

CHRISTIAN WATCH

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

Mark 13:37

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I AM NOT WHAT I ONCE WAS

I am not what I ought to be. Ah, how imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor that which is evil - and I would cleave to that which is good. I am not what I hope to be. Soon, soon shall I put off mortality and with mortality all sin and imperfection. Yet, though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be, I can surely say, I am not what I once was – a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the Apostle and acknowledge that by the grace of God I am what I am.

John Newton

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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.

Since our last Newsletter, there have been various elections for political office held throughout the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, including – in Northern Ireland – the election of new leaders in the Democratic Unionist Party. Undoubtedly, the newly elected politicians will claim that there are opportunities to make the country a better place but, in reality, the true and only recipe for greatness is set forth in God's Word – *"Thou hast also given me the shield of Thy salvation: and Thy right hand hath holden me up, and Thy gentleness hath made me great"* (Psalm 18:35).

There are three cardinal factors set forth on the path to greatness:

- Shielded by the Lord
- Strengthened by the Lord
- Saved by the Lord.

The word 'gentle' is a reference to the gentle, gracious dealings in the mercy of God with David.

There is no greater 'greatness' than obtaining the end of God's 'great' salvation. How is Heaven to be achieved? *"He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry (them) in His bosom, (and) shall gently lead those that are with young"* (Isaiah 40:11).

The factors set forth in both Psalm 18:35 and Isaiah 40:11 are essential if one is to increase and prosper and achieve true and lasting greatness, in any earthly endeavour, be it business or politics. The Lord must be in it for it to succeed.

Although 2020 has been dominated by the covid-19 virus, alarming statistics have emerged that indicate that abortion accounted for the most deaths worldwide in 2020 – around 55% of all deaths. According to the World Health Organisation, over 73 million abortions take place every year, whilst death from all other causes totals almost 60 million. In the UK, abortions became even easier to obtain – including DIY home abortions – and a liberal

abortion regime was imposed on Northern Ireland against the wishes of both the Stormont Executive and the people. *“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!”* (Isaiah 5: 20-21).

Let me take this opportunity to encourage you to read the Scriptures every day. Here are ten good reasons why you should also endeavour to memorise Scripture:

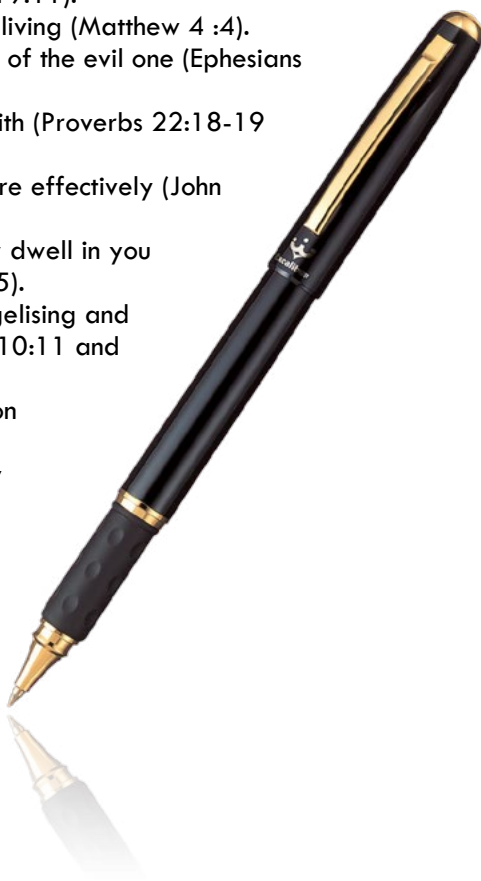
1. It creates and sustains delight in the law of the Lord (Psalm 1:2-3 and Psalm 119:97).
2. It keeps you from sin (Psalm 119:11).
3. It fulfils your very purpose for living (Matthew 4 :4).
4. It fends off the flaming arrows of the evil one (Ephesians 6:16).
5. It feeds, sustains and grows faith (Proverbs 22:18-19 and Romans 10:17).
6. It teaches you how to pray more effectively (John 15:7).
7. It lets the Word of Christ richly dwell in you (John 15:7 and Colossians 3:15).
8. It assists in encouraging, evangelising and defending the faith (Proverbs 10:11 and 1 Peter 3:16).
9. It promotes on-going meditation (Joshua 1:8).
10. It was done by Jesus (Matthew 4:4, 7 and 10).

May God have mercy upon us as a nation.

Yours in His service,

Ian Henderson

Ian R. Henderson
Chairman



THE EXCELLENCY OF PRAYER

By: William Huntington

Prayer is the blessed means which God has appointed to bring every grace from Christ to the believer. The believer is to let his requests be made known unto God and, for his encouragement, God says that the prayer of the upright is His delight, yea, He says that He loves to hear it. *"Let Me hear thy voice, let Me see thy face."*

Prayer is pouring out the soul unto God and showing before Him our troubles. It is casting our cares upon Him who careth for us; and our burdens upon Him in whom we are to say, *"I have righteousness and strength."* It is opening the heart, the mind and the mouth to Him who hath said, *"Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."* It is opening to Him who is the Well-beloved of His people and who has said, *"Let Me hear thy voice, let Me see thy face; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."* It is besieging the everlasting Kingdom, moving the throne of grace and knocking importunately at the door of mercy, encouraged by the promise, *"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."*

In prayer we must take no denial. If we have but a feeling sense of our wants, a Scripture warrant to go upon, or one promise to plead, we must sue, argue, reason, plead, supplicate, intercede, confess, acknowledge, thank, bless, praise, adore, repeat, importune, observe, take hold of and turn to advantage whatsoever may be of use to the soul. Sinners, sensible of their lost estate by nature, who feel their need and poverty, have many invitations, encouragements, precedents and promises. They have, under the teachings of the Holy Spirit, to plead and rely upon the covenant of Jehovah, the oath of God, the merits of Christ and all His covenant engagements, undertakings and performances; the covenant characters He sustains, His incarnation and near relationship to them – together with all the glorious train of Divine perfections found in the proclamation of the name of God to Moses (Ex. 34:6,7) – for all these sweetly harmonise and brightly shine in Christ crucified, who has *never once yet disappointed* the hope of a penitent sinner, but has graciously said, *"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* His promises, like Himself, are unchangeable – and this is one of them: *"Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."*

Prayer has brought in countless providential mercies, as well as spiritual blessings. God could have granted them all without asking, but has condescended to honour this exercise by saying, *"I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."*

Prayer is God's appointment, the Spirit's gift, the saints' privilege, and the scourge of Satan. **Therefore, prize and use it.**

FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM'S REJECTION OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

By: Rev. Ivan Foster

It is sad to see the Queen being made the mouthpiece of the Westminster Government as it sets its face against the Word of God and submits afresh to the dictates of the sodomite lobby.

It was reported in a national daily newspaper that:

“Government launches consultation on banning ‘abhorrent and coercive’ conversion therapy that aims to ‘cure’ gay men and women.”

We do not have any respect for the ‘Conversion Therapy’ born of ‘Neo-evangelicalism’! We count it a fabrication and a blasphemous counterfeit of that conversion spoken of in the Bible. The Saviour said: *“Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven”* Matthew 18:3.

Peter the Apostle said to the people gathered around at the sight of the lame man healed by Peter and who were part of the mob involved in the crucifixion of the Lord: *“And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did [it], as [did] also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord”* Acts 3:17-19.

David prayed for spiritual recovery from his terrible backsliding and for a reviving of his soul in order that he might carry out his duty to the unbeliever. *“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; [that] the bones [which] Thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me [with Thy] free spirit. [Then] will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee”* Psalm 51:7-13.

The converting of men, women and children to faith in Christ is the central purpose of the preaching of the Gospel. It is only then, as Peter states, that sin will be dealt with effectively. *“Be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.”*

Part of the newspaper article read:

“Ministers have pledged to end the ‘abhorrent and coercive’ practice which seeks to make LGBT people heterosexual; but there are fears that the measures contain a loophole for religious groups who are the main proponents of the highly controversial therapy, which critics say is a form of abuse.”

HOWLS

The ‘Queen’s Speech’ outlined the Government aims. “The speech sets out plans for a consultation and also says that it will also ensure ‘medical professionals, religious leaders, teachers and parents can continue to be able to have open and honest conversations with people’. The Report goes on to say: “The Government has also commissioned research into the scope of practices and experiences of those subjected to conversion therapy.”

We can well imagine what howls of opposition to the Gospel that ‘research’ will contain!

BORIS HAS SPOKEN!

The Report continues: “In March, Boris Johnson said ending conversion therapy is ‘technically complex’ but insisted that Ministers will ‘stamp it out’ after three LGBT advisers resigned in protest.”

So the Government is committed to end ‘Conversion Therapy’ but, to accomplish that and satisfy the pro-sodomite lobby, it will also have to ban the plain preaching of the Gospel.

Such is the agenda, the true agenda of this bunch of perverted lobbyists. ‘Stop the preaching of the Gospel’ is their slogan! These enemies of righteousness will not be content with the outlawing of the fallacious ‘Conversion Therapy’, run by those who would term themselves as ‘Christians’, but they want to really outlaw the plain preaching of the Word of God.



THE DAY OF APOSTASY

The day spoken of by Paul in the parting record of his words, recorded by the Holy Ghost before his departing this scene of time as a martyr were these: *"I charge [thee] therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His Kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry"* 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

The time of not enduring sound doctrine has come. The itching ears time has come. The turning of the ear from the truth time has come. The time of turning to fables has come.

These terms all fit that bunch who profess to believe the Gospel and call themselves Christian, whom we see all around us today.

Just such a person is quoted in the newspaper article.

"Jayne Ozanne, an evangelical Christian and a former Whitehall equalities advisor, tweeted: 'Yet more consultation - what LGBT+ people need is protection from all those that believe they should be changed or be celibate for life'".

Note the words: "What LGBT+ people need is protection from all those that believe they should be changed." That is certainly a shot at those who teach that sodomites of every shade need that which Paul states was the experience of some who lived in that sin before the Gospel came to Corinth.



"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God"
1 Cor. 6:9-11.

In these verses is a full exposition of what true conversion entails. It most certainly is not the 'therapy' offered by those who engage in 'Conversion Therapy'!

Those referred to by Paul were not subjected to anything 'abhorrent and coercive'. They are now rejoicing in Heaven and singing unto Him *"that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us Kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen"* Revelation 1:5-6.

The likes of 'Jayne Ozanne', quoted above, would deny ALL SINNERS this same glorious experience.

May the Lord help all His people to so stand.

THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE ANNUAL RESOLUTION 2021

Passed at their Annual General Meeting on 22nd May 2021.

We, the Trustees, of the Gospel Magazine are deeply saddened at the recent death of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh. We would like to extend our sympathies to Her Majesty The Queen and to the Royal family.

We also humbly request Her Majesty The Queen to follow the example of her father, King George VI, in the Second World War, and call the people of this nation to a day of prayer for repentance from national and personal sin, and intercession to Almighty God to deliver us from just judgment.

Philip Lievesley
Secretary and Treasurer,
THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE

FROM BABYLON TO BABYLON

The Roman Pope Travels from Mystical to Literal Babylon

By: Shaun Willcock
Bible Based Ministries

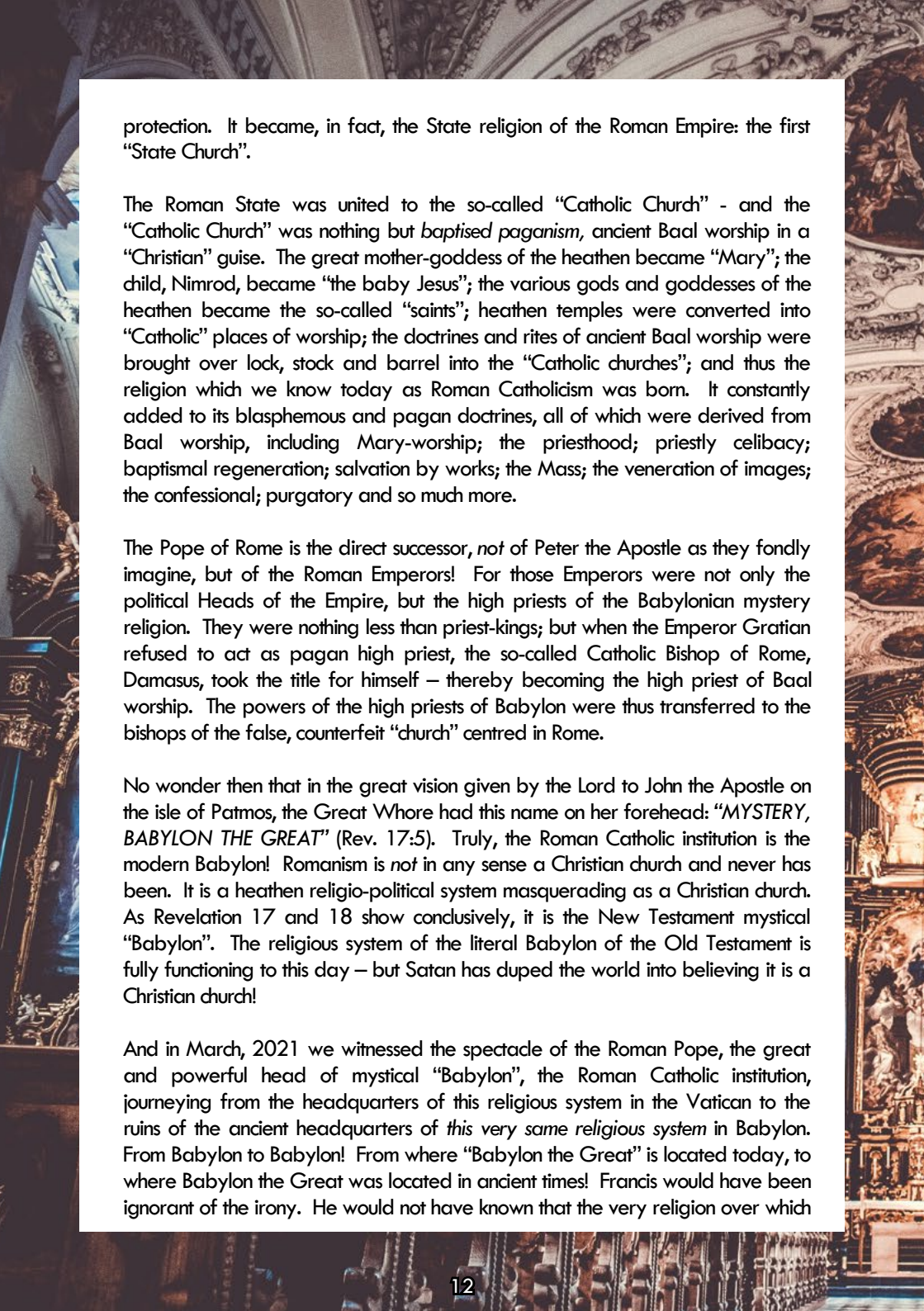
In March 2021 the Roman pontiff, Francis I, visited Iraq, meeting political and religious leaders etc; and while there he also visited the site of ancient Babylon.

Babylon was once the world's capital, seat of the greatest Empire of its day. The ancient records reveal that Cush, the son of Ham, the son of Noah, was the first great idolater after the world-wide flood, leading men away from the worship of the true God. Furthermore, according to ancient history he was the instigator of the building of the tower of Babel (see Gen. 11). His son, Nimrod, became the first King of Babylon and developed it into a great Empire (Gen 10:8-10).

And it was Nimrod who, along with his mother Semiramis, developed the religion of Baal worship. When he died, Semiramis continued this religious system in secret, which was the origin of the ancient Babylonian Mysteries. This religion began to spread around the world, taking on different names in different countries, but always expressing essentially the same religious rites and doctrines. It was the religion of the so-called Goddess-Mother and her Child - in reality the worship of Semiramis and Nimrod under various names worldwide. Baal worship is strongly condemned in Scripture, where the goddess-mother is called by such names as Ashtaroth and the Queen of Heaven and the deified son as Tammuz and Baal.

Babylon was therefore the source of world idolatry, as it is written in God's Word: *"Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad"* (Jer. 51:7). Baal worship corrupted the whole earth.

And Babylon's wine is still causing the earth to reel with drunkenness today. Babylon's location has changed – but the wine is the same. For the religion of Baal worship eventually spread from there to the city of Rome – and Rome became in time the world headquarters of Baal worship, with the pagan Roman Emperors becoming the *"supreme pontiffs"*. And, although the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century AD claimed to become a Christian, it was a false claim – he was never truly converted but continued to worship the sun god until his death; but under his rule the so-called "Catholic church", a paganised version of "Christianity" (which of course was not true Christianity at all) was given State



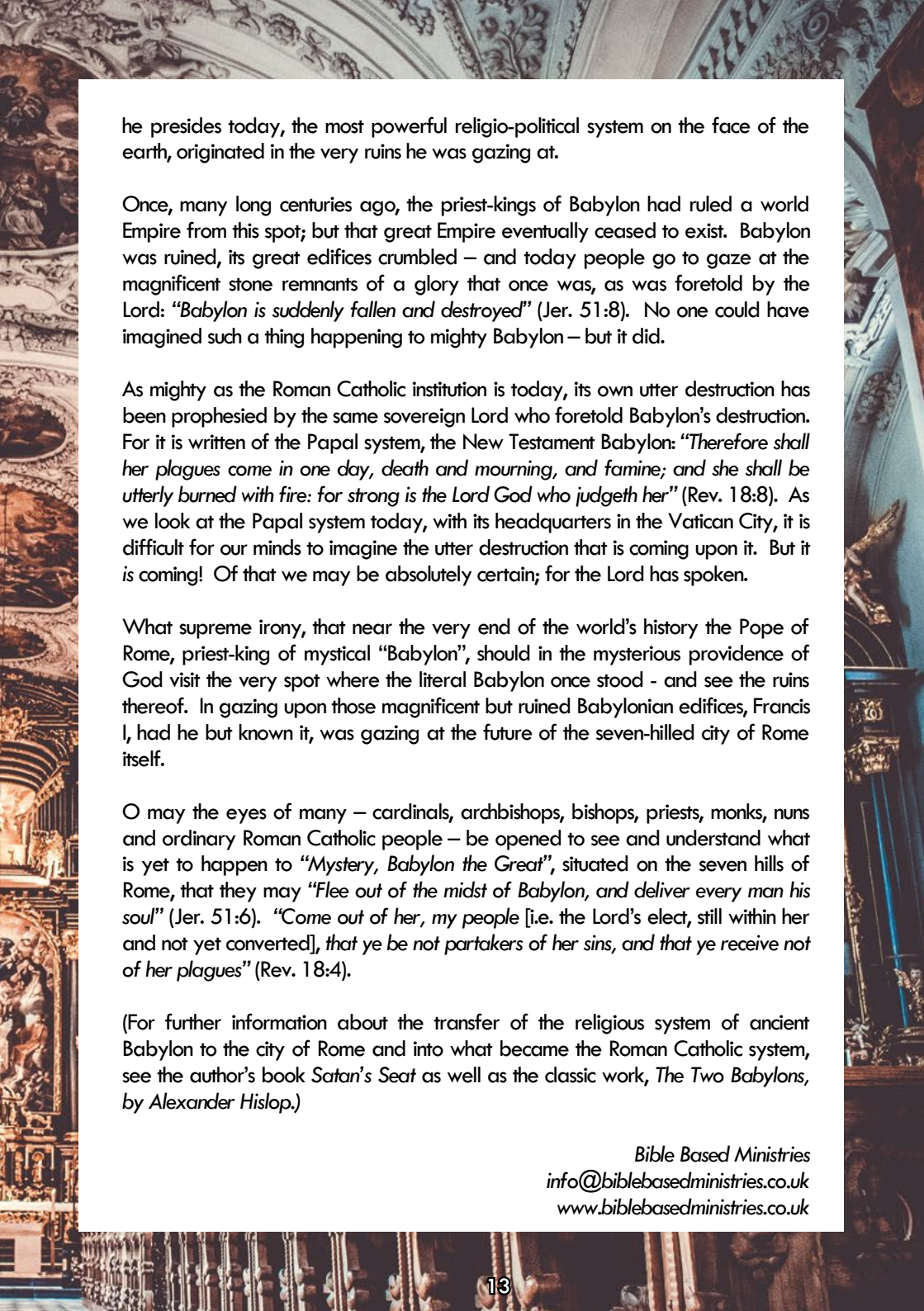
protection. It became, in fact, the State religion of the Roman Empire: the first “State Church”.

The Roman State was united to the so-called “Catholic Church” - and the “Catholic Church” was nothing but *baptised paganism*, ancient Baal worship in a “Christian” guise. The great mother-goddess of the heathen became “Mary”; the child, Nimrod, became “the baby Jesus”; the various gods and goddesses of the heathen became the so-called “saints”; heathen temples were converted into “Catholic” places of worship; the doctrines and rites of ancient Baal worship were brought over lock, stock and barrel into the “Catholic churches”; and thus the religion which we know today as Roman Catholicism was born. It constantly added to its blasphemous and pagan doctrines, all of which were derived from Baal worship, including Mary-worship; the priesthood; priestly celibacy; baptismal regeneration; salvation by works; the Mass; the veneration of images; the confessional; purgatory and so much more.

The Pope of Rome is the direct successor, *not* of Peter the Apostle as they fondly imagine, but of the Roman Emperors! For those Emperors were not only the political Heads of the Empire, but the high priests of the Babylonian mystery religion. They were nothing less than priest-kings; but when the Emperor Gratian refused to act as pagan high priest, the so-called Catholic Bishop of Rome, Damasus, took the title for himself – thereby becoming the high priest of Baal worship. The powers of the high priests of Babylon were thus transferred to the bishops of the false, counterfeit “church” centred in Rome.

No wonder then that in the great vision given by the Lord to John the Apostle on the isle of Patmos, the Great Whore had this name on her forehead: “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT” (Rev. 17:5). Truly, the Roman Catholic institution is the modern Babylon! Romanism is *not* in any sense a Christian church and never has been. It is a heathen religio-political system masquerading as a Christian church. As Revelation 17 and 18 show conclusively, it is the New Testament mystical “Babylon”. The religious system of the literal Babylon of the Old Testament is fully functioning to this day – but Satan has duped the world into believing it is a Christian church!

And in March, 2021 we witnessed the spectacle of the Roman Pope, the great and powerful head of mystical “Babylon”, the Roman Catholic institution, journeying from the headquarters of this religious system in the Vatican to the ruins of the ancient headquarters of *this very same religious system* in Babylon. From Babylon to Babylon! From where “Babylon the Great” is located today, to where Babylon the Great was located in ancient times! Francis would have been ignorant of the irony. He would not have known that the very religion over which



he presides today, the most powerful religio-political system on the face of the earth, originated in the very ruins he was gazing at.

Once, many long centuries ago, the priest-kings of Babylon had ruled a world Empire from this spot; but that great Empire eventually ceased to exist. Babylon was ruined, its great edifices crumbled – and today people go to gaze at the magnificent stone remnants of a glory that once was, as was foretold by the Lord: *“Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed”* (Jer. 51:8). No one could have imagined such a thing happening to mighty Babylon – but it did.

As mighty as the Roman Catholic institution is today, its own utter destruction has been prophesied by the same sovereign Lord who foretold Babylon's destruction. For it is written of the Papal system, the New Testament Babylon: *“Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her”* (Rev. 18:8). As we look at the Papal system today, with its headquarters in the Vatican City, it is difficult for our minds to imagine the utter destruction that is coming upon it. But it is coming! Of that we may be absolutely certain; for the Lord has spoken.

What supreme irony, that near the very end of the world's history the Pope of Rome, priest-king of mystical “Babylon”, should in the mysterious providence of God visit the very spot where the literal Babylon once stood - and see the ruins thereof. In gazing upon those magnificent but ruined Babylonian edifices, Francis I, had he but known it, was gazing at the future of the seven-hilled city of Rome itself.

O may the eyes of many – cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, nuns and ordinary Roman Catholic people – be opened to see and understand what is yet to happen to *“Mystery, Babylon the Great”*, situated on the seven hills of Rome, that they may *“Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul”* (Jer. 51:6). *“Come out of her, my people [i.e. the Lord's elect, still within her and not yet converted], that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues”* (Rev. 18:4).

(For further information about the transfer of the religious system of ancient Babylon to the city of Rome and into what became the Roman Catholic system, see the author's book *Satan's Seat* as well as the classic work, *The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop.)

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LIVING TO GOD'S GLORY

By: J. C. Philpot

Wherever the grace of God is, it constrains its partaker to desire to live to His honour and glory; but he soon finds the difficulty of so doing. Such is the weakness of the flesh, the power of sin, the subtlety of Satan, the strength of temptation and the snares spread on every side for our feet, that we can neither do what we would, nor be what we would. Before we are well aware, we get entangled with some idol, or drawn aside into some indulgence of the flesh, which brings darkness into the mind and may cut us out some bitter work for the rest of our days.

But we thus learn not only the weakness of the flesh, but where and in whom all our strength lies. And as the grace of the Lord Jesus, in its suitability, in its sufficiency and its super-aboundings, becomes manifested in and by the weakness of the flesh, a sense of His wondrous love and care in so bearing with us, in so pitying our case and manifesting mercy where we might justly expect wrath, constrains us with a holy obligation to walk in His fear and to live to His praise.

We are such strange creatures. We are willing and more than willing to be taught of the Lord, for we are continually, in all sincerity of heart, begging Him to teach us; and yet we do not like His way of teaching when it crimps the flesh. We feel earnestly desirous to live to the honour and glory of God; and yet when to do so demands

some sacrifice of money, or ease, or comfort, or reputation – still more when it seems to require the plucking out of a right eye, or the cutting off of a right hand, then we draw back and rebel that there is not a more easy and pleasant way for the flesh. And yet, perhaps, it we are enabled to make the sacrifice required by the Word and our conscience, there is a sweetness to our spirit mingled with the bitterness to the flesh. It is almost with these bitters to the flesh as Mr. Hart speaks of repentance:

“Nor is it such a dismal thing
As ‘tis by some men named;
A sinner may repent and sing,
Rejoice and be ashamed.”

It, perhaps, has been a call to make a sacrifice of a little money in possession or in prospect; and after a stout battle between a liberal spirit and a covetous heart, the better principle prevailed. Now, when the victory has been gained, do we not often find that what has been given is but little missed; and the good it has done to the cause of truth, or to any of the Lord's poor and needy children, is an ample compensation for having overcome the opposition of a covetous spirit and the crying out of the old man as he had a nail or two driven into his miserly fist? But, soon, perhaps - as the old man dies hard and writhes under the crucifying nail - there will come forth a cry from us, or some one connected with us, “Spare thyself. Why, if you go on like

that, you will rob your wife and family and bring them to beggary. There is this and that bill to be paid and you know how hardly money is got – and how swiftly gone.”

But some kind providence turns up and then drops the head into the dust, with a “Lord, I am vile, and Thou art good. Pardon my covetous, unbelieving heart. O let me never doubt Thee again.” So, if a little of our good name or fame, or darling respectability must be parted with, the flesh soon begins to cry out and cannot endure the shame of the cross. But how soon the Lord can so break in upon our heart with a sense of His goodness, mercy and love as to make us feel even unworthy to suffer shame for His Name’s sake and count it an honour to endure His reproach.

We need not pursue the subject further. Our readers’ own experience will supply them with abundant instances both of the weakness and wickedness of the flesh and the super-aboundings of grace; and they will agree with us that both misery and mercy, all that we have seen and felt of the evil of sin and all that we have tasted, felt and handled of salvation, all that we know of self, and all that we know of the Lord, call upon us and constrain us, as with one voice, to walk in His fear, live to His praise and seek to glorify Him with our body and spirit, which are His.

And with this desire will certainly follow a willing readiness to serve the Lord’s cause, help the Lord’s poor, sympathise with them in their afflictions and trials and manifest to

them our esteem, affection and love.

In what other way can we manifest the trust and reality, the life and power of our religion? Men will judge us – and rightly judge us – by our works, not by our words; by our fruit, not by our leaves; by our Christian spirit, meekness, quietness, humility, sincerity, disinterestedness, readiness to serve rather than to rule, and general willingness to bear and forebear, to seek others’ advantage, not our own, and do what good we can to the souls and body of our fellow men.

*From: Sin and Salvation
Selections from J. C. Philpot
Edited by B. A. Ramsbottom*

“With well doing ye may put to silence.”
1 Peter 2:15

Watched by the world with jealous eye,
That fain would see our sin and shame,
As servants of the Lord most high,
As zealous for His glorious Name,
May we in all His footsteps move
With holy fear and humble love.

That wisdom, Lord, on us bestow,
From every evil to depart;
To stop the mouth of every foe
By upright walk, and lowly heart;
The proofs of Godly fear to give;
And show the world how Christians live.

Gadsby Hymn 955

A GODLY MAN IS A LOVER OF THE WORD

By Thomas Watson

“Oh, how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day.”

(Psalm 119:97)

A Godly man shows his love to the written Word by diligently **reading** it. The noble Bereans ‘searched the Scriptures daily’ (Acts 17:11). The Word shows what is truth and what is error. It is the field where the pearl of price is hidden. How we should dig for this pearl!

He shows his love by frequently **meditating** on it. He has not only a few transient thoughts, but he leaves his mind steeping in the Scriptures. He delights in the Word. ‘Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart’ (Jer. 15:16).

The Godly man **prefers** the Word above things most precious: food, riches and worldly honour. King Edward VI, on the day of his coronation, when presented with three swords signifying that he was Monarch of three Kingdoms, said, ‘There is still one sword missing.’ On being asked what that was, he answered, ‘The Holy Bible, which is the ‘sword of the Spirit’ and is to be preferred before these ensigns of royalty.’

Do we love the written Word? What sums of money the martyrs gave for a few leaves of the Bible! But alas, how can they who are seldom conversant with the Scriptures say they love them?

The Godly Man’s Picture

**When the voice of Christ speaks through the Word,
then you will arise, and leave all, and follow Him.**

Robert Murray M’Cheyne

News and Current Affairs



Preaching tolerance is no longer tolerated

by Tim Dieppe of Christian Concern, 11 May, 2021, www.christianconcern.com

How can it be that a Christian chaplain at an independent school with a Christian ethos lost his job for delivering a sermon in chapel which encourages pupils to respect those with whom we may disagree?

Love your neighbour (even when you disagree)

(The full sermon can be read or watched on the Christian Concern website). In it, Dr. Bernard Randall expounds with great clarity the virtue of loving people even when we profoundly disagree with them.

“Now when ideologies compete, we should not descend into abuse, we should respect the beliefs of others, even where we disagree... Above all, we need to treat each other with respect, not personal attacks – that’s what loving your neighbour as yourself means. By all means discuss, have a reasoned debate about beliefs, but while it’s OK to try and persuade each other, no one should be told they must accept an ideology. Love the person, even where you profoundly dislike the ideas. Don’t denigrate a person simply for having opinions and beliefs which you don’t share.”



Who could reasonably disagree with that? You would have to be an extremist to say that people who don’t agree with you should not be respected. It’s a short step from there to endorsing political violence. Once you lose respect for others, you can start to dehumanise them - and then legitimise them losing rights and ultimately sanction the use of force against them.

It’s the school that is intolerant

Sadly, the evidence is that our society is moving towards a type of extremism which is just as intolerant as previous regimes have been in history. In an Orwellian manipulation of language, those who preach tolerance are branded intolerant and not tolerated.

Incredibly, Dr Bernard Randall was reported to the Government’s terrorist watchdog by

the school. He was not the one being intolerant or extremist. It is actually the school which is intolerant and a danger to children there.

What the school could not tolerate was even the suggestion that it is OK to disagree with LGBT ideology. Dr. Randall explained to the pupils that “you do not have to accept the ideas and ideologies of LGBT activists.” He did not say that they should not accept them; he merely said that they did not have to accept them. He went on:

“You should no more be told you have to accept LGBT ideology, than you should be told you must be in favour of Brexit or must be Muslim – to both of which I’m sure most of you would quite rightly object.”

Again, who could object to this? The logic is straight forward. Schools should not enforce any particular political or religious viewpoint. Let’s welcome and respect people of all different viewpoints and encourage reasoned debate.

What LGBT activists say is wrong is on gender identity. He pointed out that “some LGBT activists will happily lie about gender identity issues being a legally protected characteristic (which it isn’t).” This claim had been made by the organisation Educate and Celebrate in the school. Dr. Randall was quite right to correct this point of fact for the pupils. He would be remiss not to do so.



A rival ideology

Here is where the intolerance of the LGBT ideology becomes clear. Even the suggestion that some people might disagree with LGBT doctrine – and should be free to do so - is too threatening to be tolerated. Dr. Randall doesn’t even say that he disagrees with LGBT ideology. Neither does he say that pupils should not accept it. He merely says that they don’t have to accept it.

Dr. Randall was, after all, only fulfilling his job description. It is the job of the chaplain to uphold the Christian ethos of the school. As he points out in his article in *The Critic*,

“But if you want to import a different belief system into the school, don’t expect the chaplain to sit idly by. And make no mistake, this is a different belief system.”

At root this is a clash of ideologies. LGBT ideology is fundamentally opposed to Christian ideology when it comes to the nature of humanity and sexual morality. What's more, as is becoming more and more evident in cases like these, it is fundamentally intolerant of Christian ideology.

Whose side are you on?

Schools, colleges, workplaces and individuals are increasingly being called to choose which side they are on in this clash of ideologies. Will you promote LGBT ideology or stand against it? There is no neutral ground.

Dr. Randall made clear which side he was on. He has suffered as a result, but I hope and pray that his case will serve to encourage others to resist the intolerance of LGBT. Each of us needs to make a similar decision. We are talking about rival gods. As Joshua said to the Israelites:



"Choose this day whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

Pope hangs up graphic painting of Judas in his office

By a correspondent in British Church Newspaper, 7 May, 2021

There was an extraordinary development in Rome on Maundy Thursday. That day, 3 pages of *L'Osservatore Romano*, a newspaper owned by the Holy See, were devoted to a personal message from Pope Francis, leader of the world's estimated 1.2 billion Roman Catholics.

The article, titled 'Judas and the Scandal of Mercy', featured a recent painting which the Pope had proudly displayed in his Papal office. We cannot display this in BCN for obvious reasons, because it displays Jesus Christ, with the body of Judas Iscariot (*nor can we describe the details*).



Many have referred to the current Pope's 'unhealthy pre-occupation with Judas'. Beside the new painting, the Pope also has in his study a painting of a sculpture of Christ carrying the body of Judas – which can be found on the capital of a column in the Basilica of St. Mary Magdalen, Vézelay, France. In 2016, Francis speculated: “Perhaps if he had met the Virgin Mary, things would have gone differently, but the poor man goes away, doesn’t find a way out of his situation and he went to hang himself.”

In 2017, Francis returned to the subject of Judas, making the bizarre comment: “I do not claim that Judas is in heaven and saved; but I do not claim the opposite” – an apparent reference to the Papal doctrine of purgatory. At Easter in 2020, he wrote: “How did Judas end? Is Judas in Hell? I don’t know.”



Director of *L'Osservatore Romano*, *Andrea Monda*, in a front-page editorial, wrote: “This year we will highlight this most tragic and unsettling figure in the New Testament.” The untitled painting.....was painted by an unnamed French Roman Catholic artist. Monda said the painting “is the fruit of the meditations of Pope Francis’s 2018 book *Quando pregate dite Padre Nostro* (When you pray, say ‘Our Father’). He adds: “The painter was inspired by the sculpture portraying Jesus as the Good Shepherd, carrying Judas as the ‘last lost sheep’.

[Other highly controversial sermons and articles were also included in the newspaper depicting Judas as ‘Our Brother Judas’ - and one suggesting that “Gospel writer John distorted the truth by a dishonest portray of the hapless figure of Judas”.]

The website ‘ChurchMilitant.com’ commented: “The Vatican’s most prestigious publication dedicated its Maundy Thursday edition to rehabilitating Judas Iscariot through word and art”. In John 17:12, Judas, a fake Christian who proved a traitor, is described as ‘the son of perdition’. The only other reference in the Bible to a ‘son of perdition’ comes in 2 Thessalonians 2, where Paul, according to Protestant understanding, describes that great fake man that would emerge from the ashes of the Roman Empire: the Papacy.

Abbreviated

Letter from Israel

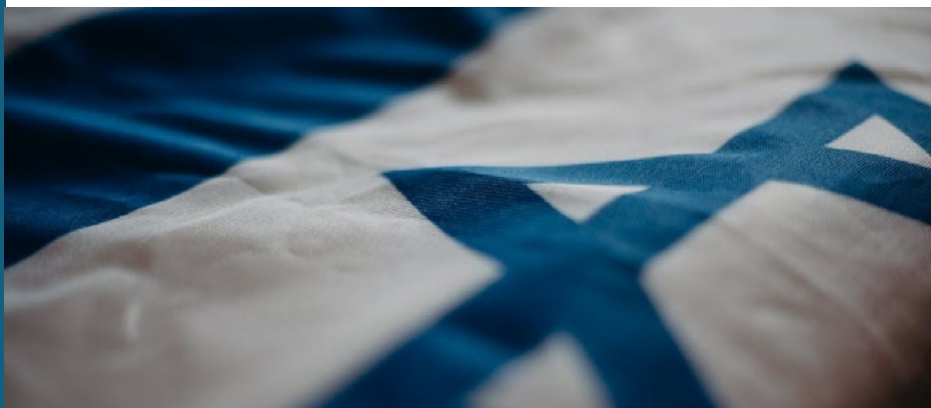
May, 2021 (Israel)

Thank you for your many prayers and messages. So many of you have been asking about 'our peace', the Hebrew expression for 'how are you?'

Re the war with Gaza: J... is located in Judean hills in Yad Hasmonah and Mevasseret above the coastal plains where Tel Aviv, Ashdod, Ashkelon and Beer Sheba are located. There was one barrage of 7 missiles sent toward the hills. It all started on *Jerusalem Day*, May 10. We heard the sudden siren in the office and then heard the missile hit the ground in a village just a few km. away. A strange feeling, someone wants to hurt you. Thankfully it has been quiet here ever since.

All of south and central Israel, however, with its major cities and nearby big and small communities, have been experiencing almost uninterrupted assault of missiles for the last 6 days and nights. Over 2,300 missiles or more have been sent toward Israel's civilian centres with death and destruction in mind. Obviously, daily life has stopped in those communities. Families huddle in the safety rooms or corridors. Many of the deadly missiles are intercepted by Iron Dome, a few fall within Gaza territory, but many destroy homes in the targeted areas somewhere within the most populated centre area of Israel - and some kill civilians, the aim of Hamas, a terrorist organisation. The reason for relatively low civilian casualties is the fact Iron Dome intercepted the missiles and that most modern homes in Israel have safety rooms to which one is to flee within 20 - 60 seconds depending on the distance from Gaza. There have been 10 people killed on the Israeli side and some hundreds wounded.

Israel has responded to the missiles which deliberately target its citizens by sending its Airforce to attempt to stop the Hamas missiles by destroying the places from which they are sent; the tunnels where most of Hamas activity and arms are located, their offices and infrastructure – and the leaders themselves.



Of the 145 killed in Gaza most belong to Hamas personnel of different levels, but there have been also innocent civilians including 45 children. Contrary to Hamas, Israel does not target civilians. It warns the people in the buildings in advance, when it plans to destroy the Hamas offices there; otherwise, there would have been a huge amount of civilian casualties. As is constantly respected in the Israeli media, the Israeli public is concerned about civilians, especially for the children. The aim is to remove the terrorist leadership and its infrastructure - rocket launching pads first and then the rocket factories and Hamas leadership.

The issue between Israel and Hamas and the Moslems within Israel (20% of Israel's citizens) is a religious issue basically between Islam's claims and Jewish claims. It flares up especially during the Moslem holy month of Ramadan when Moslems neither eat or drink during daylight hours. This time the spark had to do with legally Jewish-owned property rented by Arabs for years which the Jewish owners now wanted back - and they were supported by the High Court. The Temple Mount in Jerusalem is another point of contention. That is the place where the temple stood in Jesus' time until 70 AD. The Moslem mosque has been standing there since 691 AD. The religious feelings are now high among extreme groups among both the Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs. The extremists are committing atrocities that have never been done within the country. The Israeli Government is now in the process of taking control of the ethnic violence in Israeli cities.

Countering against the wave of hatred are the large demonstrations of the show of solidarity and unity between Arab and Israeli citizens in different locations in Israel, in Haifa, Tivon and near our neighbouring Arab village Abu Gosh when 1500 people from Arab and Jewish communities showed up to express unity and good relationships between the communities.

The Israeli hospitals are full of Arab nurses and doctors. Our daughter works in one and the friendship and appreciation is genuine. They serve the patients of both communities with equal devotion, for example during the stressful year of corona in the country.



Hate Crimes

Editorial in British Church Newspaper, 21 May, 2021

We are told that the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service have agreed a definition of a religious hate crime as - "Any incident/crime which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's religion or perceived religion."

And they add helpfully - "There is no legal definition of hostility so we use the everyday understanding of the word which includes ill-will, spite, contempt, prejudice, unfriendliness, antagonism, resentment and dislike."

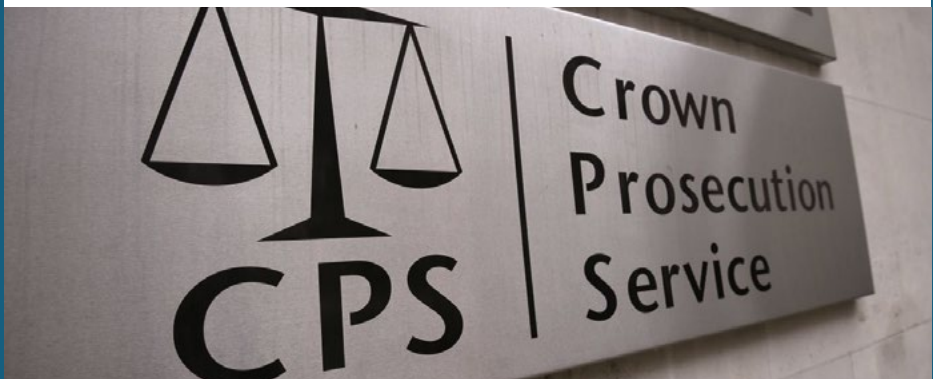
Their definitions strike us as vague or subjective! The law is a catch-all.

The Crown Prosecution Service can always say that they will not proceed because they think proceedings would not be in the public interest; so the law can pick and choose its targets. A street preacher of good character can be led off like a violent criminal on the basis of a false accusation by a person who has the right to remain anonymous. But who is really guilty of hating? The accuser or the accused?

Christ told us - *"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you"* (John 15:19).

Yet we must not leave it there. The most vicious hate crime of all was committed against Christ on the cross. His response was *"Father, forgive them!"* Then He actually made excuses for them! *"for they know not what they do."*

But there is more. *"Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him"* (Rev. 1:7). God has His hate laws too.



“THE ONE THING NEEDFUL” - Luke 10:42

Many things occupy our hearts and minds; but only “one thing” is absolutely needful to our comfort, welfare and happiness, either as respects our present experience or future prospects and that is – *communion with Jesus*. Mary attained this “good part:” and, in inviting your attention to this most interesting subject, we will, in the first place, attempt to describe “the one thing needful;” secondly, to show how it is obtained; and thirdly, inquire why “the one thing needful” is so essential and desirable.

1. “*The one thing needful*” - The object of the brief history of the visit to Bethany is to inform us that communion with Jesus is the principal thing - and then to instruct us what that communion is. A contrast is seen between the two sisters – the one careful and troubled, the other quietly sitting at the Saviour’s feet; the one perplexed with many things, the other occupied with one thing; the one anxious to serve, the other desirous to learn; the one busy and bustling, the other waiting and watching. We would not imply that Martha was altogether wrong – Jesus does not say that; but it is certain she was neither so wise nor so happy as her sister. Moreover, we must not forget that there can be no acceptable service until there has been a previous humble, docile receiving of Christ’s word.

The fellowship which Mary held with the Master is expressed in the statement that she “sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word.” Sweet position! Most blessed occupation! Here is restfulness and contentment. Mary found her lowly posture so full of comfort, she did not seek to change it. Poor, weary, restless child of God, learn that there is no peace anywhere but in quietly waiting at Christ’s blessed feet. Mary did not say much – there was no need. Her action in seating herself *there* spoke louder than words and plainly declared her desire to learn of Him.

Again, the sitting “at His feet” is very significant of humility. She was willing to be on a level with, and near to, His lowest members. And now she is privileged to enter into the true spirit of close communion, which consisted in listening to His teaching and looking up into His face. How sweet the lesson! She looked up and watched His words. Her very attitude was one of unspoken, unconscious prayer. She was willing to be instructed and thus manifested a meek and teachable disposition. Mary “sat at Jesus’ feet” because she loved her Lord so much that she could only be happy near Him.

Is this thy case? Oh, those who live at a distance find naught but unrest, disquiet and dissatisfaction! Children privileged to keep close to their Father escape many dangers and much discomfort. At His feet Mary “heard His word.” Turning away from every other voice, she lovingly listened to the utterances of His grace and received His teaching believingly into her heart of hearts.

This personal close acquaintance with Jesus is so desirable and yet alas, so little known and, we fear, so little sought after. His mercy and love overflow in rich streams of grace, permitting “a worm of the dust with Him to commune as a Friend” and imparting wisdom, consolation, instruction and strength to waiting, listening, looking, longing Mary. Let us now ascertain –

2. How “the one thing needful” is obtained – It is evident that, if Divine wisdom had not revealed it to Mary, she never would and never could have sought and found it at the Saviour’s feet. Heavenly wisdom is displayed by those who care about their soul’s salvation and love the Lord. These fruits do not grow on nature’s barren tree, but are produced by the quickening operations of the blessed Spirit of the living God. He makes His people willing in the day of His power; and it appears from the statement of Jesus, “Mary hath chosen that good part,” that it was voluntarily embraced by her – the act of her choice – which signifies a drawing of the heart to desire it. This is the first step towards obtaining possession of “the one thing needful,” i.e. communion with Jesus. The desires of the heart go forth to Jesus; the thoughts of the mind are sometimes fixed upon His Name; the understanding is enlightened to see the excellency of the lot of those who are privileged to possess the sweet rest of faith. Seekers always find and, like Mary, choose (it is an act of the will) that good part, which consists in letting the world go and cleaving to Jesus; holding earthly things with a loose hand and Christ with a loving heart. In short, as it is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit to teach the sinner his need, and to reveal Christ, the Supply of that need; so it is by the revealings and enablings of the same Spirit that poor sinners are brought into the enjoyment of communion with Him.

3. Why “the one thing needful” is so essential and desirable - The first reason that offers itself is because everything is included in communion with Christ. There is wisdom, happiness, peace, pardon, joy, rest, light, life, love, comfort, sanctification – in fact, every spiritual blessing is stored up in the heavenlies in Christ and, by communion, these blessings are imparted. This fellowship with Him does not consist merely in making the wants and wishes of the soul known by prayer, but in leanings on Him and lookings to Him and drawings from Him of precious faith. Without this, religion is an empty form. It is “the one thing needful.”

These communications to and from Jesus are needful to get through life comfortably and to die happily. There is no other way to Heaven. Those who sit at His feet here, shall sit on His throne hereafter.

Further, the Lord Jesus is glorified and honoured by that true discipleship which would first learn of Him how to serve - and which fears to perform service without previous instruction. He is the Teacher sent from God.

Lastly, communion with Him is needful to support us amid the trials, temptations, tempests and tribulations by which we are surrounded in the present time state. It is at His feet that He is “able to succour them that are tempted.” Thus, casting all our cares upon Him, we find, notwithstanding our foes, fears, sins and shortcomings, He careth for us.

We conclude these few feeble observations on a precious subject by breathing forth the desires of our heart in the language of good John Berridge –

“Teach me with child-like mind to sit
And sing at the dear Saviour’s feet,
Without distrust or fear.”

By: Edward Carr

WHEN A NATION PRAYS

A NEW BOOK

By: **Pastor Peter Simpson**

Penn Free Methodist Church and CW Committee Member

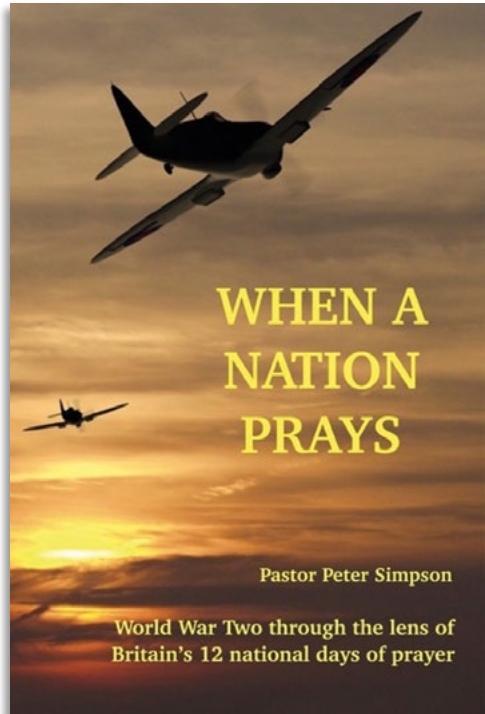
CAN PRAYER CHANGE HISTORY? In 2017, two highly acclaimed films were released about the early stages of WW2, 'Dunkirk' and 'Darkest Hour' - but what vital fact of history did both films leave out?

Both films made no mention of a most crucial factor at the time of the Dunkirk evacuation in 1940, namely the National Day of Prayer called for by the King on May 26th. This nationwide crying out to God for help led to an unfolding of events which many saw as nothing less than miraculous.

Altogether, there were 12 national days of prayer held in Britain during World War Two. The author features these days of prayer and focuses on the outworking of God's providence throughout the war years. The book also provides a useful summary of all the main events of the war from a British perspective.

What do these occasions of a nationwide turning to God teach us about the spiritual state of Britain during World War Two? How strong was true Bible-believing Christianity? What was the effect of the days of prayer on the actual progress of the war? What do the events of World War Two teach us about the providence of God and His control over the affairs of nations?

Drawing upon local newspaper reports, Pastor Simpson endeavours to trace the spiritual temperature of Britain during these years of conflict - and to apply the vital lessons to our own day.



The book (paperback, 156 pages) is priced at £6.75 (£4.75 + £2 p&p) and can be obtained in two ways:

- Penn Free Methodist church website: www.realchristianity.org
- or by post from Mrs. J. Langston, 19 St. John's Road, Tyler's Green, Buckinghamshire, HP10 8HW, making cheques payable to P. Simpson.

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