

# The Young People's Magazine

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## On the Last Day of Life

Suppose an angel were to appear to an old man today to tell him that he will die tonight. Suppose too that the man believes what the angel tells him. How do you think this old man, someone who is still unconverted, would spend the rest of the day? I imagine you would expect him to seek the Lord earnestly and urgently. After all, you would tell yourself, he has very little time left before he passes into eternity; if his soul is not saved, he will be lost for ever. You would expect him to spend all his time reading the Bible, praying and thinking seriously about his soul. After all, he knows that he is not going to live for one more day.

Perhaps he would act as you expect. But he might very well want to make the most – as he might see it – of these last hours that are left to him in this world. So he might want to make the most of the pleasures that have – as he has often told himself – made his life bearable. He might want to spend his time watching his favourite television programmes, or have his last few drinks with his friends in a pub. He might in these, or similar, ways try to keep God out of his thoughts and keep his conscience quiet, even although he has only a few more hours in which he can be reconciled to God, who is still angry with him because of his sins.

But are you not surprised that someone so close to eternity could be so careless? In fact, you should not be surprised. The human heart is very hard, very resistant to God's authority. The Bible tells us that "the carnal mind [the mind of every unconverted person] is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). Look at the response of most people to Christ's ministry when He was on earth. Time and again they rose in rebellion against Him because of what He said. And the words of the people in one of His parables represent the spirit of unconverted sinners generally: "We will not have this man to rule over us"; they are most unwilling to submit to Christ's authority. So we should not be surprised when people are careless about the salvation of their souls – even when they have only a few more hours to live, when they are in extreme danger because they are so near to eternal destruction.

But surely people would sit up and listen, you might think, if someone came back from the dead to tell them what it is like to exist beyond death. They might indeed listen; they might be totally gripped by what they hear. But it would not change their hearts in the slightest degree; it would not bring them one step closer to salvation. In any case, God has not ordained that sinners should be saved by listening to what someone might say who has come back from the dead.

That is one of the lessons from Jesus' parable about the rich man and Lazarus. When the rich man, by then suffering the awful torments of hell, was asking that Lazarus would be sent back to this world to warn his brothers, what answer was he given? It was this: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them" – in other words, let them listen to the writings of these men, in the Bible. And when the rich man persisted: "But if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent", the emphatic reply was: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead". This is not how sinners are brought to repent.

The fact is that God has appointed means to awaken sinners to a sense of their need for eternity. They are the Bible, and preaching based on the Bible. Not angels. Not human beings who have come back from the dead. None of them will ever bring us to feel the danger of a lost eternity. And we do not need them. We have the Scriptures, and most of us can, at least sometimes, go to hear men whom God has sent out to preach the gospel. They are His ambassadors – sent with all His authority to speak for Him, just as a king or a president would send an ambassador to represent him in another country, to speak on his behalf when he is at home.

In the Bible we can find out all we need to know about what lies beyond death. It tells us about the glories of heaven and about the awfulness of hell. It tells us how to get to heaven and how to escape hell. If we do not profit from these teachings, nothing else can do us any good. But, while God will not bless the words of an angel or someone who has come back from the dead, He does bless *these* teachings to the salvation of sinners. What no human being can do, what no angel can do, the Holy Spirit most certainly can. He can change the hard heart of a rebellious sinner so that he becomes willing to believe in Christ and to follow Him.

We must not expect an angel to come and warn us about the time of our death. Nor can we expect any other form of revelation from God as to when we will die. We must seek the Lord now, even if we are young. We have a full revelation of the way of salvation in the Bible; we have Moses and the prophets, and Christ and the apostles. Let us hear them. Let us receive their teachings – without delay.

## The Book of Ruth

### 75. The Challenge to Redeem

*Rev K M Watkins*

Ruth 4:4. "And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee, and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it."

Naomi needed to sell the land that belonged to Elimelech, her late husband. In the Israel of those days, the nearest relative should try to buy the land, so that the family's share of Canaan's promised land would be "redeemed" and not lost to outsiders. So Boaz challenged the relative: "If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it". Boaz was quite prepared to buy it himself, but the other man had the first right. Only if he refused would Boaz buy it. As Boaz told the man: "If thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee, and I am after thee".

The relative's first answer was positive: "I will redeem it". Yes, he would buy the land for Naomi. Knowing that Naomi was old and childless, he thought that the land would become his in the end anyway, once Naomi died. But Boaz went on to explain that the redeemer of the land must also redeem Ruth by marrying her. It was then that the near relative pulled out of the transaction. If he married Ruth, the land would go to the eldest child of that union and he would not get it himself. In the end, the challenge proved too great. He was too concerned about his own selfish interests and did not care enough about Naomi and Ruth. His failure gave Boaz the opportunity to redeem the land and marry Ruth.

Many people have seen in the near relative and Boaz an illustration of law and gospel. In other words, the relative pictures the covenant of works and Boaz pictures the covenant of grace. Let us see.

As Boaz told the near relative, there were only two possible redeemers: "There is none to redeem it beside thee, and I am after thee". It was either the relative or Boaz. There was no one else to save the land from being lost. Through all history, there have been only two methods for man to obtain eternal life: the two covenants. The first was the law, or the covenant of works. The second is the gospel, or the covenant of grace.

Adam was the head of the covenant of works. His duty was to keep the commandments of God. If he had stood and not sinned, we would have obtained eternal life through his obedience. That is why it is called the covenant of works: man had to work to obtain the promise. But Adam did not do the work required of him. He sinned. He ate the forbidden fruit. He

failed to obey the law of God. Because he was representing us all, we all became sinners as a result. We sinned in him and fell with him. The first covenant has brought us all under the sentence of death and under God's wrath and curse. "In Adam all die" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

In the second covenant, the covenant of grace, a better Head was chosen, even God's only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. As representative of His people, Jesus had two great works to do. First, He had to obey all the law of God. This He did throughout His life. Second, He had to suffer the curse of the law on account of His people's sins. This He did by offering Himself a sacrifice to divine justice. It is this second covenant – and only this – which provides a way of redemption for lost sinners.

So there are two covenants. But to which one does the sinner go first? In the Book of Ruth, the relative came first. Boaz came second, saying, "I am after thee". So it is in spiritual things also. When someone becomes concerned about his soul's welfare, his first resort is usually to the covenant of works. Feeling himself to be a sinner, and knowing that he is in trouble with God on that account, he looks for a way to escape God's wrath. By nature, his first thoughts go to the works of the law. He thinks that if he can make himself a better person, if he can live a better life, if he can be more religious, then God will be pleased with him and not punish him for his sin.

But is the law able to redeem? Can the covenant of works rescue a sinner? Can it save him out of the state of sin and misery he is in? We may challenge the first covenant like Boaz challenged the nearest relative: "If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it". "Works of the law, if you are able to redeem a soul from death and hell, then do it!"

Why don't you challenge the first covenant yourself? Challenge your self-righteousness and say: "If thou wilt redeem my precious never-dying soul, then redeem it!" Challenge those good thoughts you have about yourself: "If you are able to redeem my soul, then redeem it!" Challenge the religious performances you are so proud of – your Bible knowledge, your church-going, your baptism – and say, "If you can redeem my soul, then redeem it, and redeem it quickly!" Challenge your supposed good works, and say to each and every one of them: "If thou wilt redeem my soul, redeem it!"

What will the covenant of works reply when first challenged? The same as the relative in the Book of Ruth. It will say as he did, "I will redeem it". This is the experience of so many sinners. Even though they continually fail to meet the law's demands, still they tell themselves that in the end they will reach those high standards. So they go on trying to make a righteousness of their own, to put them in good standing with God. The spirit of self-righteousness goes on saying, "I will redeem it".

Is this you? It is very sad if a poor sinner never gets farther than the first covenant, and goes on believing its false promise, “I will redeem”. Even though the first relative said this, in the end he did not redeem the land. And even though the first covenant is saying, “This do, and thou shalt live” (Luke 10:28), yet it will never bring you that life, for you cannot do the things it requires. Do not be deceived! You are not able to meet the challenge of the law. Instead, seek redemption by grace, through the second covenant, in which Christ does everything necessary to redeem sinners.

Only when the sinner is taught by the Holy Spirit that he can never be saved by works of his own righteousness, does he turn to the grace of the second covenant. Only when he has tried the first covenant and failed to find redemption, does he go to the only Redeemer of God’s elect, in order to be redeemed by grace through faith. It is as if Christ says to the covenant of works, “I am after thee”. Let the sinner try his own works first. Then, when that fails, let him turn to the gospel to do “what the law could not do” (Romans 8:3).

When the rich young ruler came to Christ seeking eternal life, he thought he had kept God’s commandments since his youth. The spirit of the law in his heart was saying, “I will redeem”. So the Redeemer challenged the covenant in which he was trusting, by telling him to sell all that he had. The man could not do that. However well he thought he was keeping the other commandments, he was shown that he could not keep the Tenth – he was covetous. He went away sad, because the first covenant could not redeem. The law could not save. He should then have looked to the second covenant which is truly able to redeem. But that he would not do. He would not look to Christ, the Boaz of the New Testament, to save him. He could not let go of the first covenant. Do not be like him!

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## “Because You Know the Bible . . . ?”

I was once making a journey by ship. Going downstairs for the night, I noticed a number of people in the saloon. I went nearer and found two men arguing about Christianity. One, a man of about 40, was a confessed unbeliever; the other was an old Christian of about 70. It was soon clear that the Christian was no match for the unbeliever, who was trying to hold up to ridicule the Christian and his Christianity amid the laughter of those who had gathered around them.

I was anxiously waiting for an opportunity to join in the discussion, but to my disappointment the argument came to an end when the old man retired

defeated. After a moment's pause, I said to the old Christian, "I am sorry you stopped".

He replied, "I have nothing more to say". The younger man latched onto these words, trying to make it appear that the old man had no case. He ranted on for a further five minutes and did not spare my old friend.

My manner seemed to take the speaker off his guard when I said, "It seems that you know quite a bit about the Bible".

He replied, "I should think I do. I have read it through again and again."

"Well, that is what people who heard you talking would think, and I suppose it is because you know the Bible so thoroughly that you condemn it so confidently and severely."

"Yes," he replied, "that is so. It is because I know it so thoroughly that I condemn it as I do."

I pulled out my wallet and took out two £5 notes and held them up for all to see. Then I said to the speaker: "There is £10 for you if you will just quote 10 verses of the Bible correctly".

This gave rather a new turn to the conversation; the gathering waited eagerly to hear him make a start. But instead he avoided my offer by saying: "It is a long time since I read the book. I haven't read the Bible since I went to sea some 15 years ago, and my memory is failing."

I put it to him that someone who knew the Bible as thoroughly as he claimed to do could surely repeat 10 verses out of the 31 173 it contains, especially when he was going to get £10 for it. How eagerly my Sabbath school class would have jumped at the offer! But this foolish fellow once again pleaded the passing of time since he had read the Bible, and his failing memory. Here the gathering began to laugh at his predicament after all his boasting. I came down to 7 verses, then to 5, and as he declined to make a start I reduced my offer to three verses. He then tried to repeat a single verse but misquoted the words.

I took out my Bible, let him see his mistake, and then got others to read the verse. I then said, "Ladies and gentlemen, here is a sample of the men who condemn the Bible and oppose Christianity, who tell you they know the Bible from beginning to end and yet, when £10 is offered them, cannot quote one verse correctly".

I afterwards talked to the little group for about 20 minutes and then prayed. Later I had a private, serious talk with the speaker and one of his companions, warning them both of their danger. In the morning both he and his friend came to my berth. They told me that they had not been able to sleep, thinking all night of what I said. They thanked me most sincerely and declared that from then on they would be different men.

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Many scoffers boast of their knowledge of the Bible, but you may safely risk your £10 with them on the same conditions as I did. The only people who oppose the Bible are those whose life it condemns, who know neither the book nor its Author.

Adapted from *Cheering Words*

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## Religion in Eastern Europe

### 3. The Influence of Islam

*Rev David Campbell*

The first article looked at the effects of the Reformation in Eastern Europe. Last month's considered the influence of the Eastern Orthodox Churches there.

**I**n the early seventh century, Muslim armies spread out from the Arabian peninsula into the surrounding lands. And, in a wave of expansion that lasted about 100 years, they conquered almost the entire Middle East and North Africa. The Empire which had been based in what is now Iran and Iraq ceased to exist, while the Byzantine Empire to the west – the eastern part of what was once the Roman Empire – lost large territories around the Mediterranean Sea, including Syria and Egypt. The political map of the region was completely redrawn as a new Islamic empire was established over lands stretching from Spain to central Asia. The conquerors were at first a small minority ruling non-Muslim societies, but they set in motion changes that in time reshaped the region in many ways. By the fourteenth century, most people in this region had turned to Islam. Even from the tenth century, the nations of Europe had begun to feel the threat of Islam, none more so than those in Eastern Europe.

As the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe think back on their history, the words *Muslim* and *Islam* often evoke images of terror and violence. While many deride this as xenophobia – a hatred of foreigners – these negative images are still associated with the Turks and their armies, which over the centuries reached the heart of Europe. In Austria, Turks are remembered as *Renner und Brenner* (runners and fire-setters), who, while burning their way as far as the Alps, left terror and destruction in their wake. The onslaught of these Islamic armies resulted in massive movements of the people of these areas. It was thanks to foreign volunteers from other parts of Europe, including large numbers of Serbs and Germans, that Hungary and Croatia did not become part of the Ottoman Empire – as the Turkish empire is known after about 1300. The Crusades, however unchristian many of their practices were, also did much to stem the tide of Islamic conquest.

On 28 June 1389 a famous battle was fought in Kosovo between the armies

of the Serbian Prince Lazar and the Turkish forces of Sultan Murad I. The battle ended in a Turkish victory and the collapse of Serbia; the Turkish armies completely encircled the crumbling Byzantine Empire. With the fall of Constantinople to the Turks, the Ottoman Empire began to expand. The Ottomans were crucial in spreading Islam in Eastern Europe. At the end of the fourteenth century, Ottomans conquered the Balkan Peninsula – which includes such countries as Albania and Serbia. For many centuries, Balkan Christians endured harsh domination by Moslems. Today there is a great reluctance in the West to recognize that recent fighting in Bosnia was a repeat of the conflict between Islam and Christendom which shaped five centuries of Balkan history. In the Balkans and elsewhere, jihad (Islamic “holy war”) established a system that used terror, mass killings, deportation and slavery. The Serbs did not escape from this fate, nor did other peoples around the Mediterranean who were conquered by jihad. Some have claimed that the recent war in the Balkans and the killings of Bosnian Muslims cannot be understood unless we take into account the centuries of Turkish terror in the Balkans.

During a period of nearly 500 years, Christians in the southern lands of Eastern Europe were subjected to oppression and cruelty. They were under no law but the absolute will of their masters. For centuries, the Serbs fought to liberate their land from the laws of jihad, which had legalised their oppression. Turkey was at the centre of a very corrupt empire that preyed on the subject Balkan peoples, mainly the Serbians. Turks forbade the building of churches and even outlawed the ringing of church bells. Turkish rule meant a legacy of violence. Often Serbs were impaled on stakes, or beheaded and then displayed in public. One of the worst forms of terror consisted of a regular levy of children from the Christian population of the Balkans. These youngsters, aged from six to ten, were stolen from their parents, forced to become Moslems, enslaved and then trained as soldiers in the Turkish army. As recently as 1915, the Turks were accused of the slaughter of 1.5 million Armenians. Although the West has begun to acknowledge that this claim of genocide is accurate, it seems strangely reluctant to hold Turkey to account for these killings, which are still denied by the rulers of modern Turkey.

Many in the Balkans saw the support, which the West gave in recent years to the Bosnian Muslims against the Serbs, as encouraging an agenda – of bringing this region under Muslim control. Turkey's memories of her lost European lands are vivid, and she is viewed as still longing to restore the past glory that once stretched to Vienna. Yet, however grieved the Serbs may have been, this can never justify the genocide which took place during

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the wars in Bosnia during the 1990s. Over eight million Muslims live in the Balkans today, a self-governing population that originally turned to Islam either out of opportunism or sheer terror. Well over 10 million Muslims live in the European Union, mostly immigrants from North Africa and Turkey. France alone has four million and Germany three million. In the United Kingdom, there are over 2.5 million. It is a matter of deep concern to many Christians in Europe today that Turkey, a nation whose people are largely Muslims, is being encouraged to join the European Union. Whatever the future may hold, Islam has long been a threat to Christianity, a threat that we ought to take very seriously.

This third influence on the religious history of the nations in Eastern Europe is still very much alive today. But we ought to remember that the Balkan States in particular have lived under the threat of Islam for many centuries, and sometimes under its tyranny. This ought to make us deeply thankful for the protection we have had from this evil influence and we should pray all the more earnestly that we would not come under it in future.

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## Begging Day

When I was a child, we moved away from a farm to a small village. This village was in a valley, and on top of the hill there were some huts. All the poor people from around that area lived there, quite separate from the villagers. They had no jobs and the government provided no help for them. So there was only one thing they could do in order to survive: they had to beg.

Saturday was begging day. They would come down in ones or twos or in families and would go from house to house begging. They brought white cotton sacks with them to carry away the food they were given, which was later cooked at home. There were sacks for different kinds of food: one for rice, another for beans (the staple diet in Brazil), and others for coffee beans, sugar, pasta and so on. By the end of the afternoon they would go back home with the sacks full of provisions for the coming week. In fact, as well as food, they would take home all kinds of things which people were able to offer them – such as clothes, shoes, sheets, pots and pans.

In our family, it was my job to answer the door and attend to these people – a task which I performed rather unwillingly. But after a while I came to know the people and began to grow quite fond of them. I noticed that some were quite diligent in the way they went about the work of begging. Some would come down from the hill early. Their sacks would be very clean and

I could see that they took care in washing them. On the other hand, others came very late in the day, their sacks were often dirty and they did not seem to show the same care as the others.

Have you ever thought what it must be like to be a beggar? The Word of God shows us that we need to come to God to *beg* for mercy, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we come, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, to trust in Jesus for salvation, we start to realise how spiritually poor we are. Psalm 86 (a prayer of David) begins with the words: "I am poor and needy". David was the rich and powerful ruler of his people, the nation of Israel. But he knew that he was poor and needy in his soul. God shows us that we are dependent on Him for everything – every breath we take, every drop of water we drink and every grain of food we eat comes from Him. We are poor creatures and, unless the Lord provides us with what we need, we cannot survive. If this is true in our physical lives, it is just as true when we look at the needs of our souls. We must come as beggars to ask to be made holy, to have our sins forgiven, to receive wisdom and strength. And we need to be upheld in times of temptation; we need grace to forgive others; we need grace to love the Lord, His people and His cause.

So how are we, poor beggars spiritually, to receive what our souls need? The beggars on the hill came down every Saturday with their empty sacks to ask for food. And, by the end of the day, they went home with sacks full of provisions for the week. This is just what we have to do – not only one day a week – but every day. We must come to the throne of grace every morning with our empty sacks and beg that the Lord would fill them for us. We must seek the things He offers us freely in His Word: Christ's righteousness instead of our sinfulness, His wisdom instead of our ignorance, and His love instead of our coldness. Will you not beg the Lord to show you your utter emptiness, your misery, your need to have your soul saved? Will you not plead with Him to show you the desperate plight you are in, with eternity before you. And will you not plead with Him also to show you how He is able to save your soul?

Those beggars on the hill would not stay at home on a Saturday. If they did, they would not have food for the week ahead and they would die of starvation. Yet, at the end of the day, they often went home with more than they asked for. They, who had no money, went home with much. A spiritual beggar is one who comes to Christ with nothing, acknowledging that only Christ can supply all his needs. This kind of beggar discovers that Jesus, in great mercy, is ready to receive him, which is far beyond what he could have imagined. The Lord "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20). In His holy Word, He offers salvation to

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every begging sinner; He says, “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Isaiah 55:1). *C Johnson*

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*For Junior Readers*

## Tsunamis

I am sure you have heard a lot about tsunamis in recent weeks. As you will know by now, tsunamis are gigantic waves usually caused by an earthquake under the sea. They travel at great speed in the open ocean but, as they approach land, they slow down and build up, producing towering waves that sweep inland and cause great destruction.

Can you imagine what it was like for lots of families and young people like you? They were playing games on the beach in the sunshine when an enormous wall of water hit the beach, swept them off their feet and sucked them back out to sea, never to be seen again. How very solemn! And many, many thousands of people have been swept into eternity in the same way.

Should this not make you think about the state of your own soul? What did Jesus say when He was told about some people from Galilee who had been murdered? He asked first: “Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?” Was it because they were specially wicked that this happened? No. But Jesus had something more to say – something very important – “I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”.

That means *you*. Unless you repent of your sins, you too will perish. Think of all your privileges: living in a Christian land, belonging to a Christian church, hearing the Word of God explained to you. You know so much more than many of those who perished. So how much more serious it will be for you to give an account to God than for them!

As if to reinforce this point, Jesus went on to mention another calamity: “Or these eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” No, they may not have been greater sinners than others. But the point for you to learn is that, unless you repent, you also will perish.

Should you not then confess your sins, be sorry for them and turn from them unto God, in the name of Christ? And should you not confess them with what the Shorter Catechism calls a “full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience” – seriously wanting now to keep God’s commandments.

The Bible encourages you to do this; Christ even tells you that it causes joy in heaven when one sinner repents.

Another thing to remember is that everything that happens on this earth is under God's control. So, however frightening the tsunami was, it was under God's control. However powerful the tsunami was, God is more powerful still. David reminds us of this in Psalm 93, 'The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.'

*J van Kralingen*

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*For Younger Readers*

## **Conrad Obeyed at Once**

Conrad was about three years old. He lived with his father and mother and the other children in a little house near a railway. His father worked the points on the railway. That meant he controlled how the trains moved from one set of lines to another.

Often Conrad would go and watch his father at work. But one day his father was horrified to see Conrad playing quietly on one of the railway tracks, between the two rails.

At once, he thought of rushing to rescue Conrad. But he could not go away from where he was. He was holding down a handle so that a passenger train could pass through the points safely just beside Conrad. And any minute a second train could come on the other line. If Conrad's father ran down to save him, there might be a train crash. Hundreds of people might die.

What could Conrad's father do? Many thoughts rushed quickly through his mind. He sent up a prayer to God. Then he shouted quickly to his son: "Conrad, lie down".

Just then the two trains rushed safely past. But could Conrad possibly be safe? His father rushed to look where he last saw Conrad. He was surprised to see that his son was still there. There was nothing wrong with him at all.

You see, Conrad obeyed his father. He obeyed at once. If Conrad had not been obedient, the train would have killed him. Although it must have been very frightening for him to lie on the railway, the train passed safely over him. It did not touch him at all.

Conrad was safe because he was obedient. How important it is for you to obey your parents! That is what God wants you to do.

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But if you were in Conrad's place, perhaps you would have said, "Yes, I will obey my father. But not yet."

Remember, Conrad was only safe because he obeyed at once. That is what he was trained to do at home. I am sure your parents want you to obey them, and to do so at once.

But remember too that this is what God wants you to do. God tells you in the Bible: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right".

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## Looking Around Us

### Fate or Providence

One day in 1963 a 10-year-old girl from Edinburgh threw a bottle into the sea as she crossed the English Channel. Some time later a boy from Utrecht in Holland found the bottle and its message washed up on a beach at Noordwijk and sent a reply to Edinburgh. The two became good friends and some years later they married.

Now, after 27 years of married life, she says, "People ask my husband if he believes in fate", no doubt because of the unusual way they came together. She answers, "He doesn't really, but there is something different about what happened". One is thankful if he doesn't believe in fate – what happens just because it is bound to happen, but not because of God's control.

The fact is that God is in control of everything, which is what we call His providence. He controls everything wisely, and for His glory. It would be good for us to recognise God's control in everything that happens to us. That is one reason why we should pray to Him. We should commit every detail of our lives to Him – including the matter of marriage.

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## Scripture and Catechism Exercises 2004-2005

### Exercise 2

All answers from *overseas* should be sent to *Mrs N M Ross, F P Manse, 10 Achany Road, Dingwall, Ross-shire, IV15 9JB, Scotland*. The correctors should have your answers before the end of March. These exercises are based on 2 Kings 7 to 2 Chronicles 18, and James 1 to Revelation 22 and Matthew 1-11.

#### Senior Section (15 years old and over)

UK answers to *Miss C MacQueen, 32 Fraser Crescent, Portree Isle of Skye, IV51 9DR*.

#### Old Testament

Read 2 Kings chapters 18, 19, 20.

1. (a) What was Hezekiah's first concern on becoming king? (4)
- (b) How did he prosper as a result? (1)
2. How were Hezekiah's enemies overcome in answer to prayer? (end of chapter 19) (3)
3. The answers to the following are in chapter 20.
  - (a) What was Isaiah's message to the King after he prayed for health? (3)
  - (b) What sign was he granted that he would yet attend God's house? (1)
  - (c) What did Isaiah prophesy about Hezekiah's treasures and his descendants? (2)
  - (d) How did the King react? (2)
4. Read 1 Chronicles chapter 17.
  - (a) How did David compare his house with the house of God and what did this make him want to do? (2)
  - (b) Recount briefly the Lord's dealings with David as they are outlined here. (See also Psalm 78:70-72) (3)
  - (c) What promise did David receive about his son? (2)
  - (d) How did David feel as he expressed the words of verse 16? (2)

#### New Testament

1. Read the Epistle of James. Match the passages to the Christian graces (example, 1c):
 

(1) Chapter 1 verse 27.	(a) patience	
(2) Chapter 2 verse 8.	(b) believing prayer	
(3) Chapter 3 verses 2-6.	(c) practical godliness	
(4) Chapter 5 verses 7-10.	(d) obedience	
(5) Chapter 5 verses 14,15.	(e) purity of speech	(5)
2. Read 2 Peter 1.
  - (a) List the graces commended to believers. (4)
  - (b) To what are we advised to "give diligence"? (2)
  - (c) What is the blessed outcome of this "diligence"? (2)
  - (d) How was Peter sure that he had not followed "cunningly devised fables"? (2)
  - (e) What is the "more sure word of prophecy"? (2)
  - (f) Copy the words confirming the inspiration of Scripture. (2)
3. Complete these passages from the book of Revelation chapter 3.
  - (a) "As many as I love . . . ." (2)
  - (b) "I know thy works; behold I have set before thee an open door . . . ." (2)

#### Memory Exercise

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 36 in the Shorter Catechism: What are the benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from justification, adoption and sanctification? (3)

### Intermediate Section (13 and 14 years old)

UK answers to *Mrs E Hymers, Achavarn, Thurso, Caithness, KW14 7YH.*

#### Old Testament

1. Read 2 Kings chapters 18 and 20.
  - (a) Name Hezekiah's mother and father. (2)
  - (b) How old was he when he began to reign? (1)
  - (c) How do we know he was a good king? (4)
  - (d) What was Isaiah's message to him? (3)
  - (e) On hearing the message, what did Hezekiah do? (3)
  - (f) In what practical way did Isaiah help Hezekiah? (2)
  - (g) What sign did Isaiah give to Hezekiah that he should recover? (2)
2. Read 1 Chronicles chapter 22.
  - (a) Who wanted to build a house for the Lord? (1)
  - (b) Why did the Lord not allow him to do this? (2)
  - (c) Who was chosen for this great work? (1)
  - (d) What does this teach us? (2)

**New Testament**

1. From your reading of the Epistle of James, answer the following questions.
  - (a) What advice is given to those who “lack wisdom”? (2)
  - (b) What has the Lord promised to those that love Him? (2)
  - (c) How is “pure religion” defined in chapter 1? (2)
  - (d) What is the “royal law”? (2)
  - (e) When is a person’s faith described as dead? (2)
  - (f) In what way is “your life” like a “vapour”? (2)
  - (g) Quote a verse which reminds you of the Third Commandment. (2)
2. All of the following quotations are from the Gospel of Matthew. In each case state (1) to whom, (2) by whom and (3) why they were spoken.
  - (a) “Thou shall call his name Jesus”. (3)
  - (b) “Go and search diligently for the young child”. (3)
  - (c) “Let your light so shine . . . .” (3)

**Memory Exercise**

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 86 in the Shorter Catechism: What is faith in Jesus Christ? (3)

**Junior Section (11 and 12 years old)**

UK answers to *Mrs C M Sutherland, Inchure, Saval Road, Lairg, Sutherland, IV27 4ED.*

**Old Testament**

1. Read 1 Chronicles chapters 28 and 29.
  - (a) Why was David not allowed to build an house for the Lord? (1)
  - (b) Who was chosen to do this? (1)
  - (c) Who gave David the pattern for the house? (1)
  - (d) To whom did David give the pattern? (1)
  - (e) Name five materials David prepared for the house before he died? (5)
  - (f) The people also offered materials. With what mind did they offer? (1)
2. Read 2 Chronicles chapter 14.
  - (a) Who came to fight against Asa? (1)
  - (b) How many soldiers had Asa? (1)
  - (c) How many soldiers were in the enemy’s army? (1)
  - (d) Asa’s prayer is recorded in verse 11. Write out the part of the prayer that tells us that his trust was in God rather than in the number of his soldiers. (2)
  - (e) What was the outcome of the battle? (1)

**New Testament**

1. Read James chapter 4 and then complete these sentences:
  - (a) The devil will flee from us when we . . . .
  - (b) God will draw nigh to us when we . . . .
  - (c) We are enemies of God when we . . . .
  - (d) The Lord will lift us up when we . . . .
  - (e) We should add “God willing” to our plans because . . . . (10)
2. From your reading of Revelation chapters 1-3 answer the following:
  - (a) List the seven churches of Asia to which the epistles were written. (7)
  - (b) Which church was rebuked because it had left its first love? (1)
  - (c) To which church did Christ describe Himself as “He which hath the sharp sword with two edges”? (1)
  - (d) Which church was rebuked because it had a name that it lived but was dead? Explain in your own words what this means. (3)
  - (e) To how many of the seven churches was it said: “I know thy works”? (3)

**Memory Exercise**

Learn by heart and write out from memory the answer to question 44 in the Shorter Catechism: What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us? (3)

**Upper Primary Section (9 and 10 years old)**

UK answers to *Mrs Sheena Campbell, 2 Silverknowes Midway, Edinburgh, EH4 5PP.*

**Old Testament**

1. Read 2 Kings 18:1-8.
  - (a) Who was Hezekiah's father? (1)
  - (b) How old was Hezekiah when he began to reign? (1)
  - (c) How many years did he reign? (1)
  - (d) Write down two things which tell us that Hezekiah was a good king. (2)
2. Read 2 Kings 20:1-7.
  - (a) What was the first message to King Hezekiah from the Lord when he was sick? (1)
  - (b) What was the name of the prophet who came to give him this message? (1)
  - (c) What did Hezekiah do when he heard this message? (3)
  - (d) How many more years did God say Hezekiah would now live for? (1)

Read verses 8-11.

  - (e) What did Hezekiah ask for? (1)
  - (f) What happened to the shadow? (1)

**New Testament**

1. Look up the following verses:  
James 1:5, James 1:17, James 2:1-4, James 3:5, James 4:1, James 5:13.  
Write down these chapter and verse numbers and then write next to each of them the sentence from below which best describes it. For example:  
James 1:5. C: Pray to God and ask Him for wisdom.  
A: Do not show more respect to people just because they are rich and wear nice clothes.  
B: God gives us all the good things we have and He does not change.  
C: Pray to God and ask him for wisdom.  
D: If you have problems pray. If you are happy sing psalms.  
E: The tongue is a small part of our body but can do a lot of harm by boasting and saying wrong things.  
F: Wars and fightings come from the wickedness inside us. (5)
2. Read Matthew 2:1-10.
  - (a) Where was Jesus born? (1)
  - (b) How did the wise men from the east know that a king had been born? (1)
  - (c) Why do you think King Herod was worried? (1)
  - (d) What did he ask the wise men to do once they had found the child? (1)

Read verses 11-16.

  - (e) What did God warn the wise men not to do? (1)
  - (f) What did Herod then order to be done? (3)

**Memory Exercise**

Learn by heart and write out the answer to question 22 in the Shorter Catechism:  
How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man? (3)

**Lower Primary Section (8 years old and under)**

UK answers to *Mrs R J Dickie, 11 Churchill Drive, Stornoway, Lewis, HS1 2NP.*  
Most questions can be answered in one or two words but older children can write in sentences if they wish.

**Old Testament**

1. What did David want to build for the Lord? (1 Chronicles 22:7)
2. Did God say that David could build it? (1 Chronicles 28:3)
3. Who did God say would build it? (1 Chronicles 28:6)
4. Who gave Solomon the pattern for building the house of God and everything in it? (1 Chronicles 28:11)
5. Who gave David the pattern? (1 Chronicles 28:19)
6. Name two things David prepared for God's house. (1 Chronicles 29:2)
7. How did the people offer their gold and precious things to the Lord? (1 Chronicles 29:9)

**New Testament**

Write down the missing words in these verses from the "Sermon on the Mount":

1. Blessed are the p\_\_\_ in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of h\_\_\_\_\_.  
(Matthew 5:3)
2. Blessed are they that m\_\_\_\_\_: for they shall be c\_\_\_\_\_.  
(Matthew 5:4)
3. Blessed are the m\_\_\_\_: for they shall inherit the e\_\_\_\_\_.  
(Matthew 5:5)
4. Blessed are the p\_\_\_ in heart: for they shall s\_\_\_ God. (Matthew 5:8)
5. But seek ye f\_\_\_ the kingdom of G\_\_\_, and his righteousness: and a\_\_\_ these things shall be a\_\_\_ unto you. (Matthew 6:33)
6. A\_\_\_, and it shall be g\_\_\_\_\_ you; s\_\_\_, and ye shall f\_\_\_; k\_\_\_\_\_, and it shall be o\_\_\_\_\_ unto you. (Matthew 7:7)

**Overseas Names for Exercise 1**

**Senior Section:** *Auckland:* Kirsten McCrae, Liana Sullivan, Susan and Robert Thomas. *Brisbane:* Sarah Brigden. *Chesley:* Everdena and Margaret Kuiper, Randy Winkels. *Dunedin:* Hayley Worth. *Gisborne:* Mark and Stephen Geuze. *Grafton:* Susanna Kidd, Cassandra van Dorp, Emma and Natalie White. *Sengera:* Everlyne Andrew, George Birundu, Selina Gwaro, Peris Kwamboka, Zablou Marube, Jayne Magoma, Pamellah Maranga, James Matara, Naftal Mecha, Andrew and Mishael Mosiria, Justus Mosoti, Moses Nyanchongi, Lucas Nyandwaro, Esther Ongori, Jorame and Reuben Otworu, Francis Oyaro, Christine Thomas. *Singapore:* Yong Shang Ning. *Sydney:* Jennifer and Laura Marshall. *Texas:* James and John Smith. *Wellington:* Naomi and Thomas Hicklin.

**Intermediate Section:** *Auckland:* Charlotte McCrae, David Thomas. *Brisbane:* Miriam Brigden. *Chesley:* Martha Bouman. *Gisborne:* Anita Geuze, Herman and Trudy Haringa. *Grafton:* Shelley van Dorp. *Holland:* Anne and Peter Bakker. *Indiana:* Ebenezer Hembd. *Sengera:* Lispher and Keziah Kamanda, Bernard Mosoti, Jennifer Mosiria, Kevin Nyabuto, Linet Ondieki, Jared Onywoki. *Singapore:* Yong Shang Yu. *Sydney:* Alison Marshall. *Wellington:* Conan Cassidy, Joanna Hicklin.

**Junior Section:** *Auckland:* Samantha Muirhead. *Chesley:* Jenny Bouman, Rachel Winkels, Audrey Zekveld. *Dunedin:* Richie Worth. *France:* Julia Davenel. *Gisborne:* William Geuze, Louise van Dorp. *Grafton:* Chloe van Dorp, Matthew White. *Sengera:* Joan Abel, Peter Kamanda. *Sydney:* Andrew Marshall, Madison van Praag. *Texas:* Samuel Smith. *Wellington:* Elizabeth and Rebekah Hicklin.

**Upper Primary Section:** *Auckland:* Laura and Sam McCrae, Amy Thomas. *Brisbane:* Mary Jean Brigden. *Chesley:* Jacob Zekveld. *Dunedin:* Gresham Worth. *Gisborne:* Anne-Marie Geuze, Heidi Haringa, Alexander and Kirsten van Dorp. *Grafton:* Bethany McAlpine, Cameron White. *Sengera:* Lilian Kamanda, Dolfine Moses. *Sydney:* James Marshall. *Wellington:* Lydia Hicklin.

**Lower Primary Section:** *Auckland:* Claudia Campbell, Rita de Bruin, Bianca Jago. Lachlan McCrae. *Brisbane:* Rachel Brigden. *Connecticut:* Rachel, Rebecca and Sarah Mack. *Gisborne:* Hannah Geuze, William Haringa, Anna, Annika and Emma van Dorp. *Grafton:* Joshua Kidd, Alexandra van Dorp. *Holland:* Gerben Bakker, Nathalie and Samantha MacDonald. *Sengera:* Finlay Mogari, Eric Momanyi, Judith and Rebeccah Moses, Christine and Mary Mosoti, Job Ondieki, Nyabonyi Ontiri. *Sydney:* Duncan and Keith Marshall, Emily van Praag, Heather, Nathan and Zoe van Praag. *Wellington:* Luke Cassidy, Abigail, Julia and Timothy Hicklin.

## Youth Conference 2005

The Conference will be held, God willing, in St Andrews from Tuesday, March 29, to Thursday, March 31. The lower age limit is 16. The cost is £36 for those in full-time employment and £18 for others. Cheques are payable to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Further details are to follow later. Please send your application and fee as soon as possible. It must arrive by March 19.

- 1. God the Father**  
What this Doctrine Teaches Us ..... *Rev J R Tallach*
- 2. "Go Ye into All the World"**  
Some Aspects of the Free Presbyterian Church's Mission Work *Rev J MacLeod*
- 3. Marriage**  
What the Bible Teaches ..... *Rev G G Hutton*
- 4. Sites of Religious Interest in St Andrews**  
A Historical Tour, conducted by ..... *Rev J B Jardine*
- 5. A Time of Surprising Conversions**  
Jonathan Edwards and His Work, 1703-1758 ..... *Rev K D Macleod*
- 6. "The Man After God's Own Heart"**  
David the Son of Jesse ..... *Rev J MacLeod*

### 2005 Youth Conference Application

To Rev D A Ross, F P Manse, Laide, Ross-shire, IV22 2NB.  
I/we wish to enrol as residential/non-residential. I enclose my/our fee.

Name(s) .....

Address .....

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