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How Can Prayer Be Heard?

It is everyone's duty to pray. Yet there is a serious difficulty: how can a holy God answer the petitions of a guilty sinner? So Isaiah was directed to tell rebellious Israel: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear" (Is 59:2). It was as if their prayers could not reach heaven because a mountain of sin was standing between them and their God and it was hiding God's face from them – so that He could not show them favour. If they were to take their sins seriously, they would have to ask how their prayers could possibly ever be heard. It should be clear that no one in any generation has any right to the least blessing from God. As fallen in Adam, we are all sinners; we are all rebels against our Creator.

We get some light on the solution to this difficulty when we read of Abraham coming to "a mountain on the east of Bethel"; he "pitched his tent" there and "built an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord" (Gen 12:8). This suggests to us that Abraham recognised his need of a sacrifice before he could pray with a hope of being heard; he saw it as the way God had appointed so that sin might be forgiven and sinners have access to God. While the Old Testament sacrifices could not actually take away sin, they were God's appointed way to be reconciled to Him. The believing offerer was seeing in the sacrifice a God-appointed substitute for himself and, by faith, was laying hold on the divine provision, to be made in the fullness of time, whereby sin could truly be put away.

Similarly it is only on the basis of a sacrifice, appointed by God and accepted by Him, that a sinner can be heard today. But we are in a far better position than Abraham. The Son of God came into the world and took our nature so that He might have an offering which actually would take away sin. He has offered that sacrifice; He has thus opened a way for sinners to approach God. Prayer is heard, for He is the Mediator. We are to pray "for Jesus' sake" – that is, we are to present our petitions while looking by faith to the One who died for sinners and is now at the right hand of the Father making continual intercession. There was no reason for Abraham to restrain

prayer before God; guilty though he was, a way of access to God had been revealed to him. More emphatically, there is no reason for us, in this New Testament age, to restrain prayer before God; a clearer and more perfect way of access has been revealed to us – through Jesus Christ, the exalted Saviour.

Yet when God's children feel their unworthiness, are they justified in restraining prayer? Most certainly not; it is important for them to remember that they are "accepted in the Beloved", not in themselves. The fact is that they can never be worthy of God's gifts. Surely David had every right to be conscious of his unworthiness when in unbelief he fled to the Philistines because of his fear that he would "perish one day by the hand of Saul". Yet he could record to the glory of God: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps 34:6). Even when an unworthy distrust of God's goodness made him flee among the heathen, David's prayers were heard.

God's children have to learn more and more that none of their prayers are heard because they are worthy – whether they are in their best state or their worst. They will always be unworthy; it is Christ who is worthy – altogether worthy. So let them come boldly to the throne of grace, not looking to themselves – not even to a worthiness that they might yet develop – but to Christ, "who is even at the right hand of God", to make continual intercession for them (Rom 8:34) in spite of their sins and unworthiness.

Think of Paul approaching Athens with a view to speaking there for his Master. We can well believe that he gave special time to prayer on his way there and, no doubt, as he walked along the way, his heart was rising up again and again in prayer to God for a blessing on what he might be led to say. And he was heard, though the results of his preaching in Athens were much less than in many other places. But why was he heard? Certainly not for the sake of his worthiness, his godliness, or his faithfulness. He was heard because the great Intercessor in heaven expressed His will, before the Father, that Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris should believe, and others besides.

Similarly on the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out in such power that 3000 individuals were brought into the kingdom of God, it was in answer to prayer. The disciples had "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" in the upper room in Jerusalem since Jesus had ascended to heaven. Why were their prayers answered? Not because of the disciples' holiness, earnestness or unity. It was because the exalted Saviour had taken their petitions and – to the extent it pleased Him to do so – had presented them to the Father as His own will. He had done so on the ground that He had died for each of the 3000, had kept the law as their Substitute,

and so had merited a full salvation for them. And the time had now come for them to be drawn into the kingdom of God to enjoy all the blessings which Christ had purchased for them.

Believers pray for sanctification, perseverance in grace, and the supply of all their needs. They will be heard because Christ's intercession for them will continue; He will express His will in heaven that, in accordance with the provisions of the covenant of grace, these blessings be granted. Then, at the time appointed, He will say, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory" (John 17:24). And He will be heard. At their death, they will be brought to heaven; they will, as to their souls, be made perfect in holiness; and when Christ will come the second time, He will reunite body and soul. Then their salvation will be complete. It will be the final answer to all the prayers they sent up from this world to heaven, for Christ's sake. And they will see that what He purchased for them was a complete salvation – altogether beyond what they could ask or think. But let us remind ourselves that these prayers are heard only because they were presented before the Father by the great Intercessor.

What encouragement then they have to pray! Robert Traill expressed this in a remarkable way. Christ, he believed, had set His love on him, and so had sent the Holy Spirit to work faith in his heart; he therefore had a right to exercise that faith in asking for every good thing that was in the divine purpose for him. "If faith in Christ be the work of His love," to use Traill's own words, "how warrantably may I look, by that faith, for all the good that this love purposeth, promiseth and prayeth for to me!" But how much the children of God lose by underestimating the authority of the warrant that is theirs to look by faith for all the good that Christ in His love has promised them!

Yet where does this leave those who are still unconverted, or fear that they are still unconverted? One matter should be clear: all, however sinful, however far away from God, are duty bound to pray. But how dare an unholy sinner approach the infinitely holy God in prayer? The sinner is to come on the basis of the finished work of Christ, which is freely set before him in the gospel. When Christ says to the sinner: "Come unto Me", He is directing the sinner to look to Him, to believe in Him. The sinner therefore is to come boldly to the throne of grace with his eye on the Mediator – that is, believing in Christ as the One who offered Himself up as the one effective sacrifice so that the ungodly might be reconciled to God. Christ Himself assures sinners that, however far away from God they may feel, "whosoever believeth in Him" will "not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). No one has any right to stay away from the throne of grace; neither has anyone the right to stay away from Christ. His calls to us have infinite authority.

The Saviour's Compassion¹

A Sermon by *Charles Calder Mackintosh*

Luke 19:41,42. *And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.*

This is sacred ground. During the sojourn of our Lord on earth, nothing more impressive and solemn is recorded than His weeping over Jerusalem, except the account of His agony in Gethsemane and His death on the tree. We never read of our Saviour smiling, but we read of His weeping. He wept over the grave of Lazarus and over Jerusalem. Our Lord was now entering Jerusalem, as He had never entered it before, in triumph. It was a triumph indeed which befitted His character as the meek and lowly Jesus – not the triumph of an earthly conqueror but of a spiritual deliverer, for whose condescension no service or condition was too low to secure the salvation of sinners and for whose power nothing was too hard. Just as He tamed the ass's colt and made it submissive to His will, so does He change, by His grace, the spirits of sinful men.

Yet He permitted His disciples to express their joy freely. In answer to the Pharisees, He said, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out" (Luke 19:40). He comes in sight of Jerusalem and, all at once, in the midst of this joy, He stops and weeps. What awakened this deep emotion, and in such measure that it overflowed in weeping? He was now entering the city in triumph; within five short days He was to be led forth from it bearing His cross. One of His own disciples was to betray Him. Wicked hands were to seize Him. And after undergoing every kind of insult and reproach, He was to be put to a cruel and shameful death. This He knew. He knew all that awaited Him. Was He then overcome by the thought that in so short a time all this suffering should come upon Him? For a mere man it might be natural that such a thought, suggested at such a time, should unman him and constrain him to weep. But this was not the cause of Jesus' weeping. He thought not of Himself, but of Jerusalem.

"If thou hadst known [or, O that thou hadst known], at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes." That is, you do not and will not know them, and therefore, in a little time, the Lord will give you over altogether to your own hearts' lusts.

The Jewish nation and Jerusalem had enjoyed a long and precious day of

¹Taken, with slight editing, from *Memorials of Charles Calder Mackintosh*. Mackintosh (1806-68) began his ministry in the parish of Tain as assistant to his father and for the last 14 years of his life was Free Church minister of Dunoon..

visitation. It stretched from the time when God visited them in Egypt till the appearance of Christ Himself. During this time God had kept His visible Church among them, as His own people, blessing them with His word, ordinances and ambassadors. But though He had at all times a people among them, yet as a body, being true representatives of fallen man, they resisted and vexed His good Spirit. Instead of bearing the fruits of righteousness, they bore the grapes of Sodom and the clusters of Gomorrah.

Some of His prophets they beat and sent away empty, and some they killed. At length the Lord sent His Son to receive the fruits of the vineyard. With His coming, the measure of their privileges was filled up to the uttermost, and it was therefore fitting and right that it should be determined whether they should continue still exalted to heaven through bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, or whether, filling up the measure of their iniquity, they should be cast down to hell. They had done much already to solve this question. They had rejected their Messiah. Some of them had said of His miracles: "He hath Beelzebub, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils". And some said of His personal character, "Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" "His own" had not received Him (John 1:11).

In a few days the cry of "Hosanna to the Son of David!" was to be changed into the cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" They were to kill the Prince of life. Another gracious message was to be sent from His throne on high, "beginning at Jerusalem". But this too would be rejected; and then, as the limit would be reached which the divine forbearance could not cross, wrath would come forth against them to the uttermost, and all the threatenings recorded in the word would be executed against them. Beholding the city, and thinking of its coming destruction, He wept over it.

He saw clearly the guilt of Jerusalem – that all the judgements to come upon it would be a glorious demonstration of the justice and truth of God. Doubtless He saw its especial guilt in rejecting Himself, in hating both Him and His Father. All this He saw in its real character of desperate wickedness; yet, seeing it all, He wept over the city. He saw the certainty of its doom. No visible cloud of judgement was suspended over it; no fears were entertained by its inhabitants of approaching danger; but He knew that its sentence had gone forth, He saw the flaming sword stretched out over it. He saw the fearfulness of this doom – the holy city razed to the ground, where Old Testament saints had worshipped and, beholding His day afar off, had been glad. He saw too its inhabitants visited with a complication of natural miseries such as had never, in equal measure, met before in the case of any people – wasted and destroyed by famine, the sword and pestilence, and the remnant

of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh made a byword among all nations and driven to the four winds of heaven, not to be restored, as formerly after a banishment of 70 years, but to wander for centuries among the nations, the monuments of Jehovah's wrath.

But, more than all this, He saw multitudes of immortal souls passing into eternity with the guilt of His blood upon them, dying in darkness and cast into outer darkness. And He "would have gathered them" (Luke 13: 34). His infinitely-compassionate heart told Him how He had sought their salvation. He knew that He had come to them with glad tidings, that He had sincerely and earnestly invited them to the enjoyment of rest, that His mercy had gone out after them importunately beseeching them not to die, that He had spent His strength in labouring among them. And now finding this mercy, as it were, thrown back upon Him, returning to His breast all but empty – because, while He would have gathered them, they "would not" – He wept over their coming ruin.

We must remember that this is very holy and tender ground. It is evident that our Lord's lamentations did not arise from any want of complacency in His Father's will regarding the salvation of some and not of all: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt 11:25); or from the want of entire complacency in the threatenings of that law which attaches eternal death to sin; or from any feeling that His own work would be in vain, and that He should not "see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." (Is 49:5,6; John 6:37; 10:27,28). None of these things are to be understood.

But we trace it to the pity and mercy of His heart, overflowing in sorrow in contemplating the misery produced by sin. Unless He had been "the Lamb of God", He could not have been thus affected. It was a part of His humiliation to be "despised and rejected of men". It was a necessary consequence of His purity and love that this rejection should make Him "a man of sorrows". And it was perfectly consistent with His perfection as God-man that He should weep over the destruction of sinners, while He saw clearly that they merited their doom and while the foundations of His own happiness should be altogether untouched by the sight of their misery. We see His holy jealousy in the denunciations against the Scribes and Pharisees: "Ye hypocrites, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" We see His complacency in the punishment of the lost in the words which, He tells us, He will address to the wicked on that day: "I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity".

We see here the gushing forth of His mercy, the mercy which has "no

pleasure in the death of the wicked", the grace and tenderness and love (unselfish, self-sacrificing love) manifested in the whole of His work of humiliation and suffering, and by which He revealed the Father as "love". The mercy and love are not less real but more wondrous because they are in alliance with the purity which hates sin and the righteousness which cannot spare sin. We have the heart of Christ opened up to us, a heart filled with good will to sinners, with tenderness and compassion – yes, as having as its deepest affection, in connection with the glory of His Father, thirst for their salvation. It is full of grace, pure grace, yet holy grace which cannot desire to be exercised at the expense of righteousness or to screen the guilty. And though every tear has been wiped from His eyes, though His sorrows were over when He said, "It is finished", and He is now infinitely exalted above all sorrow, yet His heart is the same – as gracious and as full of compassion as in the days of His flesh.

Now then, let us notice a few of the truths taught us by Christ's weeping and Christ's words. There are "things which belong to our peace" in this life and in the ages of eternity, which it supremely concerns us to know. Our true peace and happiness depend on our enjoying the favour and friendship of God. If the great "God be for us, who can be against us?" But if He be against us, there is no peace to us, and our case is the more affecting and dangerous if we say, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace". God alone can make us happy. He only can fill our hearts. By nature God and we are estranged, and His wrath abides on us.

But He has devised and revealed a way of reconciliation and return through Jesus Christ, the Son of His love. "There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." "The things which belong to our peace" may be said to be the saving knowledge of Christ in its excellency and preciousness, or "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" – so to know and feel ourselves as lost; so to know Jesus as the way to the Father that we trust in Him alone for salvation and come to God through Him for mercy, acceptance and rest and for grace to live to His glory; so to know Jesus that He shall be precious to us and that for us to live shall be Christ. And "blessed is the people that know" them. They have peace with God; they have rest to their souls; they may lie down in peace and take quiet sleep, for the Lord maketh them dwell in safety.

There is a "day" in which "the things which belong to our peace" may be known, in which pardon and salvation are to be obtained. And during this day the Redeemer uses many means to awaken the sinner and to lead him to

saving acquaintance with the “things which belong to his peace”, seconding the calls of His Word with His providence, digging about the barren tree and dunging it. It is the day of *gospel privileges*, when the Sun of righteousness shines forth in the firmament of the truth, when the Lord sets before us life and death, His terrors and His mercies, and invites us to Himself as the God of peace.

O to know the value of the gospel! It is the day of *life*. It is this which gives life its preciousness – that these things may be known, even at the eleventh hour. “All day long” He has “stretched out [His] hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people”, and yet He says, “Today if ye will hear My voice, harden not your hearts.” But especially it is the day of *youth*. Most of those who now know the Lord savingly were converted in youth. It is the day *when the Spirit of God strives* with the soul. Generally speaking, this is the gospel day; but there are some special times above others when He strives with men. Let all beware of resisting Him now, lest, as has happened to others, He cease to strive with them, and they be left “like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh”.

This day is short and will soon come to a close. At the longest, it is a short day. But its continuance is also uncertain. At any moment it may come to an end. The brittle thread of life may be snapped. What is our life? “It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” The longsuffering of God may come to an end, or He may “swear in His wrath” that we “shall not enter into His rest”. Yet many refuse to know the things that belong to their peace. As it was in Christ’s day, so is it still. They continue as careless about the soul as though it were in no danger. They refuse to believe God’s testimony concerning its lost state and the way of salvation. They give their hearts and thoughts and energies to this world, as though there were no hereafter. They sleep on in sin and neglect the great salvation, persuading themselves that they shall “die the death of the righteous” and that their last end shall be like his. “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be which find it.”

If these things are not known in this world, they will never be known. It is only in this world that the Lord exercises pardoning mercy. “There is no device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.” As the tree falleth, so shall it lie. And if these things be not known, what remains but the “judgement” and the “fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries?” The mercy which now says, “Why will ye die?” will not interfere to shield or rescue the sinner from avenging justice. Christ’s tears over Jerusalem

now assure the most guilt-laden sinner of His readiness to receive him, and that he cannot perish because of any lack of willingness in Christ to save him. "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life" (John 5:40). But out of the lips of mercy, from which flowed the affecting words, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace," will then come forth the awful sentence, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

To *apply* these remarks further:

How unspeakable are the obligations of those who are brought so to "know the things that belong to their peace" that it were misery to them not to feel the power of a world to come! It is the sufferings and the grace of Christ that have procured for you any hope in looking forward to eternity. Let that thought be precious to you. And O by these solemn realities, by the darkness of hell and the glories of heaven and the dying love of Christ, be exhorted to plead and wrestle for the salvation of souls. Bring your hearts to this sight of a weeping Saviour till they are fired into a flame of compassion for the souls of perishing fellow-sinners and you seek to pluck them as brands from the burning.

Through grace it is the desire and aim of us ministers to be faithful and to win precious souls. But how humbling the contemplation of a weeping Jesus if, believing in the amazing mysteries of redemption and in the soul's value and the soul's immortality, we are not more solemnly in earnest in speaking the word of life; if we are not now as Jeremiah was when he said, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" or as Paul was when he said, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you". How humbling is the contemplation to the Christian in his most advanced state in this world! And yet, if he is seeking after conformity to the Lamb of God, he will one day be like Him in holy love.

What a rebuke also to unconcern for the soul's salvation! What an awakening call is here! Was it without a reason, or without a sufficient reason, that the Son of God came to our world and was a man of sorrows and died on the tree? Or was it to save the soul He came, and was it over the loss of the soul He wept? Then have you no concern for the salvation of your own soul? Will you take no thought about it? Did Christ sweat great drops of blood when He was struggling for the redemption of souls, and are you unacquainted with a single soul-pang or intense striving in reference to it? Did Christ weep such tears as were never shed before, and is it a *fiction* that there is a hell? Fellow sinners, awaken! The tears of Christ tell you that you have infinite reason to be concerned and to weep for yourself this day.

Remember that, while the whole of Christ's work casts light on the value of the soul and the greatness of its loss, it has not changed your condition by nature. It has made it possible for sinners to be saved; but it has not made a natural state less dreadful or dangerous than it was. Nay, if you continue Christless and die Christless, it will fare worse with you in eternity than if you had never heard the gospel.

"What meanest thou" then, "O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon" thee, that thou "perish not". I might beseech you, and I do beseech you, to consider that, if you are unaffected by the state of your own soul, it is because sin stupefies and Satan blinds you. This does not make it less certain that it is a fearful thing to go on in this state till the foot slides and distress and anguish come upon you. Nor is it the less certain that, if your eyes were opened, if you believed God, you would be exercised as the Psalmist was exercised: "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul" (Ps 116:3,4). I might beseech you, and I do beseech you, to consider what it will be to have these things "hid from your eyes" for ever, to have the reflection following you to eternity that you perished because you *would not come to Christ*.

But I would rather make use of the *love of Jesus*, as exhibited here, to move, to awaken, to melt, and to draw you. This is the loving Saviour who now invites you – He who wept over His enemies and His murderers. Think what a heaven it must be to be with Him! Think what a hell, were there nothing else in hell, to be separated from Him for ever!

Leviticus – a Summary¹

Henry Law

Leviticus 27:34. *These are the commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai*

Leviticus thus ends. Bright is this jewel in the Bible-crown. This book stands as a rich tree in a rich garden of delight. Happy are they who gather wisdom from its laden boughs! These last words fall with solemn weight. They are the farewell of these pages. They seem to seat us on some height whence we survey the traversed plain. They bring the whole into a narrow view. They bid us cast back a parting glance and count our gain before we move onward.

As we reflect, one truth is obvious. The main lesson of this book is Christ.

¹Taken, with slight editing, from Law's *The Gospel in Leviticus*.

He is the light and lustre of each part. To read aright is to walk up and down with Him. Have we thus found? Is He more deeply grafted in our hearts? Is He more closely enshrined within our thoughts? Has He become the main-spring of our being? Have we no longer any mind but His? Christ is the juice, the life, the heart-blood of Leviticus. If it instruct not thus, the veil is on the reader's mind. He gropes in darkness amid glorious rays.

He who sees Christ, the glory of this book, sees quickly that our God is love. The Son reveals the Father's heart. The gift proclaims the Giver. Here golden letters write God's name of love. Hear it, O earth. Let this bright sunbeam shine through every clime. Behold God's loving mercy in redemption's plan. He calls His Son to bear the sinner's sins. He lays all help upon a mighty Helper. Such a scheme is as a flood of grace bursting from springs of love. The first thought and the last is love. When, then, Leviticus exhibits Christ, it calls us to adore our God as love.

This book too is a signal proof of God's desire to bless. Strong efforts are here made to break down ignorance, to dispel mists, to introduce pure light, to open out the gospel way. A remedy unknown heals no disease. A shield unused wards off no blows. A chart unstudied is no guide. A saviour hid is no saviour. Hence types and figures are profusely given. They leave no mode untried to picture Christ. They show clear models of His saving work. Part after part moves, as a living semblance, on the stage. The gospel is here displayed in skilfully-constructed forms. One is exhibited. Another comes. And then another is adjoined. But all have one design – to set Christ before men. In varied colours the same features shine. In every portion "Christ is all". Can we thus read, and doubt God's mind?

Is not the intention clear as day? If constant efforts prove desire, here is desire that eyes may see, and hands may grasp, and feet may swiftly follow, and hearts may love, and souls may trust, the Saviour sent by God. Who can draw back when God thus strives to teach? Reader, can you pass, through Leviticus, to Christ?

Leviticus next graphically shows how Jesus saves. It is a blood-stained record. The rites are full of death. The page resounds with victims' groans. Is not Christ here? He comes not with entreaties on His lips. He strives not to melt justice by appeals. He brings no pleas for mitigation or reprieve. He grants that His poor flock are lost – wholly and helplessly undone. He writes condemned on each and He allows that endless misery is justly earned. He vindicates Jehovah's glory in demanding death.

But He claims the right to save by substitution. He pleads the covenant which gives Him licence to be Surety. He comes, a proxy by eternal compact. The sinful seed are flesh and blood. He takes this nature. He assumes this

flesh. So He becomes our Kinsman. If flesh must suffer, He is flesh. If soul must agonise, a human soul is His. Thus He is wholly fit to bear, to suffer and to die. He bounds, as ardent runner, to the guilty place. With eager step He mounts the altar. His people's sins are piled on Him. The hateful load is bound upon His back. And He endures, till every penalty is fully paid. He drinks the cup, till every dreg is drained. The sword of justice is sheathed within His heart. He verily sustains all of that torment which endless hell would have been pouring on His flock.

This is that fact on which salvation hinges. Till this be fully seen, the soul drifts hopelessly towards shores of woe. O it is worth ten thousand times ten thousand worlds to be assured that death has died, and sufferings suffered, and agonies endured, and the worm slain, and vengeance satisfied, and sins washed out, and all debts paid. It is the joy of joy to see no frown in God, no stern repulse, no look but tenderness and smiles. It is as heaven begun to see hell's portals closed, its chains all shivered, its fires extinct. It is ecstatic rapture to behold an open passage to a glorious home, a blessed rest, a reign with God for ever.

Leviticus is blazoned with this fact. The altar prominently stands. What is it but an emblem of the cross? Victims without number die. They each are types, representatives of Christ. A stream of blood flows without ebb. Each drop displays the wounded Saviour and the dying Lamb. Priests spare not the death-blow. The uplifted arm shows justice with the avenging sword. The blazing fire consumes its prey. Here all demands of wrath are met. The tabernacle service thus displays a reconciling Calvary. It leads directly to the curse-bearing tree. It is a varied model of Christ taking away guilt, of God inflicting punishment on Him, of sinners ransomed by His anguish, of wrath expiring in the God-man's wounds.

Such are the rays which mainly constitute Leviticus' light. Reader, an earnest question knocks at your heart's door. What is your profit from this book? It may be that you see no heaven-born virtue in these signs – that all these rites seem but a meaningless parade of death. Tremble. The gospel hidden is the grave of hope. But look again. Each sacrifice allures you to Christ's side. Each record brings the only Saviour to your door. Each altar is a call to Calvary.

Ah, can it be that Jesus' emblems have no charms for you? Sad is this evidence: the all-lovely One is not lovely in your eyes. The all-precious One is accounted vile. God's grandest gift is scorned. Heaven's glory is cast, as a husk, to wind. But look again. Think of the misery of a Christless state, the peril of a Christless life, the anguish of a Christless death. You dare not say that you are without sin. The hardest heart, the dullest mind, the blindest of

the blind, allow that there is error in their lives. Be sure, iniquities are an appalling mass. The sands of all the ocean's shores reach not their number. In height, they tower above the skies, defying God. In depth, they penetrate to hell, there claiming the just due. Each stone of this tremendous pile is such an outrage against God that finite penalty can never make amends.

Now read Leviticus again. Its pages cry: Sin need not be your ruin. There is a death which saves from death. There is a stream which cleanses from all stains. There is a wounded side which shelters, hides, redeems. A Saviour dies. And if through grace you clasp His cross, all – all is pardoned. Leave not Leviticus till you can shout: I see salvation's glorious scheme. I see a God-man bleeding in my place. I see transgression laid on Him. He has endured my hell. He calls me to His heaven. Then will these types be chosen pleasure-ground, and steps to ever-brightening views.

But there are some, who, Spirit-led, have found the cross. Thrice-happy men! You are God's sons, and glory's heirs. But here you pant, you long, you strive, you pray, for deeper knowledge of your precious Lord. More, more, is your intense pursuit. The day is blank unless you study Christ. To you Leviticus is a boundless mine. The more you dig, the richer is the ore.

When Satan whispers that your sins are vile, these many sacrifices pass in review. Each puts a seal to the reviving truth: that God's own Lamb bears guilt away, and so these rites extract all conscience-stings.

You hear of coming wrath. You know that quenchless fire is terrible reality. But every altar shows fierce flame consuming an offering, that the offerer may be free. You thus are taught that all the vengeance which you earn expires in Jesus' agony.

You seek renewed assurance that God's smile is towards you. These rites for ever tell that enmity no more remains – that reconciliation is complete.

Your piercing eye would read the language of Christ's heart. These rites unfold it. Each death proclaims: Christ dies for you. He counts no sufferings great to buy you as His own: He wades through all the billows of God's wrath – through all the flames of hell through all the depths of torment – to set you free and cleanse you from all stains and rescue you from foes. His anguish passes thought. And why? Because His love for you exceeds all bounds. Leviticus displays all its costly efforts, and thus proves its truth. Faith claps the hand in every ordinance, and sings: See how Christ loves me.

But you are conscious of an evil heart. You would be pure as God is pure, but vile corruptions raise their hated head. You would have every thought in heaven; but a depressing weight drags down to this earth's mire. You would have life one spiritual employment; but an indwelling foe prevents. Seek for relief amid these types of Christ. Draw nearer to the slaughtered victims and

the streaming blood and the uplifted knife. Through these discern the tortures of the cross. Each pang shows sin to be exceeding sinful – a monster of unspeakable deformity, an enemy which slew the Lord, the executioner of all His stripes. You must loathe that which pierced Christ's heart. Down, down with that which spared not Christ. Thus he who probes by faith the wounds of Christ most hates iniquity, most flies its touch. Leviticus thus leads to a sin-loathing walk.

Learn more and more the quickening lessons of this book. You live in a cold world. You breathe freezing air. You have to climb an adverse hill. You have to struggle with resisting tides. Your chariot-wheels need oil. Fresh fuel is require to keep your fire alive. Seek warmth and a reviving gale from these invigorating rites. Here Christ is seen, a quenchless flame of zeal. He is one effort to save souls. Behold, and catch the holy warmth. Behold, and be Christ-like.

These are sad days of indolent profession. There is a seeming faith in soft attire. There is much loitering by the brooks of sloth. Whence this indulgent ease? Christ and His dying love are little studied, and are poorly felt. He whose eye cannot long be absent from the cross will find his heart all fire, his feet all speed, his lips all fluency, his life all effort to save souls, to thwart Satan, to testify of Christ, to glorify his God. Self dies in Jesus' death. Life in Christ's service springs from Jesus' cross. Zeal is the fruit of this book duly read.

Great Spirit of the living God, we bless Thee for this gospel-book. Hear an imploring prayer and make Leviticus a seed of life, a ray of hope, a flood of peace, a pasture of delight, a garden of pure comfort, a step towards heaven, a text-book of redeeming love, a picture of Christ's heart – to many a pilgrim through this sin-sick world. Hear, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Regeneration and the Spirit (2)¹

Rev James R Tallach

The Place of the Holy Spirit in Regeneration. In Genesis we read of the Spirit moving on the face of the waters and the word of God going forth. In the first beginning recorded in the Bible, we have the Spirit and the Word working together in the creation. The beginning of human life was marked by the word of the triune God: "Let Us make man" (Gen 1:26), and the breathing of the Spirit into the nostrils of Adam, when "he became a living soul" (Gen 2:7). Though dependent on God, as all of creation was, the

¹The first part of this paper dealt with the term *regeneration* and its necessity.

principle of Adam's spiritual life was in himself.² Job's comment on this is: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life" (33:4). Again in Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones we see the word spoken – in this case the prophecy commanded by God, when the Spirit came as a wind over the valley.

In the New Testament, the life given by the Spirit is more clearly seen as given by Christ. The Lord told the woman of Samaria that, if she had asked, He would have given her living water (Jn 4:10). This living water was a clear reference to the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit speaks of Christ and glorifies Him: "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine and show it unto you" (Jn 16:14), as Christ glorifies the Father: "I have glorified Thee on the earth" (Jn 17:4). The Spirit also flows from Christ; we read in Revelation 22:1 that John was shown "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb". Christ, being the Lamb of God, is the source of the Spirit, who gives life to believers. As at the first beginning of the world and of man, as related in Genesis, the Word of God and the Spirit of God combine to effect another beginning, which is regeneration.

The preparatory work of the Spirit in regeneration. This is a vexed area with eminent men expressing what are apparently very different views. Witsius is representative of those who believe that the Spirit makes no preparations in the soul before regeneration. It is worth quoting him in full: "It appears there are no preparations antecedent to the first beginning of regeneration because, previous to that, nothing but mere death in the highest degree is to be found in the person to be regenerated. 'When we were dead in sins, [He] hath quickened us together with Christ' (Eph 2:5). And indeed the Scripture represents man's conversion by such similitudes as show that all preparations are entirely excluded, sometimes calling it a new generation, to which certainly none can contribute any thing of himself; but yet, as natural generation presupposes some dispositions in the matter, so that we may not imagine any such thing to be in ourselves but from God, we have this held forth by the similitude of a resurrection, in which a body is restored from matter prepared by no qualifications . . . but in the resurrection of the soul there is nothing at all.

"Therefore we have added the figure of a creation (Ps 51:10, Eph 2:10), by which we are taught that a new creature exists from a spiritual nothing, which is sin; but as there was . . . nothing to assist and sustain creation; so there was nothing to oppose and resist; but sin is so far from submitting to what God does that it is reluctant thereto and . . . at enmity with Him;

²John Owen, *Works*, vol 3, p 286.

accordingly the other images do not fully complete the idea of this admirable action till at length it is called a victory of God: victory, I say, over the devil who maintains his palace (Luke 11:21) and effectually worketh in the children of disobedience (Eph 2:2). All these operations of God . . . tend to exclude as far as possible all preparations from the beginning of our regeneration.”³

Owen on the other hand writes that ordinarily there are certain preparatory workings upon the souls of men which dispose to regeneration. He likens this to wood which is dried out before being burned. Thus the body of Adam was formed before the rational soul was breathed into it, and the bones in Ezekiel’s vision came together with a noise and shaking before the breath of life entered into them. He mentions coming to sit under the Word and says that God ordinarily meets with those who attend with diligence on the preaching of it.

He notes also the internal spiritual effects wrought in the souls of men by the Word preached. Different degrees of illumination may enlighten the soul, resulting in a knowledge of, and an assent to, the truth and a degree of delight in the way of salvation. There may also be conviction of sin leading to sorrow and humiliation for sin; great reformation of life may ensue, as in the parable of the house which was swept, empty and garnished after the unclean spirit was put out (Matt 12:44). For Owen, Hebrews 6:4,5 is an account of the highest form of preparatory work by the Spirit. The enlightening, tasting and partaking described in that passage are of the same order, but a higher form of preparation for the work of regeneration. All these are real effects of the Spirit of God and in many persons, perhaps the majority, who are thus affected, genuine conversion to God does follow.

The resolution of the apparent conflict between Witsius and Owen is that they are using the phrase *preparatory work* in a different way. Witsius is using it as though there were changes in the soul before regeneration. He rejects that suggestion and points out that the soul is dead until raised up by a sovereign divine act of grace. If that is what is meant by a preparatory work, we would all agree with Witsius. Owen, looking at the matter as an observer, sees changes commonly taking place in the walk and conversation of a sinner prior to conversion. This he calls “a preparatory work”, yet states that this work is not of the essence of regeneration. He also maintains that, though this work commonly results in regeneration, it does not always do so. Here again we would concur with Owen and conclude that Witsius and Owen are actually in agreement; the only difference lies in the meaning they give to the phrase *preparatory work*.

³Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, P and R Publishing, 1992, vol 1, pp 360-1; see also the following pages.

The Dunnottar Covenanters of 1685¹

1. The Prisoners

The account [news] of Argyll's invasion turned hot towards the beginning of May 1685,² and the managers at Edinburgh were alarmed with his being at Orkney, and coming about to the west; and fearing the Earl's landing, and not knowing what the consequences might be, very suddenly it was resolved that all the prisoners for religion, especially those from the south and west, should be sent to Dunnottar Castle. Accordingly Mr John Fraser, Mr William M'Millan, Quintin Dick, with William Niven, and many others in Edinburgh and the Canongate Tolbooths, were, to their great surprise, on 18th May taken out of their prisons, about three hours before sunset, without suffering them to know what was to be done with them, that such of them as could might have prepared some way for such a journey, and carried out of town under a strong guard and delivered at the Netherbow to Douglas' regiment, who guarded them down to Leith.

There they were shut up so close in the Court of Guard that their nearest relations and acquaintances were not so much as permitted to speak with them. From thence, with the prisoners at Leith, making in all above two hundred, they were carried down to the shore, and put into open boats, and hurried off the shore, without allowing them to receive any necessaries from their friends and relations, whereof good numbers were waiting on to take their leave of them, never expecting to see them again.

¹The following account is extracted [by Rev D W B Somerset] from Robert Wodrow's *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland* (ed R Burns, 4 vols, Glasgow, 1830) vol 4, pp 322-5, with some additional footnotes. Wodrow's account was based on manuscripts written by some of the sufferers such as John Fraser, Quintin Dick, and William M'Millan. In J M Wilson's *Tales of the Borders etc*, (24 vols, London, 1888-89) vol 15, pp 104-114, there is a paper by Thomas Gillespie, Professor of Humanity at St Andrews from 1824 until his death in 1844, entitled "The Covenanters' March" (see J C Johnstone, *Treasury of Scottish Covenant* (Edinburgh, 1887), pp 573,593). It gives an account of the prisoners' journey from Edinburgh to Dunnottar, professedly based on the same MSS as Wodrow, but it is so much at variance with Wodrow and other sources that we have made no use of it.

²The years 1684 and 1685 were a period of intense persecution for the Covenanters, and are often called "the killing time". In February 1685 Charles II died, and his brother James VII and II, a Roman Catholic, succeeded to the throne. In the summer of that year there was a rebellion, led in England by the Duke of Monmouth and in Scotland by the Earl of Argyll. As a precaution against this rebellion, the authorities transferred the Covenanting prisoners in Edinburgh to Dunnottar Castle, spectacularly situated just south of Stonehaven, on the east coast of Scotland. There the Covenanters were as badly treated as any large group of prisoners in British history.

Next morning, about break of day, they were landed at Burntisland. There about twelve score of them were crowded in two rooms in the Tolbooth, where, through the straitness of the rooms, and multitude of the prisoners, their miseries seemed to be but beginning, for as much as they had suffered. And Mr Dick remarks that it was a wonder to themselves how such a multitude could subsist for two days and two nights, when they were denied liberty separately to ease nature, and had nothing allowed for their subsistence; yea, a good many of them were not permitted to have bread and water for their money.

When thus pent up at Burntisland, one came over from the [Privy] Council, with orders to bring back to Edinburgh as many of them as would immediately swear the Oath of Allegiance, with the Supremacy in it.³ About forty, through the extremity of their misery and hardships, complied; the rest owned their allegiance, but stuck at swearing it with the Supremacy.⁴ At Burntisland, after two days, they were committed to the militia of Fife; and most of them had their hands tied behind their back with cords.⁵ Through their hard usage at Burntisland, some of them were fallen under rheumatisms, and other distempers, which made travelling afoot very uneasy, and would have hired horses with their own money, but this was not allowed.

The prisoners were carried afoot, generally speaking, through bypaths, so that the well-disposed persons in Fife, who came with necessaries to the prisoners, might be disappointed, as many were; and some who came were beaten off by the guard, and nothing was allowed to be given them. That night they were brought to a small village near Falkland, called Freuchie,

³The Oath of Allegiance, introduced in 1661, required the acknowledging of the King's authority "over all persons and in all causes". The precise bounds of this authority, if any, were left unclear (Wodrow, vol 1, pp 92-93). The Act anent Supremacy was passed in 1669 and explicitly asserted the King's "authority and supremacy over all persons, and in all causes ecclesiastical" (Wodrow, vol 2, p 137).

⁴Two distinct lists of those imprisoned at Burntisland are given in *The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland 1685-6*, (third series, vol 11, Edinburgh, 1929), pp 289-293. They were included as an appendix in some copies of J H Thomson's *Martyr Graves of Scotland* (Edinburgh, nd). A list of the prisoners sent from the Old Tolbooth in Edinburgh to Burntisland is given in *The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* (Edinburgh, 1923), vol 12, pp 166-7, and a list of the compliant prisoners sent back from Burntisland to Edinburgh in *The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* (Edinburgh, 1922), vol 11, pp 61-62.

⁵Elsewhere Wodrow adds, "Lieutenant Beaton of Kilrinnie was very rude, and beat some of the old women among them, when not able to walk so fast as he would have them, thrusting them forward, and crying to the soldiers to thrust their pikes in them, for they were feigning themselves, calling them old bawds and witches, wishing the devil to take them and their religion. . . . By the way the pipers derided them with their foolish songs" (vol 4, p 327).

and from thence next day they came to the waterside of Tay; their accommodation at both these places was very sorry. Upon the south side of Tay, the tide not answering them, about nine or ten score were crowded into three little rooms most incommodiously, till about break of day, when the tide made, and then they were ferried over to Dundee, and about sun-rising, put into the Tolbooth there, where they continued till about eleven o'clock, and were allowed refreshments for their money. From thence they were brought to a muir a mile beyond Dundee, and delivered to the Earl of Strathmore's regiment and the militia of Angus, and marched, man by man, betwixt two of the militia, till they were brought to Forfar, where they were again crowded into the Tolbooth, to the great prejudice of their health. From Forfar they were brought to Brechin, and rested a while in the open fields near by, and had some refreshments allowed them for their money, which was now reckoned a great favour.

From thence at night they were brought to the north-water, or North Esk bridge; and there they were all of them set upon the bridge, and the soldiers kept strict guard at both ends of it. In this posture they were kept, exposed to wind and weather all night, without meat or drink. The night was exceeding cold and stormy, and many of them by this time weary and faint; yet they behoved to stand and lie as they best might upon the cold bridge, till three or four in the morning; and that day, May 24th, being the Lord's day, they were carried to their resting place at Dunnottar. Some few found means to get off by the road, and they were, when they entered Dunnottar, in all eight score and seven persons.⁶

At Dunnottar, they were received by George Keith of Whiteridge, Sheriff-Depute of the Mearns. This large company was thrust into a dark vault under ground, one of the most uncomfortable places poor people could be in. It was full of mire, ankle deep, and had but one window towards the sea.⁷ So throng were they in it, that they could not sit without leaning one upon another. They had not the least accommodation for sitting, leaning, or lying, and were perfectly stifled for want of air. They had no access to ease nature,

⁶A list of the prisoners who arrived at Dunnottar is given in James Anderson's *Black Book of Kincardineshire* (Stonehaven, 1843), pp 11-14, taken from the Sheriff Court records. It contains numerous mistakes. From a comparison of the various lists of prisoners it would appear that well over a dozen prisoners escaped on the journey. At least four women were subsequently detained as prisoners in Dunnottar as a result of visiting their husbands or relations (*Register of Privy Council 1685-6*, vol 11, pp 178,381; *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland 1686*, third series, vol 12, Edinburgh, 1930, pp 249-50).

⁷The Whig's Vault, as it is called, in fact has several windows, but the side ones were presumably blocked up for security. It is not underground, but it would have seemed so to the prisoners if the side windows were blocked up.

and many of them were faint and sickly. Indeed all their lives were in great danger. In this miserable vault about a hundred of them were pent up all this summer; and it was a miracle of mercy they were not all killed. The barbarities of their keepers and the soldiers are beyond expression.⁸ The prisoners had nothing allowed them but what was paid for, and money was paid for cold water. And when the soldiers brought in barrels of water, and had sold it out in parcels to them till they began to weary of it, they would pour it into the vault to incommode them the more.⁹ Considerable numbers of them died, and no wonder, through such hardships; and it was boasted of as an undeserved favour by the soldiers, that they received the dead corps, and disposed of them as they pleased, for none of their fellow-prisoners were allowed to see them interred; it was too great a favour to allow them so much of the free air.

When the whole number had continued for some days in the great vault, the Governor was pleased to remove about forty of the men to another small vault, which being narrow and low, they were not much less straitened than in the great vault; and they were in hazard to be stifled, there being no air nor light there, but what came in by a very small slit or chink.¹⁰ The walls, it seems, were a little decayed, and some little air came in at the bottom of the vault; and they used one by one to lie down on their belly on the bottom of the vault, that they might have some of the fresh air. By this means, some of them, particularly the Reverend Mr Fraser, contracted a violent cold and dysentery. After some time spent in this melancholy posture, the Governor's lady came in to see the prisoners in the two vaults, and prevailed with her husband to make them a little more easy. Twelve of the men were removed from the forty to a better place, where they had room and air enough, and the women were removed from the large vault, and put into two several rooms. This was indeed a great kindness but they had abundance of hardships remaining.

⁸Perhaps some allowance can be made for the conduct of the soldiers on account of the fact that they were not receiving their pay. The arrangements for paying them are mentioned in *Register of Privy Council 1685-6*, vol 11, on May 19 (p 49), but on June 12 it was recorded that the money had been "wrongously" retained by the officers of the Aberdeenshire militia (p 67). The money was ordered to be delivered up within 14 days, but on June 24 it was reported that the Aberdeenshire militia had mutinied rather than hand over the money to the Dunnottar garrison (p 81).

⁹Elsewhere Wodrow mentions that "the Governor refused to permit the country people to help them with bedclothes", and that "they were sadly disturbed by the sentinels when at worship" (vol 4, p 328).

¹⁰There is a puzzle here. It is presumed that Wodrow refers to the very small vault underneath the Whig's Vault. This vault can hold 40 people – indeed over 60 crammed into it on a recent visit to the Castle – but one would think that the 40 men must have been greatly more straitened than they had been in the Whig's vault, rather than less so.

Somewhat has been already hinted as to their strait for meat and drink; nothing was allowed them but what they bought and the Governor made even a monopoly of this. When the country people about were bringing in provisions to the prisoners for their money, they were stopped, and the soldiers were ordered to allow them no access; and one of them was very roughly treated, for insisting to get in to the prisoners with what he had to sell. The reason of this was, the Governor's brother, who lived at Stone-hive [Stonehaven], not far from Dunnottar, resolved to have any money the prisoners had, and none was suffered to provide for them but he.

Such who were in the great vault were in the greatest misery, and not a few of them died.¹¹ It was no great wonder that under such grievous hardships they essayed all innocent methods for their own safety. In order to this, they endeavoured, and got at length out by the window in the vault, which was just over the sea, one night, and crept along a most dangerous rock, to the utmost hazard of their lives; and indeed it was one to ten, that they were not either crushed by their fall, or drowned in the sea. Some twenty-five of them escaped before the alarm was given to the guard, by some women who were washing near the rock, and the rest were stopped. Upon the alarm, the outer gates were shut, and the hue and the cry raised, and all possible means used to retake them. Fifteen of them were apprehended, and it was a wonder all of them were not caught, being so weak that they were not able to flee far, and the country round about being disaffected to them and their way.¹²

Such as were seized were most barbarously used. I have the accounts of this mostly from the foresaid William Niven, who was one of those who were retaken. Not only were they most inhumanely beat and bruised when apprehended, but, when brought back to their prison, they were put in the guard-house, bound and laid on their backs on the floor, and most dreadfully tormented. In three different parts of the room they were tortured.

The said William, with Peter Russel, and Alexander Dalgleish in Kilbride,

¹¹It is difficult to know how many of the prisoners died. The Covenanters' gravestone in Dunnottar churchyard mentions nine people. In addition, James Forsyth's wife, who had been imprisoned when she came to visit him in Burntisland, died soon after childbirth in Dunnottar (Wodrow, vol 4, p 322). Also the burying ground in Dunnottar Castle has a stone with the inscription: "A bairn of nine years lies here, 1685". This is presumed to have been a child of one of the Covenanters.

¹²Two of the escapees, James Watson and another whose name is not recorded, did indeed fall to their death. They are mentioned on the Covenanters' gravestone in Dunnottar churchyard. A list of those recaptured is given in *The Black Book of Kincardine*, p 27. In his journal for September 1, the Covenanter John Erskine of Carnock records meeting two of the men who had escaped, William Boyd and (Alexander) Smith, (Journal of Hon John Erskine of Carnock 1683-7, Edinburgh, 1893, p 153).

were laid upon their backs upon a form, and their hands bound down to the foot of the form, and a fiery match put betwixt every finger of both hands, and six soldiers waiting on by turns, one after another, to blow the match, and keep it equal with their fingers. This was continued for three hours without intermission, by the Governor's order, merely for the fault of essaying to escape at the hazard of their lives. By this treatment William Niven lost one of the fingers of his left hand. Alexander Dagleish died of the pain and the wounds he got, and an inflammation rising thereupon; and several others had their fingers burnt, and the very bone turned to ashes, and some, besides the last mentioned, died of this torture.¹³ Some accounts of those barbarities were sent into Edinburgh, and methods taken to lay them before the [Privy] Council. By the influence of some there, not altogether so merciless as others, orders were sent to the Governor to treat the prisoners with a little more humanity, and to accommodate them with some better rooms.

Since the writing of what is above, I find in the Council Registers, a petition presented to the Council, in favours of the prisoners at Dunnottar, which, as containing nothing but what the petitioners were ready to vouch, and consequently being one of the best accounts of the hardships used toward the prisoners, I insert here, with the Council's act thereupon:¹⁴

“Anent a petition presented by Grizel Cairns and Alison Johnston, in behalf of Mr William M'Millan, and Robert Young, wright in Edinburgh, their husbands, and the rest of the prisoners in the castle of Dunnottar, showing, that the petitioners' said husbands, who are under no sentence, with many others, having been sent prisoners to the said castle, they are in a most lamentable condition, there being a hundred and ten of them in one vault, where there is little or no daylight at all, and, contrary to all modesty, men and women promiscuously together, and forty-two more in another room, in the same condition, and no person allowed to come near them with meat or drink, but such meat and drink as scarce any rational creature can live upon, and yet at extraordinary rates, being twenty pennies each pint of ale, which is not worth a plack [the smallest coin] the pint, and the peck of sandy dusty meal is afforded to them at eighteen shillings per peck, and not so much as a drink of water allowed to be carried to them, whereby they are not only in a starving condition, but must inevitably incur a plague, or other fearful diseases, without the council provide a speedy remedy; and therefore humbly supplicating, that warrant might be granted to the effect underwritten.

“The lords of His Majesty's Privy Council, having heard and considered

¹³Alexander Dagleish survived long enough to be taken to the Leith Tolbooth on August 18 (*Register of Privy Council 1685-6*, vol 11, p 154). Presumably he died soon afterwards.

¹⁴This Petition was dated June 18 (*Register of Privy Council, 1685-6*, vol 11, p 70).

the foresaid petition, do hereby continue that part of the desire, for liberty, till they consider further of the petitioners' cause; but, in the meantime, give order and warrant to the Deputy-Governor of the Castle of Dunnottar, to suffer and permit meat and drink, and other necessaries, to be brought in to the petitioners by their friends or servants, at the ordinary easy rates, and to allow the said Mr William M'Millan and Robert Young a distinct room from the rest; and, in regard of the heat of the season of the year, that all the prisoners may be so accommodated without throng, that their health be endangered as little as possible."

This no doubt enraged the Governor exceedingly, and he drew up a paper, by way of declaration, in his own favours, wherein the subscribers testified they were gently treated, and wanted not conveniences since they came to Dunnottar; a very few, by threats and promises, were prevailed upon to sign it, but the rest peremptorily refused it, which further enraged the Governor, and they were yet more hardly dealt with.

School at Ingwenya¹

James Macleod

John Tallach Secondary School is a boarding school with nearly 600 pupils, of whom 100 live locally. It is located in a rural community 40 km outside Bulawayo. Its academic record speaks for itself: in 2005 it had the highest O-level pass rate in Bulawayo and Matabeleland North, and the ninth highest in Zimbabwe. The school's headmaster is Mr B Ncube, whose father is an elder in the Mbuma congregation. Mr Ncube is assisted by his deputy Miss Norma MacLean and 27 government teachers. Currently education only goes as far as Form 4, so pupils continuing to sixth form have to do their final two years of secondary education elsewhere. Expanding the school to include A-level is a possibility some time in the future.

Pupils come from a wide variety of religious and economic backgrounds. Some come from Free Presbyterian Church homes while others are Seventh Day Adventist, Pentecostal or Roman Catholic, for example. Many have a mixture of Christianity and the witchcraft and ancestor worship which is prevalent in rural areas. This means there is a continual stream of questions from pupils which demand scriptural answers: When did God change the Fourth Commandment saying we should keep the first day of the week as Sabbath? Why do you not speak in tongues, when Paul said, "Forbid not to speak in tongues"? What about miracles? Sadly and more seriously, most

¹This article was previously published, in translation, in the Mbuma Zending magazine.

churches teach that Jesus died for everyone: a doctrine which turns the Saviour into “another Jesus” and is part of “another gospel” (2 Cor 11:4).

The school day starts with breakfast at 6 am in the dining hall. This is immediately followed by worship. Classrooms are then swept before assembly at 6.45 in summer and 7.20 in winter. Assembly is later in winter, to give day pupils time to get to school without having to walk in the dark. Assembly starts with the singing of two verses from a psalm, led by a prefect, followed by the Lord’s Prayer and any announcements for the day. There are eight 40-minute lessons before lunch, with a 30-minute interval after period four.

After lunch pupils do some manual work, typically raking paths, cutting grass or lifting litter. Unlike in Europe these jobs are done by pupils rather than groundsmen to help keep fees low. Afternoon studies start at 3 pm and last for two hours. Some practical subjects are arranged for the afternoon due to timetabling constraints. Day pupils go home after this study session. After dinner, boarding pupils return to school for an hour and a half of evening studies, which finish at 8 pm. By 9 pm lights are out in the dormitories. On Friday evening pupils have an evening off from studies and do a variety of activities. Nothing is timetabled for Friday afternoons or Saturdays.

At 9 am on the Lord’s Day, pupils gather for Sabbath school which usually lasts an hour. It starts with worship, after which the school splits into four groups with over 100 in each class. Pupils learn the Westminster Shorter Catechism and a verse from a psalm or a passage of Scripture. The first service starts at 11.30, when the school joins Ingwenya congregation. Because most people in the local congregation travel on foot, the second service starts after an hour’s break, during which the pupils have lunch. There is a third service at 6 pm, which is attended only by school pupils.

Religious education is an important part of the timetable. The Zimbabwean Religious Studies O-level course is excellent. It is probably the best course of its type in the world because it sticks very closely to the text of the Bible. In Forms 3 and 4 the pupils study Luke and Acts in detail, normally covering one chapter a week. Typical exam questions are: “Give an account of Jesus’ temptations in the wilderness”, “Give an account of the parable of the sower and its meaning as explained by Jesus” and “Why was Paul taken before Gallio in Corinth; what did Gallio say and what happened as a result?” To do well, pupils need to know the details of the text. During Forms 1 and 2, pupils study Genesis, the first part of Exodus, and Mark.

To keep school fees as affordable as possible, food and boarding accommodation is basic by Western standards. Isitshwala is the staple food; it is a porridge made from maize. It is eaten soft, with sugar, for breakfast, and harder with milk, vegetables or meat for other meals. The school has its own

herd of cattle which provide a large percentage of the meat consumed in the dining hall. It is important to realise that many things taken for granted in Europe are considered optional extras or even luxuries in Zimbabwe. For example, there are large numbers of children in some dormitories; pupils wash their own clothes by hand and they clean classrooms.

Being in the southern hemisphere, winter is in the middle of the year. There is very little, if any, rain between May and October, but during the rest of the year there may be frequent thundery downpours. Here it “promises” rather than “threatens” rain! At 1300 metres above sea level, temperatures do not go too high and generally peak at 36 degrees in October, before the summer rains bring the temperatures down.

It doesn't take long for things to become normal which on arrival appear strange and unusual. One of the most striking features of the local Ndebele language is its clicks. The letters c, q and x represent different clicks, made by putting your tongue on different parts of your palate and releasing it in such a way that it makes a click. Only main roads are tarred, the rest are dust roads which quickly become corrugated. If you imagine driving on corrugated iron, you have a pretty good idea of how it feels on these roads.

Zimbabwe is facing severe economic difficulties: basic foodstuffs like sugar, oil and flour are sometimes unavailable; electricity is in short supply, so there are regular power cuts known as “load shedding”; fuel has been in extremely short supply for the past few years; last year there was massive water rationing in Bulawayo; and the phones at the school, which broke down last year, cannot be repaired. Inflation is another major problem. Currently it is well over 1000%; so prices are more than ten times what they were a year ago. School fees are a good example. In the first term of 2006 they were \$7 000 per term, while at the beginning of this year they were \$140 000.

Even after 100 years of working in Zimbabwe, expatriate teachers of religious education are still needed, and currently there is a desperate need. For the past few years there have been three expatriate teachers but now there is only one. Teaching religious education is a unique opportunity to bring the gospel to pupils. A long-term commitment, although desirable, is not necessary; a period of one or two years' teaching could be very useful. The Foreign Mission Committee first advertised in September 2005, but since then the situation has become more desperate without any applicants.

Outwardly Zimbabwe is a very Christian country. I recently attended a meeting for computing teachers from different schools. Like most such meetings, it started and finished with prayer. Europe, and indeed most of the West, is far more heathen than Zimbabwe. But sadly most of the Christianity falls far short of the Bible's standard. One of the ministers said recently that the

Church has two needs: the work of the Holy Spirit and ministers of the gospel. What is true of the Church is true of Zimbabwe, Africa and indeed the whole world.

Book Review

Land, Faith and the Crofting Community, Christianity and Social Criticism in the Highlands of Scotland, 1843-1893, by Alan W MacColl, published by Edinburgh University Press, hardback, 248 pages, £45.00, but obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom for £35.00.

This book seeks to explore the influence of religion, especially Evangelical religion, on events in the crofting communities of the Highlands in the late nineteenth century. Other books written on what were, more or less, the Gaelic-speaking areas of Scotland, give a competent account of secular aspects of the Clearances and associated events – a chapter in Scottish history marred by the heartlessness of many proprietors to people who had lived on their land for many generations. This volume, however, has the great advantage of being written by someone who has a clear understanding of Evangelical Calvinism; such knowledge is obviously needed when one of Scotland's most prominent contemporary historians can state that Highlanders regarded Sabbath-keeping as a means "to atone for sin" (quoted p 61). One comes away from Dr MacColl's work with the confidence that, not only has he written good secular history, but he has also given a reliable analysis of the religious factors in the thinking of the crofters and their leaders.

This was, after all, a period when most Scottish Highlanders subscribed to Evangelical Protestantism – witness, for instance, the high proportion of Highlanders who came out in the Disruption of 1843. And clearly their religion had a marked effect on their reactions to the difficulties which the crofting communities experienced during the period studied. This was the focus of the author's research, and although it is presented here with academic rigour, the resulting book is commendably readable.

In the early part of the book, the author considers how religious beliefs, such as predestination, influenced reactions to the famines of the 1840s. He concludes that "the view which holds that Evangelical Calvinism engendered a fatalistic passivity and thereby helped facilitate the destruction of Gaelic society is one which has little foundation in historical evidence". Particularly in relation to the agitation of the later nineteenth century, he demonstrates that "Evangelicals and other leading churchmen were determined to maintain law and order, and this message was largely, but not always entirely, accepted

by their congregations. In their encouraging of passivity before the forces of the state, they never wavered throughout the whole of the nineteenth century. What did change, however, was their increased willingness to criticise the existing arrangements of society. A major contention of the present work is that by providing the means whereby a critique of the status quo could be developed, Evangelical leaders significantly forwarded the defence of Highland community values.”

The Free Presbyterian era lies beyond the main scope of this book, but some comments on relevant issues are quoted from *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* and from elders such as John MacIver of Scoraig. Altogether, this is an important addition to the literature on the subject.

Protestant View

Russia and the Vatican Meet

President Putin’s meeting with the Pope on March 13 at the Vatican is being hailed as a breakthrough in the relationship between Moscow and Rome, and between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches. If so, it bodes ill for biblical Christianity. Historically, the relationship between the two Churches has been one of animosity, but some observers think that reconciliation is more likely with the present Pope than the previous one because Russia enjoys better relations with Germany, the Pope’s homeland.

Of course, Putin’s aims are not religious but political. It is very significant that when the secretary for Inter-Christian Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church was asked if the meeting would contribute to rapprochement between the two Churches, he replied that this was a meeting between *state* representatives and not between confessions. However, some ecclesiastically-important event seems to be in the offing. Bishop Alfeev, an Austrian who is the Russian Orthodox representative to the European Community, stated, “Some positive changes in relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church are about to happen during the current pontificate”.

One commentator on global politics writes, “As America and Britain decline in prestige and power, Germany and Russia are poised to become leading nations in the world . . . there may be a move to bring Russia to Mary in the hope of world peace The world is weary of war and suffering. However, a move to establish world peace beneath the banner of religion, under religious and state leaders, could instead herald a time of great trouble.” Very perceptive words for a secular commentator! Pacts or concordats between false religions and ungodly rulers have ever resulted in oppression for

the true Church of Christ. But the Lord reigns. "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid" (Is 8:12). *NMR*

Notes and Comments

The Union of 1707

Presbyterian Churches do not attempt to dictate the political allegiances of their members, and readers of this Magazine may hold different views of the precise nature of the relation which should exist between the member nations of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. But it helps in assessing situations to be clear on matters of fact and to judge not by prejudice but by principle informed by regard to God's Word and concern for God's glory and the spiritual well-being of the population of our Islands. The Establishment Principle implies that it is part of the prophetic function of the Church to bring biblical considerations to bear on social and political issues. Current discussions of the Union of the Parliaments in 1707, and of the desirability or otherwise of continuing the Union, focus on the perceived economic and political benefits or disadvantages of union or separation in 1707 and today and frequently confuse the issues.

The Union, which became effective on 1 May 1707, did not spring out of nowhere in the years immediately preceding it, though events during these years occasioned it at that particular time. It was the culmination of a process which probably originated in the eleventh century and received its first great impulse after the Scottish defeat by the English at Flodden (1513), from the Protestant Reformation (1560) and close relations with Reformers in England. Its second great impulse came from the Union of the Crowns (1603), its third from the Covenant into which these nations entered with one another and with God (1643), and its fourth from the Revolution and the accession of King William III (1689).

Undoubtedly questions of politics, national security, finance, language and an increasingly-common culture entered substantially into the movement for union. Many Presbyterians as well as Jacobites strongly opposed the movement initially, some because they considered it wrong to enter into an incorporating union with a nation which they perceived had broken Covenant and maintained a prelatic Church which they feared would threaten the Presbyterian constitution of the Church of Scotland. Acts of Security written into the union treaties safeguarded the independence and Presbyterian government of the Scottish Church and muted much of the ecclesiastical opposition.

It has to be said that the British Parliament violated the terms of agreement, for example with the Acts of Toleration and Patronage, 1712, which resulted in several secessions and the Disruption of 1843.

However, it soon became apparent that the Union was made possible in the providence of God because of the common Protestantism of England and Scotland and that, in spite of the tensions accounted for by the Presbyterian / Anglican antipathy, it was a bulwark against the threat of resurgent Roman Catholicism and of coming again under Jacobite and French dominion. Before long this was publicly acknowledged even by church courts which had formerly been hostile or lukewarm towards union. As Professor Christopher Whatley (*The Scots and the Union*, 2006) puts it: "Almost by default, the union and the defence of the 'true' Protestant interest against the Catholic enemy without and the Episcopalians within were becoming inextricably linked in the minds of the mass of Scottish Presbyterians".

The single biggest factor in the unity of this Island has been the common commitment of the constituent nations to the Protestant constitution and throne. As this has declined, so has meaningful understanding of what it is to "be British". While the present legislatures of the United Kingdom and of Scotland practically ignore the Christian and Protestant constitution of the Kingdom, it still exists as the basis of the Union and provides some legal leverage for those seeking to defend their right to maintain Christian standards. There is little doubt that the breaking of the Union would result in this nation ceasing to be constitutionally Protestant and so, at least formally, committed to the religion and morality of the Bible. Prominent Roman Catholics have indicated either indifference to the outcome of discussions regarding the Union or a preference for an independent Scotland.

Some who wish to break up the union which exists in the United Kingdom are enthusiastic to enter independently into the union which exists in Europe. A columnist in *The Scotsman* (19 January 2007) comments: "For Scotland, there would be some piquancy in removing itself from one union in the quest for sovereignty and self-determination, only to find we have sustained a greater loss of sovereignty through an EU dedicated to 'ever-closer union', common foreign affairs, defence and security policies, citizenship rules and economic policies". We fear that more than sovereignty and self-determination are being lost. We are jettisoning the heritage which, in its modern form, we owe ultimately to the work of grace which began in the sixteenth-century Reformation.

The writer's views are probably obvious, but this note is simply an appeal to readers to consider these important issues from a spiritual and religious point of view.

HMC

Highest-Ever Number of UK Abortions

Even the notorious organisation, Marie Stopes International, itself seemed surprised when it announced that almost 6000 abortions had been carried out in its nine UK centres in January alone – the highest number in 32 years. One must agree with the spokesman for a pro-life organisation who commented, “Stopes should stop trying to fool the public by feigning innocence and bewilderment about the rise in abortions. . . . Marie Stopes spends significant resources promoting and providing abortion. Unborn children are being killed and vulnerable women are suffering post-abortion trauma as a result of Marie Stopes’ work.”

How appalling that since the Abortion Act was passed in 1967, over six and a half million unborn children have been killed by surgical abortion. It is a disgrace to our nation that, when passed, it was one of the most liberal abortion acts in Europe. Abortion is allowed in Britain at up to 24 weeks – more than half way through a normal pregnancy and the highest legal limit for such terminations in Europe.

There is growing unease among politicians about our Government’s barbaric approach to human life. No doubt such recent incidents as the survival of baby Amilla Sonja Taylor, born after only 22 weeks in the womb, underlined the barbarism of aborting babies at up to 24 weeks old. There are also instances of babies surviving the abortion procedure. A Government agency is launching an inquiry into doctors’ reports that up to 50 babies a year are born alive after botched abortions in the National Health Service.

It is solemn indeed that abortion marks our nation as guilty before God. God warned Israel not to leave unpunished any unlawful killing, at the peril of having guilt and punishment come upon the nation itself. How much more does a nation which legislates for unlawful killing stand guilty before God. “For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain” (Is 26:21). *NMR*

The Education Secretary on Marriage

The ordinance of marriage was instituted by God in the Garden of Eden. It was between one man and one woman, the woman being specially created for the man, and out of the man. “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,” said Adam; “she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Gen 2:23-24).

Marriage has both civil and religious elements. It involves a vow before God, and therefore it is religious; but it also involves rights and property,

which are the concern of the civil powers. In marriage, therefore, there is to be an acknowledgement both of God and of the state. It is right that the ceremony of marriage should be performed by a minister of the gospel, and it is right that the state should have knowledge of the union which is to be formed. When men and women cohabit without marriage they are defying God and they are also defying the authority that He has established in the hands of civil rulers. If rulers were wise, and were governing according to biblical principles, they would discourage such conduct. Those who are living in open rebellion against God and authority are not likely to be loyal or scrupulously honest in other matters.

The fruit of the widespread breakdown and abandonment of marriage is seen all around us, and it is increasingly forcing its attention upon our rulers. What can be done, they wonder, to reduce the torrent of juvenile crime? An obvious solution is to try to promote marriage, and this, very feebly, has been the policy of the present Government. But such a policy “stigmatises alternative lifestyles”, say the more extreme enemies of Christian morality in the Labour Party. And the Education Secretary, Alan Johnson, who is a candidate for the position of deputy leader of the Labour party, has publicly maintained that “other family models” are equally effective in the upbringing of children. He regards the former married couple’s allowance, which the Government abolished, as “pernicious and judgemental” because it discriminated against children whose parents were not married.

As long as our rulers regard the sin of immorality as sacrosanct, and indeed as the essence of liberty, we as a nation must expect to incur the increasing anger of God. We very much doubt that Mr Johnson’s remarks are based on evidence, but rather on a simple refusal to admit that God’s way is best. “The commandment is holy, and just, and good” (Rom 7:12). Sin has many ramifications, and the immorality of the parents causes difficulties for the children, and for society, that the parents did not envisage or intend. We are seeing, alas, that God does indeed visit “the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation” (Ex 34:7).

DWBS

Church Information

Retiral of Rev P Mzamo

At its meeting held on Tuesday, 10 October 2006, in Bulawayo, the Zimbabwe Presbytery, with a sense of sorrow, accepted the resignation of Rev P Mzamo from the ministry. This took effect on 17 October 2006.

Mr Mzamo was ordained to the ministry in Scotland in 1957 and has been minister of the gospel in the Mbuma congregation and its stations for over 50 years. He laboured extensively in the Nkayi district and the Church at large as a minister of the gospel and as superintendent of the mission schools.

In all these years, he served his Master, the Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul said, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:20,21).

We hope and pray that the Lord, who is rich in all grace, will continue to bless his many labours. We wish him a pleasant retirement.

(Rev) S Khumalo, Clerk of Presbytery

Meetings of Presbytery

Skye: At Portree, on Tuesday, April 10, at 11 am.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, April 24, at 11 am.

Australia & New Zealand: At Gisborne, on Friday, October 19, at 2.30 pm.

General Building Fund

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

R A Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

College & Library Fund: Anon, Newcastle, Isaiah 12, £40.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: Anon, Lewis, £150.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Dingwall: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £40; Mrs B, £20.

Gairloch: *Congregational Funds:* A Friend, £3000.

Glasgow: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10, £10, £20, £20, £20, £20, £40; Anon, £100 per RAC. *Car Fund:* Friend, Glasgow, £20 per Rev RML. *Congregational Funds:* Anon, £50, £25, £600; Anon, "where most needed", £50, £50. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £40, £45, £45, £49, £50, £50, £60, £75. *Fabric Fund:* Anon, for church paving, £50 per Rev RML; Anon, "where most needed", £1000. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, for Israel Mission, £55; Anon, for Zimbabwe Mission, £20.

Greenock: *College & Library Fund:* Anon, "where most needed", £20, £100. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £40. *TBS:* Anon, £40.

Laide: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £40. *Communion Expenses:* MD, Ballifeary Home, £20; Friend, £10. *Congregational Funds:* Mr N Pearce, £100; Anon, £35, £30, £60, £35. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £50; "For the production/distribution of eldership book", £1000. *Home Mission Fund:* Anon, £10.

North Uist: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50.

Raasay: *Congregational Funds:* JA, "In memory of beloved parents", £140 per Rev JRT.

Stornoway: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50, £50, £50; Friend of the Cause, N Tolsta, £20; LMA, £145. *Door Collection:* Anon, £50.