful is Thy indulgent care;
Needful Thy all-prevailing prayer.

Needful Thy presence, dearest Lord,
True peace and comfort to afford;
Needful Thy promise to impart
Fresh life and vigour to my heart.

Needful art Thou, my soul can say,
Through life's dark and thorny way;
In death Thou wilt most needful be,
When I yield up my soul to Thee.

Needful art Thou, to raise my dust,
In shining glory with the just;
Needful when I in Heaven appear,
To crown and to present me there.

PSALM 46

*A Prayer Meeting address by Mr. J. Delves
Ebenezer Chapel, Clapham, on 28 April, 1973*

This beautiful Psalm has often been read in private and public and yet it always seems to have a freshness, life, savour, sweetness and matter for faith to feed and live upon.

One point in the Psalm consists in **what God is**. He is many things; He is our refuge and strength in times of trouble, which, as far as we may be favoured to realise it and experience the truth of it, may allay our emotions, still our fears, remove our mountains and enable us to put our trust in Him. It is very sweet to feel it, especially when in trouble, for here it is that God is a present help (not "I will help you in a year's time," but a **present** help) in trouble, just when He is needed and He knows the time better than we do. "Therefore," says the Psalmist, "will not we fear," whatever may come upon the earth, in this world, or whatever eruptions may come (as in verses 2 and 3).

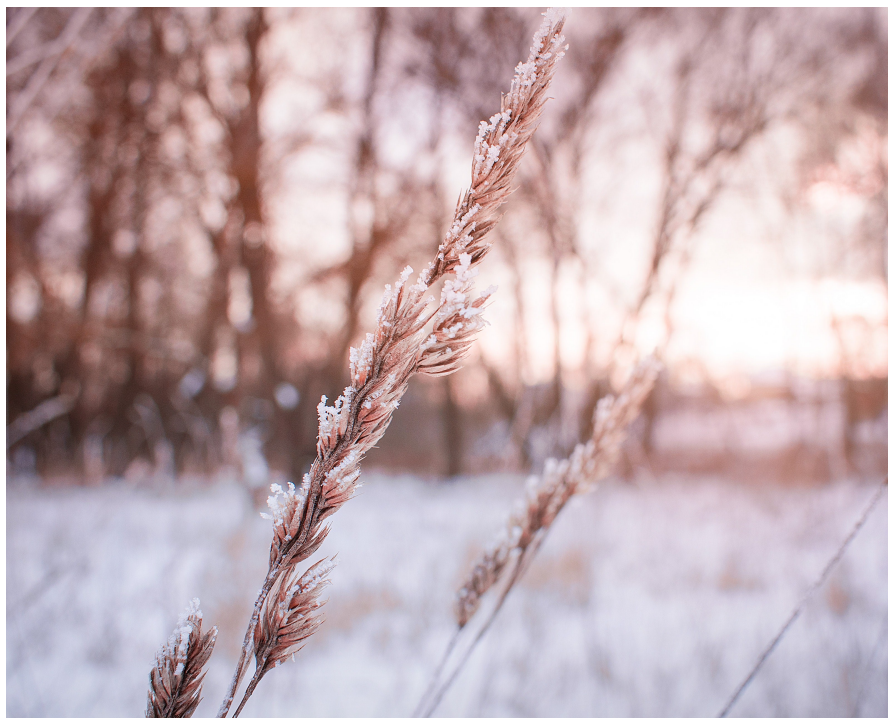
Another point in the Psalm is a **living stream**; "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the Holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." "God is in the midst of her"; His church; He dwells there. This is a beautiful point. Whatever we may be passing through, the trials, afflictions, bereavements, or other things that may and will come, here is a beautiful point for us. "God is in the midst of her." He understands our trials better than we do and how to deal with us in them. He can sanctify bereavement, bring His dear people to His feet, favour them to feel His presence and enable them to cast their care upon Him.

The third point is a timely injunction; "**Be still, and know that I am God.**" In one aspect this is a very solemn stillness, when the hand of God is heavy upon us and there is a revolting feeling against His ways, but actually it is to bring before us a vivid sense of the majesty of God. We hear Him saying "Be still"; whatever the trouble is, the pain, grief, sorrow, losses, affliction, or whatever it may be, or however distressing it may be, I am above it all. "Be still, and know that I am God." Look to Me, look away from the things that drag you down and bring much tempest-tossing in your spirit and look up to Me. I am above them all. I understand them and I have appointed them all. Be still." And especially is this beautiful in the experience of the Lord's people when they are favoured to feel it, for this stillness is a leaning upon Him, it is a stillness in the heart. You are casting your care upon Him in an act of faith and confidence in Him. It is falling into His hands. "Be still, and know that I am God."

"The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." So it is **the God of Jacob**

that is our refuge. We read a lot about Jacob and as we read of him it opens up this truth to us – that God was *his* refuge and the same God must be *your* refuge, *my* refuge. And what a refuge this is as we view it in a gospel sense! This is a refuge that faith finds in the finished work of the Lord Jesus, where it is enabled to shelter in His wounded side and “be still.”

May the Lord help us, then, under all the changing conditions of this mortal state, as we have to pass through them and see one and another taken from us. What a precious truth we have here! Over it all seems to come just this: “*Be still*”; God is *your* refuge, He will cause the river to flow, the river of Divine love and grace which alone can comfort every sinking heart. May the Lord help us, then, in a right and gracious way under His dealings in providence and matters that relate to the church and the nation, to be still and, in passing through them, prove that this God is our God and He will be our God for ever and ever. Amen.





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