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Britain's Heritage

In the early hours of May 21 an intense fire broke out on the historic sailing ship *Cutty Sark*, which is now kept in a dry dock at Greenwich in south-east London. Originally built in 1869, she was designed to be the fastest ship in the race to bring the first batch of each year's tea crop from China to Britain. Though she never succeeded in winning that race, her sleek lines made her extremely fast. She carried 34 sails and had a top speed of more than 17 knots (about 32 km per hour). After eight years, as steam replaced sail, changes in the trade forced her to alter her cargo and her route; she now carried wool from Australia. And over the years she was able, again and again, to reach Britain in as little as 67 days' sailing.

At the time of the fire, the ship was under repair; the masts, half the planking and much else had been removed. So the damage, though serious, was a lot less than it might have been. But the cost of repair will be much higher as a result of the fire, another £10 million will be needed on top of the previous £25 million – which is a huge amount of money.

Why spend so much money on an old ship? The reason is that she is very much part of Britain's history as a seafaring nation. And more than 16 million people have visited her since she was first opened to the public by the Queen in 1957. The Duke of Edinburgh is the president of the trust which looks after the *Cutty Sark*; he called the fire a "sad setback to an important example of our national maritime heritage". Tessa Jowell, a Government minister, pointed to the ship as a symbol of that heritage. And so, everybody seems to argue, it is worthwhile to make every possible effort to preserve the ship. Though there have been great changes since the *Cutty Sark* began to sail the high seas – cargo ships are no longer powered by the winds, for example, and they are no longer built with wooden planking – this vessel belongs to our history; she is part of our heritage.

If the *Cutty Sark* is worth preserving, it seems very strange that almost no one raises a finger to protect a far more important part of Britain's heritage. This is a Christian nation, with a strong Christian heritage. Yet the Government and all sorts of people in positions of influence keep chipping away at

that heritage. Of course it is true that Britain never valued Christianity as it ought to have done. Yet when, for instance, the *Cutty Sark* was flying before the wind on her way back from China or Australia, Christian influence in Britain was far stronger than it is today. Then most government ministers would have felt obliged to let others see that they were religious; they would have been afraid that, if they did not go to church or if they did not respect the Bible and its commandments, people would have seen them as unsuitable for high office and would have voted against them at elections. Few of today's Government ministers, on the other hand, would want to be heard referring positively to Christianity or the Bible. Indeed, just a few years ago, one adviser to the British Government made it absolutely clear that God had no place in its thinking.

Small parts of the country's Christian heritage remain; prayers are said every day in the House of Commons, for example. Yet in the Scottish Parliament, religion is rationed to a mere four minutes per week, and even that brief "time for reflection" may be led by a Muslim or an atheist – so little is our Christian heritage respected. In today's religious climate, no one in high office dares to speak of Christianity as the one true faith, or the Bible as God's sure Word – the basis of all true religion. Our Christian heritage has been forgotten. Worse, it is being energetically thrown overboard.

It should be obvious that the Bible ought to be kept at the centre of our system of government. When Queen Elizabeth II was crowned in 1953, she was presented with a Bible. One churchman said to her: "To keep your Majesty ever mindful of the law and the gospel of God as the rule for the whole life and government of Christian princes, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords". And another minister told her: "Here is wisdom; this is the royal law; these are the lively oracles of God". It is a tremendous pity that her country is now not ruled in the spirit of these statements.

To take one example: the laws of Britain – according to our Christian heritage and the teachings of the Bible – used to promote the institution of marriage. After all, it is God who gave marriage to mankind for their good. And if He has done so, how dare anyone argue against it? But just a few months ago, two Government ministers, both of whom wish to become deputy leader of the party which rules Britain, went out of their way *not* to support marriage. One of them objected very strongly to giving any support to married couples through the tax system; he complained that it discriminated against children whose parents were not married. What these men were doing was rejecting the country's Christian heritage and, more seriously, rejecting the testimony God gives in the Bible in favour of marriage. Today

fewer and fewer couples marry, and it is no wonder that problems are increasing in society generally, and among children and young people in particular. How sad that, when society is falling apart as quickly as it is, our rulers so wilfully close their eyes to the remedy!

But Britain's is not merely a vaguely-Christian heritage; it is specifically a Protestant heritage. This goes back to the Reformation, but what used to be called the Glorious Revolution of 1688-9 is particularly important. For the three years from 1685 James II, a Roman Catholic, had been putting in place arrangements which would have given his Church power again in Britain. But the period of cruel persecution under the fanatically-Romanist Queen Mary, in the middle of the previous century, had not faded from English memories. Some London politicians, mindful of a better heritage from the past, contacted William of Orange in Holland, who was married to a daughter of James. Both were Protestants and they became King and Queen of Britain, as William III and Mary II, in place of James. To avoid Britain again coming under the power of Rome, a law was passed forbidding a Roman Catholic being made a king or queen of the country. Some people object strongly to this law, but they forget something very significant. Each such King or Queen would be required by their Church to bring up the future king or queen as a Roman Catholic.

At her coronation, as part of Britain's Protestant heritage, the Queen had to answer the question: "Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law?" Sadly, in spite of her promise to maintain the Protestant religion, she has attended many official inter-faith services, where false religions are given the same place as Christianity. Society, from top to bottom, refuses to place a proper value on our God-given heritage.

This article has focused on Britain, but other nations also have had a Protestant heritage and are in the process of throwing it away. What, wherever we live, should be our reaction to this? As individuals, we must value the Bible – and the teachings, the way of life and heart religion which are revealed there. We should do all in our power to support what is left of our country's Christian heritage. But we must not be content with an outward form of religion; we must earnestly seek "to be found in Christ, not having [our] own righteousness". We must pray that God would bring Britain and other countries to value a Christian heritage – and, more particularly a Protestant heritage. But we should not merely be looking for an outward acceptance of scriptural values but a time when true religion will take possession of the hearts and minds of men, women and children everywhere. That would indeed be a glorious heritage to pass on to the next generation.

Missionary to India

14. Starting Again

In 1840, Alexander Duff returned to India after a period of ill-health. He took up his missionary efforts again with his usual enthusiasm.

The year 1843 brought about a huge change in the Scottish Church, and in her Indian Mission also. Scotland's courts had been interfering in the spiritual affairs of the Church, deciding that ministers must be imposed on congregations even if the people did not want them. Those who believed that Christ is the one Head of the Church could not continue in such a situation. More than 400 ministers filed out from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May 1843 to continue their witness to the whole truth of God's Word as the Free Church of Scotland.

Duff had felt it his duty to keep clear of all the arguments leading up to what became known as the Disruption; he was not minister of a congregation but was responsible to a committee of the Church. Though all the missionaries would have known what was likely to happen, none of them heard what actually took place at the Assembly until late in July. Then a letter arrived from Alexander Brunton, who headed the committee of the Church Scotland which ran the Indian Mission. He was full of praise for the missionaries and hoped that they would feel able to continue to work with the Church of Scotland. A letter also came from Charles Brown, on behalf of a committee of the Free Church, who were anxious to continue missionary work. None of the missionaries in Calcutta hesitated; they all joined the Free Church. In many ways, things would have been easier if they had continued in the Church of Scotland, but they knew what their duty was. They must be part of the Church that was free from state interference. However convenient the easier course might have been for him, Duff wrote, how could he avoid the piercing scrutiny of the all-seeing eye of God, and the judgement to follow?

Yet one practical matter must have made it very difficult to think of themselves as Free Church missionaries – they would almost certainly have to leave all the property that had been built for the Mission or bought for it. It was a huge wrench. It seemed as if 13 years of work was to be broken up. Would the new Free Church really be able to support them and their work in faraway India? And what would the Indians think? If they saw the Mission staff having to walk away from their churches and schools, they might think this was a judgement from the gods against the missionaries – because they had attacked the Hindu teachings and worship. Duff seemed to hear a thousand voices calling on him to pause – to cling to the Church of Scotland, “which so majestically ploughs the waves over a sea of troubles”.

But duty pointed in another direction; principles were at stake. The truths of God's Word showed that the right course was to enter the Free Church and maintain the historic position of the Church of Scotland. A thousand other voices, he said, "kept pealing in my ears, loud as the sound of great thunders or the noise of many waters". They seemed to say that if "pride and prejudice, self-interest or natural feeling" were allowed to hide what he knew to be the truth, or to stifle the testimony of his conscience, his hands would become feeble, his spirit would faint and his knees become weak as water. The important thing was to follow the truth, to do what was right. And he did. And so did the other missionaries, in spite of the likely consequences.

But God provided for them. First came a letter from India's best-known doctor, Simon Nicolson. "I have been silent about your Church disruption till now," he wrote, "but I have watched it and you; and with my wife and daughter I cast in my lot with you." He realised that no more money would come from the Church of Scotland, and he was anxious that all the Mission projects would continue. He sent a cheque for 5000 rupees and promised: "More will follow when you give me a hint". Then a letter arrived from Mr Justice Hawkins of the Supreme Court of Appeal. He offered to help support the Mission but, what was more, he told Duff that he had seen the truth of the principles of the Free Church and so he was going to leave the Church of England to join them. Another judge, Macleod Wylie, followed him and published a book with the title: *Can I Continue a Member of the Church of England?* One thing was clear: God had not forgotten those who had given up everything to stay faithful to the principles of His Word.

Most of the members of the Church of Scotland congregation in Calcutta, many of them Europeans, had joined the Free Church. This was the congregation with which Duff was associated, and they now had a major problem: where could they worship? They asked for the use of a government-owned hall. But the government refused because they could not, so they said, understand the dispute in the Church of Scotland. Yet the congregation managed to find another hall which they used until a church was built.

It must have been a great disappointment when the new building, designed by an army engineer, collapsed the night before it was to be first used for public worship. Another, more expensive, church was soon built in its place. It is clear that the congregation must have included many wealthy people, and they gave generously to support the work of the Church.

But Duff also needed a building in which he could run the Mission's college. He knew of a house in Neemtollah Street which was big enough but was badly in need of repair. The owners could not agree among themselves but none of them wanted to rent it out for use as a college. So Duff went to

see a prominent local man who was willing to speak to the owners on behalf of the Mission. He succeeded in persuading them to rent the building to Duff, and friends from Scotland and India supplied books to form a new library. Later a new College was built on a site beside this house.

Duff felt encouraged and wrote to Scotland commenting on God's faithfulness in providing for the Mission. He saw it as the cause of Christ, who yet "shall see of the travail of His soul" among the millions of followers of false religions in India. The missionary remembered the many warning letters he had received from Scotland in the spring of 1843. They had told him that, if the missionaries did not continue in the Church of Scotland, it would not be possible for the home country to send money to India to support them. The thought of being left without money was alarming, yet Duff felt in his heart that this was impossible. And he now added: "Thanks be to God that the event has so triumphantly proved it to be so". God had indeed proved once more that is faithful to His people.

Duff was also concerned about schools outside Calcutta. There had been one at Ghospara which was now the property of the Church of Scotland, and Duff did not want to set up another in opposition to it. So he crossed the River Hooghly and came across a school which had closed down, and the building was up for sale. Money was not always readily available but a gift of £500 had come from a family in New York. Duff had divided this up between the mission stations in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. But John Anderson had written back selflessly from Madras: "Give us your prayers and keep the money; we have enough". And Duff was able to buy the school and to restart work not far from Ghospara.

Money was also required for the new building in Calcutta. This was supplied by Major James Outram. He had been involved in the battles to seize the province of Sind and had been awarded £3000 for his part in the campaign. But Outram was convinced that there was no justification for this war and felt it would be wrong for him to use any of the money for himself; he gave it all to charity. He approached Duff to ask him if he had any use for some of the final 6000 rupees. This was in fact the minimum amount of money that Duff had in mind as the cost of building the new College. God had again provided for the needs of the Mission.

If Duff had money and staff available he would have built a school in every village in Bengal. But this was impossible. Yet he worked out that the total amount of money spent each year on alcohol – "which destroys the bodies and the souls of thousands" – would have been enough to provide 50 000 schools. But, as well as staff and money, Duff was wishing for grace, "with large, prayerful, faithful hearts, to wait on the Lord God for His blessing".

Seek to Know Jesus Christ

J C Ryle

Another piece, slightly edited, from this noted nineteenth-century English minister. It follows last month's article.

To know the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the principal thing in religion. This is the cornerstone of Christianity. Till you know this, my warnings and advice will be useless. And your attempts, whatever they may be, will be in vain. Religion without Christ is just as useless as a watch without a mainspring. [Today we might say: a watch without a battery.]

But do not misunderstand me. It is not the mere knowing of Christ's name that I mean; it is to know His mercy, grace and power – to know Him, not by the hearing of the ear, but by the experience of your hearts. I want you to know Him by faith; I want you, as Paul says, to know “the power of His resurrection . . . being made conformable unto His death” (Philippians 3:10). I want you to be able to say of Christ: He is my peace and my strength, my life and my consolation, my Physician and my Shepherd, my Saviour and my God.

Why do I make such a point of this? I do it because in Christ alone “all fulness dwells” (Colossians 1:19) – because in Him alone there is a full supply of all that we require for our souls. Of ourselves we are all poor, empty creatures – empty of righteousness and peace, empty of strength and comfort, empty of courage and patience, empty of power to stand, or go on, or make progress in this evil world. It is in Christ alone that all these things are to be found: grace, peace, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. It is just in proportion as we live upon Him that we are strong Christians. It is only when self is nothing and Christ is all our confidence – it is then only that we shall do great exploits. Only then are we armed for the battle of life and shall overcome. Only then are we prepared for the journey of life and shall get forward. To live on Christ – to draw all from Christ, to do all in the strength of Christ, to be ever looking unto Christ – this is the true secret of spiritual prosperity. “I can do all things,” says Paul, “through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13).

I set before you Jesus Christ this day as the *treasury of your souls*. And I invite you to begin by going to Him if you would so run as to obtain. Let this be your first step – to go to Christ.

Do you want to consult friends? He is the best friend: “a friend that sticketh closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24).

Do you feel unworthy because of your sins? Do not be afraid: His blood cleanses from all sin. He says, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall

be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).

Do you feel weak and unable to follow Him? Do not be afraid: He will give you power to become sons of God. He will give you the Holy Ghost to dwell in you and seal you for His own. He will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.

Are you troubled with unusual difficulties? Do not be afraid: there is no evil spirit that Jesus cannot cast out; there is no disease of soul that He cannot heal.

Do you feel doubts and fears? Cast them aside: He says, "Come unto Me"; "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out". He knows well the heart of a young person. He knows your trials and your temptations, your difficulties and your foes. In the days of His flesh He was, like yourselves, a young man at Nazareth. He knows by experience a young man's mind. He can be touched with the feeling of your infirmities – for He suffered Himself, being tempted. Surely you will be without excuse if you turn away from such a Saviour and Friend as this. Hear the request I make of you today: if you love life, seek to know Jesus Christ.

David – Son of Jesse

3. A Faithful Friend and a Dutiful Son

Rev John MacLeod

Last month's article described David as a shepherd and as a soldier.

D*avid as a faithful friend.* The league of friendship between David and Jonathan is so well known that it has come to be almost proverbial. For sincerity and constancy it has been said that it is unrivalled in every kind of history. It would appear that Jonathan was considerably older than David, but that was no barrier to forging a friendship which became all the stronger on account of the interests which they shared. The principal interest was the Cause of that God whom they both served and believed in. They were, as we might say, Old Testament Christians, knit together in the bonds of a love which flowed from their knowledge of the Lord as their God and Saviour.

After witnessing the slaying of Goliath, and after David's conversation with Saul, "the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul". As a token of that love, Jonathan "stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle". That was the beginning of a friendship that was to continue until Jonathan was slain, when

David was found lamenting his death and recalling that Jonathan's love to him was wonderful.

And wonderful it was when we think of the steadfast support Jonathan gave him when David was being pursued and persecuted by Saul, who sought to take his life. This was all the more remarkable if we bear in mind that Jonathan would have been his father's successor on the throne if David had not been anointed by Samuel. Jonathan accepted what was predestined and rejoiced in it for David's sake, saying only: "Thou shalt be king in Israel, and I shall be next unto thee." The faintest trace of envy or jealousy is not to be found. As F W Krummacher expresses it: "Where in the wide world do we meet with such an example of self-sacrificing submission to the divine determination, and of hallowed friendship, so full of self-denial, as this which now lays claim to our admiration?"

David did not forget the covenant between himself and Jonathan when the time came which Jonathan expected, when David's enemies were all subdued and he was settled on the throne. Accordingly we find David asking: "Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?" Mephiboseth was thus taken from Lodebar and assured: "Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake".

It has been observed that the most lasting companionships are commonly formed in our youth and it is then that we are most easily influenced by others. How important then to consider this and to exercise care in our choice of friends. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but the companion of fools shall be destroyed." Our concern should be – first and foremost – to be in friendship with the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is the friend who loveth at all times, who has left us an example that we should follow in His steps. If someone seeks to be your friend who would undermine your spiritual principles, who would lead you astray into worldly places and practices which the Lord Jesus would have you avoid, resist. You are to bear in mind what Solomon says: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. . . . My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path."

David as a dutiful son. As members of a family we are all placed under obligations. Every relationship has particular duties attached to it and these duties are, of course, prescribed by the moral law of God. Psalm 119 is generally accepted as having been written by David. Throughout it we find abundant evidence of his love to the law of his God. The opening words sum it up: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." Later on the question is posed (which, of course, includes the young woman too): "By what means shall a young man learn / his way to purify?" And the answer: "If he according to Thy word / thereto attentive be".

The Fifth Commandment is, as we all doubtless know, the first commandment with promise, and it places us under the obligation of “preserving the honour, and performing the duties, belonging to everyone in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals”. There is every reason to think of David as one who, by the grace of God, sought to discharge this responsibility faithfully. In obedience to his father he, in his youth, performed without murmuring the ordinary duties connected with his work. And even when Samuel arrived to anoint one of Jesse's sons as the future king, and the rest of the family were gathered together to entertain the distinguished visitor and take part in the sacrificial act of worship at the home, he appears to have been content to remain in the field. When required by his father to visit his three brothers in Saul's army and carry provisions to them, he dutifully did so.

His brotherly love and meekness, and his ability to rule his own spirit in the face of provocation are shown in his reply to Eliab's cruel insinuations: “Why camest thou down hither? And with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.” David answered, “What have I now done? Is there not a cause?”

Returning again to the duty of honouring parents, we find it admirable that at the time when Saul was seeking to cut off his life and when his father and mother were exposed to danger, David provided a refuge for them under the protective wing of the king of Moab. He pled with the king: “Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me. And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold.”

We have to admit that his conduct as a father showed a mixture of strength and weakness. His love cannot be doubted – and although love covers a multitude of sin, we cannot approve of the manner in which he dealt with Amnon and Absalom, who were guilty of the most serious sins. But since we are concerned with the more admirable features of David's character, we will not dwell on these failings. We may, however, point out that love to our fellow men, and especially those to whom we are united in ties of the flesh, is not, of course, a failing. But acting in a way that seems to approve of their sinful conduct is.

David mourned the illness of Bathsheba's first child and we are informed in regard to Amnon that “David mourned for his son every day”. We are again told that “his soul longed to go forth unto” Absalom in his banishment. How touching and absolutely affecting is David's lament on hearing of the death of Absalom, who had risen in rebellion against him! “The king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he

went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!” At this point in thinking of a father’s love for his wayward child, we cannot but think of the words of the Divine Redeemer, and the light they shed on the wondrous grace of God revealed in the gospel: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” Such plain statements leave sinners without excuse, whether they are young or old.

“As the Lord Commanded”

2. Musical Instruments (1)

Rev D W B Somerset

In the first article of this series on how we are to worship God, we spoke about the Regulative Principle. It states that we are to worship God in exactly the way He has appointed, and in no other way. It is fundamental for the subject of worship; once it has been established, everything else follows fairly simply. We go on to consider some specific things that God has, or has not, commanded for public worship.

The first thing that we consider is the use of musical instruments in public worship. This subject is of special importance because it illustrates the spiritual nature of worship. In the Old Testament, the use of musical instruments in public worship was required by God on certain occasions. The question is: Does God still require, or at least permit, the use of musical instruments in public worship under the New Testament? Our answer is that He does not.

The use of musical instruments in the worship of the Old Testament was of two kinds. On the one hand, they were used in connection with the temple and the ceremonial law. Aaron, for instance, had bells on the hem of his high-priestly robe (Exodus 28:33-5). Every 50 years the trumpets were to be blown at the time of the Jubilee: “Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land” (Leviticus 25:9). David used musical instruments when the ark was brought up to Jerusalem: “David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of music, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy. . . . Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and with harps” (1 Chronicles 15:16,28).

The fullest account of the use of musical instruments is at the sacrifice of the burnt offering under Hezekiah: "And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by His prophets. And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished" (2 Chronicles 29:25-28).

It is especially emphasized here that the use of musical instruments was according to the commandment of the Lord, and not at the whim of Hezekiah. It is also noteworthy that the instruments were not used to accompany the singing of psalms. The passage goes on: "And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves and worshipped. Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped" (verses 29-30). It was not until the musical instruments had finished that the psalm-singing began.

In all these instances, the use of musical instruments was part of the ceremonial law. The High Priest and his garments, the Jubilee and the Day of Atonement, the ark of the covenant, the sacrifices and offerings, and the temple itself were all pointing forward to Christ. They were intended to provide a picture of His death and of the great work of salvation. Once Christ had ascended up into heaven, they had served their purpose and the time soon came for them to be abolished. They have no part in the worship of the New Testament Church.

The significance of the musical instruments is to be seen, therefore, in the work of Christ and in the gospel. We benefit from the Old Testament sacrifices, not by continuing to offer them ourselves, but by learning what they teach us about the death of Christ. Similarly, we benefit from the musical instruments of the ceremonial law, not by continuing to play them, but by understanding what they are intended to point to and laying this to heart.

The bells on Aaron's robe were to remind and to reassure the people that Aaron was engaged in his priestly work: "his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the Lord, and when he cometh out"

(Exodus 28:35). The bells now serve to remind and to reassure Christians, when they think about them, that Christ is engaged in the work of intercession before God. He is “even at the right hand of God”, says Paul, and he “maketh *intercession* for us” (Romans 8:34). We should be as certain of that as the Israelites were of Aaron’s intercession when they heard the bells jingling on his robe.

The sound of the trumpet at the time of the Jubilee was a *proclamation* of liberty. The gospel proclaims “liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Isaiah 61:1). This is something that has to be declared plainly to the world of sinners: “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice *like a trumpet*, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins” (Isaiah 58:1). “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Christ is calling us to come out of the prison in which we are held captive by sin and by Satan, and He is calling us as clearly and distinctly as if a trumpet was being sounded close at hand. Are you hearing the sound of the trumpet? “Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound” (Psalm 89:15).

Carrying the ark up to Jerusalem was a picture of the *ascension* of Christ into heaven, and the musical instruments indicated the triumph and the glory of the occasion: “God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of the trumpet” (Psalm 47:5). We are to realise that the ascension of Christ into heaven was more glorious and important than carrying the ark up to Jerusalem, when thousands of Levites were singing and playing musical instruments, and tens of thousands of Israelites were shouting for joy. “Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, ascended up on high” (Metrical Psalm 68:18).

Finally, the singing and the musical instruments in Hezekiah’s time were to accompany the sacrifice of the burnt offering. The burnt offering was the ordinary sacrifice – the morning and evening sacrifice – and it pointed to the continuing effectiveness and power in the death of Christ. He “was once offered to bear the sins of many” (Hebrews 9:28), but the benefits of His death have been available to sinners from the Fall of Adam, and will be to the end of the world. The singing and the trumpets and the musical instruments represent the praises of the people of God, looking at the sacrifice of Christ with faith and thankfulness and joy, and glorifying Christ for what He has done for them. “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 1:5-6).

In the next article we hope to consider the other use of musical instruments in Old Testament worship (DV).

For Junior Readers – Lessons from the Life of John G Paton

10. Stealing and Warships

Things became a bit more settled on Tanna. Paton and the other missionary workers spoke to people whenever they could. Some men started visiting them at night to discuss the Christian religion. But on the whole, there was little evidence that the people of Tanna were listening to the gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ.

The people of Tanna were terribly dishonest. It was not shameful to steal but it was shameful to be caught. It meant you were not very clever. If the people of Tanna were angry with Paton and the other missionary workers, they would just come to the missionaries' homes and take whatever took their fancy. If anybody tried to stop them, the Tanna men would just lift their club or tomahawk. It was a threat to kill anyone who did not let them steal whatever they wanted.

They were very cunning at stealing things without being noticed. If a small article fell on the floor, a Tanna man would carry on speaking as if he did not notice it falling. Then he would gradually cover it with his foot. And by grasping it between his toes, he would succeed in walking away with it, just as if everything was normal. Paton lost many small articles this way. At other times a man would quickly grab an item when Paton would turn away to look at something. He would hide it in his thick plaited hair or under his armpit.

One day after lots of rain, Paton hung out his bed-clothes to dry. He decided to stay outside and watch them, along with the wives of two missionary teachers. Lately, many things had been disappearing mysteriously and Paton did not want to lose his blankets. Suddenly one of the senior war-chiefs, Miaki, came running towards Paton. He was out of breath and gasped, "Missi, come in, quick, quick! I want to tell you something and to get your advice!" He then ran into Paton's house and Paton followed him. But before any story was told or advice asked for, the two ladies out in the garden started shouting, "Missi, Missi, come quick! Miaki's men are stealing your sheets and blankets!"

Paton ran out into the garden only to see his bedclothes disappearing into the bushes. He turned to Miaki, who looked a little embarrassed for a moment as Paton accused him of tricking him. But Miaki quickly pulled himself together to put on a good show. He smashed his huge club down on the bushes in the garden and cried, "Thus will I smash these fellows, and compel them to return your clothes." Do you think Paton ever saw his bed-clothes again? No, he did not!

One night the kitchen house was broken into and all the pots and pans and cooking utensils were stolen. Paton was stuck. What could he do without any pans or his kettle to boil water? He went to the chief and complained. The chief went into a rage that somebody would do this to Paton and promised that he would make the thief return everything. But of course, nothing was returned. Eventually Paton offered a blanket to anyone who would bring back his kettle. It was Miaki who brought it back, making out he had a most difficult job finding it. But the lid was gone. Probably Miaki was hoping to get another blanket for the lid. He said the lid was on the other side of the island with another tribe over whom he had no control. Anyway, Paton was glad to get his kettle back.

One morning a group of men came rushing to Paton's house in great excitement. "Missi, Missi, there is a god or ship on fire, or something of fear, coming over the sea! We see no flames, but it smokes like a volcano. Is it a spirit, god, or ship on fire? What is it? What is it?" One group of men after another came running to Paton, shouting out the same questions in great alarm.

Paton used the situation to his advantage. He told them he could not come to see it but it sounded like one of Queen Victoria's warships. It was coming to see if the people on Tanna were being good and kind to him, or if they were threatening him and stealing his stuff. Paton told them he could only tell the Great Chief of the warship the truth and he had to go and get himself ready to meet the Great Chief. The Tannese panicked. "O Missi, tell him not! Everything shall be brought back to you at once; no one will be allowed again to steal from you."

Very soon a large pile of Paton's stolen belongings appeared on his doorstep. The chiefs called him to come out to see all his belongings, which they had found it impossible to find before then! They asked him if everything was there. Of course Paton could not tell if everything was there but he told them, "I don't see the lid of the kettle here yet!" "No, Missi," said one chief, "for it is on the other side of the island. But tell him not, I have sent for it, and it will be here tomorrow." Paton left the worried Tannese chiefs to finish getting himself ready to meet the Great Chief of the warship.

Paton and the other missionaries found it difficult to live among the people of Tanna. They were stealing their stuff and threatening them. But they suffered these things gladly for Jesus' sake, hoping that one day some would come to put their trust in Christ.

It is not always easy to be absolutely honest. You might not be stealing things but there are times when you might conveniently "forget" to give something back and just keep it. Or you might be tempted that something is so small that no one will notice if you take it. Or you might find something

and think, "O well, I found it; so it is mine," and you make no effort to try to return what you found to the person who lost it.

We have to be very careful how we deal with other people so that we do not take what is theirs, no matter how small it may be. The Eighth Commandment tells us not to steal, and there are other verses in the Bible which remind us that we have to be honest in all that we do. A good question to ask ourselves is: "If this was mine, what would I want the other person to do with it?" And I have no doubt we would want other people not to take it in the first place, or to return it to us if they had found it. There is a verse in the Bible which encourages us to act in this way: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matthew 7:12). *S M Campbell*

For Younger Readers

The Young King

Do you know how old Queen Elizabeth is? She is now over 80. She has carried out her duties for a very long time. So she knows exactly what is expected of her.

Do you remember reading in the Bible about King Josiah? He was only 8 when he became King of Judah. He was very young. He must have found it very difficult to know what he should do.

To be king or queen of any country is very difficult. There are so many things to do. Even a grown-up would find it difficult. It must have been very difficult indeed for Josiah, because he was just a young boy.

What could he do? Well, he could pray to God. He could ask God to help him. And every king and queen needs God's help, no matter what their age is.

So do you. So do we all. And we should all pray to God to help us in everything we have to do.

God helped King Josiah. He became one of the best kings that Judah ever had. He was a good man, who loved God. And I am quite sure that he prayed to God. I am quite sure that he asked God to help him in everything he had to do.

You may be just 8, or you may be even younger. But always remember to pray to God about everything, whether you are at home or in school or out playing with your friends.

Daniel and His Three Friends

Supported by the Word,
Though in himself a worm,
The servant of the Lord
Can wondrous acts perform.
Without dismay he boldly treads
Where'er the path of duty leads.

The haughty king in vain,
With fury on his brow,
Believers would constrain
To golden gods to bow.
The furnace could not make them fear,
Because they knew the Lord was near.

As vain was the decree
Which charged them not to pray;
Daniel still bowed his knee,
and worshipped thrice a day.
Trusting in God, he feared not men,
Though threatened with the lion's den.

Secure they might refuse
Compliance with such laws,
For what had they to lose,
When God espoused their cause?
He made their hungry lions couch;
Nor dared the fire His children touch.

The Lord is still the same,
A mighty shield and power,
And they who trust His name
Are guarded by His power.
He can the rage of lions tame,
And bear them harmless through the flame.

Yet we too often shrink
When trials are in view;
Expecting we must sink
And never can get through.
But could we once believe indeed,
From all these fears we should be freed.

John Newton

Looking Around Us

Onward and Upward?

Alexander King, who died a few months ago, was obviously a very able thinker. He had a successful career as a scientific adviser to the British Government, and later was a leader in what is now the Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development, in Paris. When he was well into his nineties he bought a computer and started to write an account of the tremendous changes he had seen during his lifetime. This was published when he was 96; he gave it the odd title, *Let the Cat Turn Round: One Man's Account of the Twentieth Century*.

In this book he wrote hopefully: "I am confident that, when 2084 dawns, . . . the eternal qualities of humanity will have survived and be searching in new directions". But what are eternal qualities of humanity? It is the sort of question which could only be answered in the Bible. But you will never find the Bible speaking about mankind's "eternal qualities". Man was created by God, who alone is eternal. Adam was perfect in every way, but he fell into sin, and all mankind with him. If mankind will ignore God, as Alexander King appeared to do, they may search in new directions but these can only be new ways of sin. And they will only lead more quickly to a lost eternity.

King believed "that mankind has the inner capability to develop to be something greater than itself". This pushes the idea of evolution on into the future. If man has progressed as far as he already has – if man has produced all the marvels of modern technology – then, people like King assume, he can go much further. Perhaps, they tell themselves, even his mind can yet develop to a much greater extent and become even more powerful.

But, of course, the idea of evolution taking mankind onward and upward, to ever greater and greater heights of development, is foolish. It flies in the face of the testimony of the Bible. It ignores the fact of human sin. Indeed if God was to leave the human race to itself, it most certainly would not advance; it would go backwards; civilisation would collapse and in the end the marvels of modern technology would be lost, and perhaps forgotten.

We should be very conscious of human sin. And we should be very conscious also of the divine remedy. How much we need to cry to God to preserve this generation from destroying itself in its wilful forgetfulness of the Creator! How much *we* need to cry to God to keep us from being influenced by the ungodly spirit of our times, but instead to receive the truths of Scripture and to look to Jesus Christ as the one Saviour from sin!