

# The Young People's Magazine

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**Issued by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland  
Reformed in Doctrine, Worship and Practice**

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*“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them” Ecclesiastes 12:1*



*April 2008*

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# Contents

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God's Day .....	63
Never Forget the Eye of God .....	66
The Holy War:	
3. Emmanuel Conquers Mansoul .....	67
Missionary to India:	
23. "Great Is Your Reward in Heaven" .....	70
For Junior Readers – Lessons from the Life of John G Paton:	
19. Superstitious People .....	72
For Younger Readers:	
"Can I Pray and Go to Church?" .....	74
"I've Got a House" .....	76
The Sin of Dancing .....	78
Looking Around Us .....	79
Spring – in Nature and Grace .....	80

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**Cover Picture:** *The lighthouse on South Stack, Anglesey, where John Elias was a minister.* See page 64.

## The Young People's Magazine

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# The Young People's Magazine

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## God's Day

**W**hat is the Sabbath? It is *the Lord's Day* – in distinction from all the other days of the week, Monday to Saturday. It was God who set the Sabbath apart, and He did so at the beginning of the world. We are told that “He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made” (Genesis 2:2,3).

First, notice the pattern: there were six days during which God was active in the work of creation; then there was another day, the first Sabbath, which God sanctified – He set it apart for a holy purpose. He gave it to us human beings for our good – and we are to follow the same pattern: six days of ordinary work every week, followed by a day set apart, as far as possible, for spiritual activity.

In Old Testament times, the Sabbath pointed back to the creation; the first Sabbath was the seventh day of the creation week. The pattern – six days of work and one day set apart for holy duties – remains unchanged. But now the Sabbath marks Christ's rising again on the first day of the week and so it comes at the beginning of each week. The change is important, and it is the New Testament Sabbath that is specially called the Lord's day. But there is still a Sabbath every week; the Fourth Commandment remains unchanged, demanding that we keep one day in seven holy to the Lord.

Second, on that day God “rested”. Yet God is never idle. So we can be sure that God did not give us the Sabbath as a day for idleness. It is an opportunity to rest from our normal activity. Thus most of us, whose weekdays are largely occupied by other duties, can spend time on our souls. It is God who has given us this wonderful opportunity, and we should grasp it eagerly.

How sad it will be for people in a lost eternity to look back over wasted Sabbaths – devoted to unnecessary work and to worldly pleasure. If they had made good use of their Sabbaths – gone to church, for instance, read the Bible and prayed – their situation now might well be very different. They might be enjoying the eternal Sabbath of heaven rather than suffering endless punishment in hell. It is not too late for *us* to begin making good use of our

Sabbaths, but we should ask God for grace so that our Sabbath keeping might be truly *profitable*, and glorifying to God.

The Sabbath is God's gift to mankind, but most people do not look at it positively. They do not see it as an opportunity; they would do anything to escape from a properly-kept Sabbath. The reason is: they have no heart for holy things; they have no heart for God; sin reigns within them. They see the Sabbath as a day of prohibitions, when people say, Don't do this, and, Don't do that. No doubt there have been some people whose Sabbath keeping went no further. They kept away from various worldly activities and took part in some religious duties, but they did not find it an enjoyable day. They seemed to keep the Sabbath, but in fact they had no heart for God's day. And they had no heart for the Sabbath because they had no heart for God; they had never turned from their sins to serve the living and true God with gladness.

But if we keep the Sabbath in the right spirit – with a view to God's glory and our own good – we should find it an enjoyable day. Yes, there is a negative side to true Sabbath keeping; God speaks of those who honour him, *not* doing their own ways, *nor* finding their own pleasure, *nor* speaking their own words; they turn *away* from doing their pleasure on His holy day (see Isaiah 58:13). But that is really to say something positive: these people follow God's ways; they find pleasure in the things of God; they speak the words that God wants them to speak; they do what pleases Him. And so they are among those referred to in that same verse: they “call the Sabbath a delight”, because they enjoy God's day.

John Elias was a minister in Wales 200 years ago who delighted in God's day; so he was sad when it was broken. One Sabbath he was in Rhuddlan, a town in North Wales described as “one of the strongholds of Satan”. Thousands had gathered for one of the fairs which were held there on Sabbaths; these were scenes of disorder and sin. That day Elias and some friends stood outside the New Inn, with hundreds of people in front of him all determined to enjoy themselves in sin. He could clearly hear the sound of fiddling and dancing from various taverns near them.

Elias had come to hold a service. He began with Psalm 24 and then prayed. The prayer was so solemn that a sense of awe and fear fell on the crowd. By the time he was ready to begin preaching, the noise of the fair had gone. His text was: “Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in eaving time and in harvest thou shalt rest” (Exodus 34:21). He explained what the text means, and then he showed from the Bible that God visits Sabbath breakers with punishment. He mentioned various excuses that people might have for breaking the Sabbath and he answered them all. Then, holding up his arm and with tears flowing down his face, he cried to the people: “O

robbers, O robbers, O thieves! Alas, stealing the day of the Lord! What? Robbing my Lord of His day! O robbers, the most vile and abominable!" And these words had a tremendous effect. The people were filled with fear, and many said afterwards that they would not go to such a fair again for all the world. And they never had the opportunity; Elias' sermon put an end to all these Sabbath fairs.

Clearly God's Word was declared with power, but it was not so much the power of John Elias that brought about these tremendous effects; it was the power of God the Holy Spirit working conviction in the minds of sinners. As the minister declared God's Word, they knew that the law of God had authority, and that it had authority *over them*. They sensed, in particular, the authority of the Fourth Commandment – that it was their duty before God not to break the Sabbath.

That power of the Holy Spirit seems to be mostly absent today. People generally feel that they can ignore God and His commandments, including the one which tells them to keep the Sabbath holy. Yet, sooner or later, they will find out that they were wrong; they will recognise that God does exist, that He has authority over them, and that He has a right to demand obedience to all His commandments. It is a great mercy when people recognise these things in this life – as happened in Rhuddlan under Elias' preaching – rather than in a lost eternity. We can be sure that *everyone* will yet submit to God, in one way or another; He has sworn by Himself, "Unto Me every knee shall bow" (Isaiah 45:23). So, if sinners will not submit to God in this world, they must, however unwillingly, submit to Him when He will punish them in a lost eternity.

Yet when people seem to submit to God's authority, they only do so in an outward way. Probably many who no longer dared to attend another Sabbath fair in Rhuddlan still resisted the call to come to Christ. They gave up some of their Sabbath breaking but refused to believe the gospel. But, hopefully, many others did submit from the heart, under John Elias' powerful preaching, to God and His Christ that day.

We live in a time when very few submit to God's authority. They refuse to keep the Sabbath and will not come to Christ. In such an age it is much more difficult to practise true religion. Yet all the rebellion and unbelief in the world cannot weaken God's claim to your obedience. He says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). So remember His authority over you; remember that you are a sinner; remember that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; and remember that He calls you to believe on Him. And if you believe, there is another command you will value: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy".

## Never Forget the Eye of God

*J C Ryle*

Another piece, slightly edited, from this noted nineteenth-century English minister. It follows the article last month on the duty to flee from every opportunity for sin.

**T**he eye of God! Think of that. Everywhere, in every house, in every field, in every room, in every company, alone or in a crowd, the eye of God is always upon you. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3), and they are eyes that read hearts as well as actions.

Try, I plead with you all, to realise this fact. Remember that you have to do with an all-seeing God – a God who never slumbers nor sleeps – a God who understands your thoughts afar off, and with whom the night shines as the day. You may leave your father's roof and go away, like the prodigal, into a far country; you may think that there is nobody to watch your conduct there; but the eye and ear of God are there before you. You may deceive your parents or employers; you may tell them lies, and be one thing before their faces and another behind their backs; but you cannot deceive God. He knows you through and through. He heard what you said as you came here today. He knows what you are thinking of at this minute. He has set your most secret sins before Him, and they will one day come out before the world to your shame, unless you take heed.

How little this is really felt! How many things people do continually which they would never do if they thought they were seen! How many matters they think about in their imaginations which would never bear the light of day! Yes, people have thoughts in private, and say words in private, and do acts in private, which they would be ashamed and blush to have exposed before the world. The sound of a footstep coming has stopped many a deed of wickedness. A knock at the door has caused many an evil work to be hastily suspended and hurriedly laid aside.

But what miserable folly all this is! There is an all-seeing Witness with us wherever we go. Lock the door, draw down the blind, close the shutters, put out the light; it does not matter, it makes no difference; God is everywhere. You cannot shut Him out or prevent Him seeing everything. "All things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13). Well did young Joseph understand this when his mistress tempted him. There was no one in the house to see them, no human eye to bear witness against him – but Joseph was someone who lived as seeing Him that is invisible. "How can I do this great wickedness," he said, "and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9).

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Young people, I ask you all to read Psalm 139. I advise you all to learn it by heart. Make it the test of all your dealings in this world's business. Say to yourself often: "Do I remember that God sees me?"

Live as in the sight of God. This is what Abraham did: he walked *before* Him. This is what Enoch did: he walked *with* Him. This is what heaven itself will be: the eternal presence of God.

*Do* nothing you would not like God to see. *Say* nothing you would not like God to hear. *Write* nothing you would not like God to read. *Go* to no place where you would not like God to find you. *Read* no book of which you would not like God to say, "Show it to Me". Never *spend* your time in such a way that you would not like to have God say, "What are you doing?"

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## The Holy War

### 3. Emmanuel Conquers Mansoul

*Rev Roderick MacLeod*

The first article looked at John Bunyan's picture of the fall of man's soul in his book, *The Holy War*. Mansoul (pictured as a town) is the human soul, King Shaddai is God, Emmanuel is Jesus Christ, and Diabolus is the devil. In the second article, King Shaddai sent his army to win back Mansoul.

In the sixth chapter, Lord Understanding and Mr Conscience were put in prison for inciting a riot against Diabolus – true to the nature of his deceitful promise of freedom. In this way, a delusive and dangerous quiet was restored to the town. In an instance of his matchless patience, King Shaddai sent trumpeters to sound 15 further powerful arguments for opening the city to his Captains. These arguments were drawn from the nature of Shaddai and His works, and were set against the emptiness, danger and sinfulness of Mansoul's state of sin. Diabolus twisted the meaning of these truths to his own advantage. With about eight false arguments, drawn from the greatness of Shaddai, he filled the inhabitants with a slavish dread of the great King – greater than they ever had before.

After this rebuff, the Captains sent a petition to their King pleading for help. This petition came into the hands of the King's Son, Emmanuel, who took a great interest in the petition and involved Himself in presenting it to his father, Shaddai. This petition from so acceptable a source, presented in a manner so delightful to him, about a matter so dear to Shaddai's own heart, was answered at once.

Emmanuel was now engaged in the matter. With much joy at the prospect of the salvation of Mansoul, he came to the camp of the four Captains, with

glorious reinforcements under Captains Credence, Good Hope, Charity, Innocence and Patience. King Shaddai gave 66 most wonderful, powerful instruments to use in conquering his beloved Mansoul by love and grace. He denied the claims of Diabolus and declared himself its rightful owner, for Emmanuel was the heir of his father, and Mansoul was a gift to him from his father, and he had purchased the town with his blood. He presented these and other such reasons, drawn up by divine wisdom and justice and love, as the grounds of his claim.

Here we have a picture of the intercession of Christ, which is most acceptable to the Father. Blessed are they who are embraced in it! The 66 instruments the Saviour uses so effectively are the inspired books which make up the Holy Scriptures. These are wonderful instruments when, by the Holy Ghost's power, they are preached faithfully, received meekly, laid up in the heart and practised in one's life.

In the seventh chapter, Diabolus saw his danger and sent someone called Loath to Stoop with eight proposals to the camp of his enemy. These proposals were as deceitful as the one who framed them. They were not a notice of immediate surrender, as they ought to have been; they proposed an agreement, between Emmanuel and Diabolus, about Mansoul. They amounted to this: Emmanuel would have the outside parts of the town but Diabolus would keep its heart. Needless to say, these terms were refused.

A terrible battle followed. The battering rams were thrust forward, stones were whirled, the trumpets blew, the battle cry filled the air under the authority of Emmanuel's Captains. Boanerges and the other captains broke Ear Gate in pieces. On the other side, Diabolus fortified the townsmen with boldness to resist in a way which was most offensive to the holy Prince Emmanuel. Most defiant of all was the attack on Captain Conviction, who received a wound in his mouth from the forces of Diabolus.

But the casualties proved most damaging to the interests of Diabolus. These casualties were Boasting, Carnal Security, Bragman, Love-no-good, Prejudice, Treachery, Blindness, the clever orator called Ill-pause, and many others, all strong supporters of the rebellion. Seeing the losses he had sustained and the danger he was in, Diabolus agreed to oversee a reformation in the town on condition that Emmanuel lifted the siege. *This* reformation was rightly seen as a devilish scheme.

In another battle, the main gates of Mansoul gave way, and Emmanuel's Captains marched right up to the house of Mr Conscience, where they knocked with such force that the house – and indeed the whole town – rocked to its foundations. All this time, the trembling Mr Conscience could speak of nothing but the death and destruction awaiting Mansoul for their rebellion.



In this chapter we see the power of the Word of God upon the soul of a sinner to awaken it and convict it of sin. We see also some of the devil's schemes to keep the soul in bondage.

In Chapter 8, several petitions were sent to Emmanuel from the old inhabitants of Mansoul. Lord Understanding, Mr Recorder and others of the same mind drafted them and sent them in the hands of men they thought suitable. Great fear followed when the first petition was returned without an answer. The bitter sense of having as an enemy so mighty, holy and good as Prince Emmanuel was made worse when the gate called Impregnable was broken down with great force and the offended Emmanuel marched into the town.

Though the glorious Prince gave no indication of what he meant to do, some began to hope that they could see salvation in his face. But others thought that his purpose could only be to destroy them. How Mansoul marvelled at the unique majesty of the Great Prince! How they trembled when Mr Conscience spoke about their offensive behaviour to him whom they had miscalled for so long! Their king, a trembling Diabolus, was drawn from his hole, chained to the chariot of Emmanuel and publicly led captive, while songs were sung giving great glory to King Shaddai. Mansoul feared the worst when the Captains imprisoned the leaders of the rebellion.

In these days of Mansoul's distress, a further humble petition was sent to Emmanuel, and again the only response was silence. As they had no other place to turn to, they again petitioned Emmanuel for mercy. After consulting together and with Captain Conviction, they sent the petition in the hands of Mr Desires Awake. In carrying out his commission, this man got such a glimpse of the Prince, that he expressed himself in the following touching manner: "The greatness of his person and the glory of his countenance would not suffer me to stand upon my legs. . . . The Prince to whom you sent me is such a one for beauty and glory that whoso sees him must love and fear him, I for my part can do no less, but I know not what shall be the end of these things."

This time there was a promise that the petition would be considered. But when Mr Desires Awake brought this answer back, Mr Conscience interpreted it in a most terrifying way. Again Mr Desires Awake was sent with a most humble petition to the great Prince Emmanuel, but this time he wanted a companion to go with him and Mr Wet Eyes was elected. After hearing these two explain themselves, Emmanuel charged them with 14 serious charges of treason against King Shaddai. The leaders of Mansoul were also summoned from prison to appear before the Prince to stand trial.

In this chapter several precious truths are taught. There is the genuineness

of the sinner's sorrow for rebelling against so great a King as God is. The sinner recognises the righteousness of God's laws, and of His justice if He was to send him to eternal destruction; he willingly turns from Satan and comes under the government of Emmanuel (if He will have such a sinner as he is). He gets a view of the great grace, beauty and glory of Immanuel, which conquered his will, and overcame his rebellion, while convinced of his own wickedness. These things tell us much about the change that the Lord brings about when, by His Word and Spirit, He conquers the unwilling sinner by His grace and overcomes him by His love.

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## Missionary to India

### 23. "Great Is Your Reward in Heaven"

In 1857 Alexander Duff returned to Calcutta for the last time. Soon after he arrived, the Indian Mutiny broke out. The Duffs were safe in Calcutta, but others elsewhere were not. Those in danger included Gopeenath Nundi, who had been converted through Duff's ministry, and his wife. In last month's article we saw how they stood firm under hostile questioning by the local imam; he threatened them with horrible cruelties if they did not forsake Christianity and become Muslims. In the end the family were sent to prison.

As they went on their way, Gopeenath lifted up his heart in praise to the Lord Jesus for giving them grace to stand firm and to acknowledge Him before the world. In the prison they found some other Indian Christians and a European family. After they had spoken together about their various experiences, Gopeenath asked the others to join with him in prayer. They readily agreed, but while they were on their knees, one of the guards came in and kicked Gopeenath on his back, telling him either to pray as Muslims do or else to be quiet.

The next day an army officer, Ensign Cheke, was brought in. He was so badly wounded that he was scarcely able to stand, and he nearly fainted. Gopeenath made some food for him and give him a drink. The officer had nowhere to lie on except the hard, bare earth, so Gopeenath asked a policeman to bring in some kind of bed, and he was at last persuaded. The bed he brought was broken but it was no doubt better than nothing. Then, because of Gopeenath's kindness to this other prisoner, the policeman took him away from his family and put his feet in the stocks. At the same time, a large group of armed men came to Gopeenath, promising that he would be released at once if he would become a Muslim. Cheke could hear what was happening and shouted to him: "Minister, minister, be firm; do not give

way". When Gopeenath's wife tried to stay in the same room as her husband, she was dragged away by her hair and suffered a bad cut on her forehead.

The third day was the one which had been appointed for their execution. Every moment they expected to be sent for to be killed, but the imam held back. Every 10 or 15 minutes someone came trying to convert them to Islam; and threatening them that their noses would be cut off if they refused. It must have been very hard for Mrs Nundi to tell her six-year-old twins that they would be taken as slaves and that their parents would be killed. But she went on: "Remember my last words; do not forget to say your prayers both morning and evening".

On the sixth day the imam himself came to the prison and inquired where Gopeenath was. Someone pointed him out and the imam asked him if he was comfortable.

Gopeenath answered, "How can I be comfortable while my feet are fastened in the stocks? But I am not sorry, because this has been the will of my heavenly Father." And he asked the imam: "How can you be so cruel as not to allow a drop of milk to a poor baby?" – for six days they had very little to give their little one except water.

But later that day their captors were routed by a body of soldiers under British command. As soon as it was clear that the imam and his men were no longer in control, the prisoners broke the stocks and they all went free.

Sadly, Ensign Cheke died soon after being released. Gopeenath did not have the opportunity to speak much with him, so he did not feel confident enough to say much about his spiritual state. But he was encouraged by the way the officer spoke out when Gopeenath was being put under pressure to become a Muslim.

The Nundi family were by no means the only ones to suffer as they did, but most of the others in their position were killed. Gopeenath heard what had happened to many of these others, but he was conscious of God's kindness in sparing him and his family, however difficult their experiences had been. He acknowledged God's care like this: "It was nothing but His grace alone that kept us firm. The enemy tried his utmost to throw us down. He put forth, on the one hand, all the worldly inducements a person can conceive if we gave up our faith; on the other hand, he brought before us a sure death, with all the cruelties a barbarous man could think of, if we did not become Muslims."

Gopeenath then thanked God that they were made able to make the right choice. And he went on to quote what he called "the sweet words of our blessed Saviour . . . which were strikingly fulfilled in our case: 'And ye shall

be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you' (Matthew 10:18-20)." Here is a promise that, when God's children are in a difficult situation, such as the Nundis faced – having to face rulers who violently oppose the true religion – the Holy Spirit will help them to speak wisely and faithfully.

Gopeenath and his family survived their ordeal and were able to return to Futtehpoore. He was able to reorganise the church there but, sadly, neither he nor his wife lived for long. We can be sure that they entered into that high degree of blessedness promised to those who have suffered persecution: "Great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:12).

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

## 19. Superstitious People

In May 1861 Paton heard tragic news from the neighbouring island of Erromanga. Mr and Mrs Gordon, missionary friends of Paton, had been murdered by the people on the island. Paton was shocked by this dreadful news; he felt very sad.

The people on Erromanga did not like the God of the missionaries; so they murdered this Christian couple in broad daylight. When the people on Tanna heard this news, they thought they should do the same to their missionaries and get rid of them once and for all.

And so the familiar pattern started up once again, with various warriors gathering in a threatening manner, waiting for an opportunity to strike. But Paton and his faithful teacher Abraham committed their lives to God and went on with their work. They spoke kindly to the people when they had an opportunity.

The people of Tanna held the superstitious belief that the cause of all the sickness and of the recent hurricanes on the island was Paton living with them. Because of this they did not want anything to do with Paton or his God. They tried to persuade Paton to leave the island and then, when he did not go, they threatened him with death. This story shows just how superstitious the people of Tanna were about Paton and his God.

One morning two chiefs from farther inland came running to the mission house. They had obviously been running quite hard; they were out of breath and covered in sweat. One of them held up a handful of dirty, torn

booklets and he cried out to Paton: “Missi, is this part of God’s Word, the holy Book of Jehovah, or is it the work, the words, the book of man?”

Paton took the booklets and looked at them. He told the two chiefs that they were the words of men, not of Jehovah.

They explained to Paton how they came to have the booklets. Some years before then, a sacred chief and several other people from Tanna visited Aneityum. Mr Geddie, the missionary there, gave them some religious tracts and booklets. When they returned to Tanna after their visit, the chief showed the people the booklets which Mr Geddie had given him. The people were alarmed and called for a special meeting. They thought the booklets were the holy Books of Jehovah and they were afraid of them; so they agreed to have a special ceremony to bury them. The chief buried them as agreed. Sometime afterwards he died.

The two chiefs then told Paton that, on the previous day, someone had been digging and had found these booklets. When others of the inland people saw the booklets, there was a big discussion. Some of them said that the chief responsible for burying them had made Jehovah angry and that this was the cause of the hurricanes and the plague of measles, and of his own death. And now a big group of warriors had gathered together to kill the dead chief’s son and daughter in revenge.

The two chiefs had managed to persuade the group of warriors to wait until they found out if these books really were Jehovah’s books or not, and if all the problems on Tanna could have been caused by burying the books. Paton reassured the two chiefs that these booklets never caused anyone to become sick or die. He explained to them that burying these booklets did not make Jehovah angry, or cause harm to anyone. Paton reminded the two chiefs that they both knew how the plague of measles came to the island – from the sick men who had been taken off a ship.

The chiefs were happy to hear this and one of them declared: “Missi, I am quite satisfied; no one shall be put to death over these books now”. They went off at once, but then they quickly returned to ask: “Missi, have you any books like these to show us? And will you show us the holy Book of Jehovah beside them?”

So Paton went to get some more booklets with pictures on them, similar to the ones they had brought. He also took out a Bible to show them. He told the two chiefs to take the Bible and the booklets to show the difference to the other people. They took the booklets but they were very scared of the Bible; they refused even to touch it!

The two chiefs returned to their people and were successful in explaining to them that the booklets were written by men and that burying them would

not cause anyone to die or become sick, or cause problems of any sort. So the lives of the dead chief's children were safe!

The people of Tanna were very *superstitious*. But what does this word mean? A superstition is a belief people have which is based on ignorance or fear, rather than on God's Word and good reasoning.

But the people in Tanna were not the only ones to be superstitious. Some people around us nowadays are superstitious and talk about *bad luck*. They make a joke about things like: "Don't walk under a ladder; it's bad luck!"; "It's Friday the thirteenth; be careful, bad things happen!"; "If you carry around a rabbit's foot, it's good luck"; "If you spill some salt, you have to throw a pinch over your left shoulder to ward off any evil spirits"; "Don't kill a spider, it's bad luck! You might make it rain."

There is no such thing as luck – good or bad. Things do not happen by chance: God orders them all. We know that God is ordering every detail of our lives; so we should be asking Him to keep us safe and to make things work out well for us. We should not rely on some dead object or strange belief to help us. "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas and all deep places" (Psalm 135:6). Remember, God is in control of absolutely everything.

*S M Campbell*

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*For Younger Readers*

## **“Can I Pray and Go to Church?”**

**T**here was once a slave called Moses. Most slaves had a very difficult time. People could buy them and sell them and they had to work very hard for their masters. But it was very wrong to keep people as slaves.

Moses was a good man; he believed in God and tried to please Him. He worked very hard for his master, whose name was Colonel Williams. Moses and his wife and children lived in a small cabin near Colonel Williams' house.

Colonel Williams knew that Moses worked hard. He could always trust Moses. Moses did what he asked him. But there was one thing Colonel Williams did not like about him. Moses prayed every morning and evening, and he did so in a very loud voice. Everybody could hear him.

I am sure Moses prayed for many things. He would have prayed

for his own soul. He would have asked God to take away his sin and to make him holy. He also prayed for everyone in his own family, and he prayed for the people in Colonel Williams’ family.

His master told Moses to stop praying. He did so several times, but Moses could not stop praying. This was the only thing in which he could not obey his master.

So Colonel Williams decided to sell Moses. The slave was put on a ship, to be taken to some other place in America. But a man called Mr Blake came on board the ship. He saw Moses looking very sad. He asked Moses: “Why are you so sad?” Moses told him what had happened. He also told Mr Blake that he had been taken away from his family and that he did not know where he would be sent. He said that he loved to pray and sing; often he did not know he was speaking so loudly.

Mr Blake saw Colonel Williams and said that he would buy Moses and his family. He offered a lot of money and Colonel Williams agreed to sell the slaves. Moses was very happy when Mr Blake came back to tell him about the deal. He told Moses that he wanted him to look after a store. Moses asked him: “But can I pray and go to church?”

Yes, he could. He could go to church three times on Sabbath, and he could pray and sing as loudly as he wanted. Mr Blake just made one condition: Moses must pray for his new master.

Moses soon began to work for Mr Blake. Then his family came to join him and they were very happy together. It must have been easy for Moses to pray for his new master too.

About a year later Mr Blake saw Colonel Williams come into the store in a hurry. He wanted to see Moses. Moses was upstairs and Colonel Williams went up to see him. Mr Blake heard someone crying and quickly went upstairs too.

Perhaps he was afraid that someone was hurting Moses. But what did he see when he came upstairs? It was Colonel Williams who was crying. And Moses was down on one knee, with his arm round the Colonel. What was Moses doing? He was praying for him.

When he became a little less upset, Colonel Williams explained what was wrong. After Moses was sold to Mr Blake, the Williams

family still remembered Moses' prayers. His wife and children, he said, were now converted. He was very much troubled about his sins and wanted to be saved. He came to say sorry to Moses. He even wanted to buy him back again.

But Mr Blake said, No. He wanted to keep Moses, who was such a good worker. And soon he was going to set Moses free; he would no longer be a slave. And that is what happened.

And what about Colonel Williams? God heard Moses' prayers for him. He believed in Jesus and he too was saved from his sins.

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## **“I've Got a House”**

*C Johnson*

Mrs Andrade has always lived in rented accommodation. Quite often, she has had to move out because the landlord wanted the house for someone else. This left her with the worry of finding another place that she could afford. At such times, she has found that the Lord, whom she seeks to serve, always provides for her. So she commits her cares to Him, knowing that He is both willing and able to help her. She has learned to trust in Him and to cast her heavy burdens upon Him.

Last year she was living in a very small annexe at the back of a large and comfortable house. The owners, who lived in the large house, wanted to sell and she was told she would have to move out of her little house. She was naturally concerned about finding rented accommodation, after having lived there for many years. The sale went through while she was still there, and the new owners agreed to let her stay on there for six months. Her godly friends were concerned about her and they also committed the matter to the Lord. They hoped that, when the new owners had moved in and got to know her, they might let her continue to live there permanently.

Why did they have such hopes? Mrs Andrade is a Christian, and people who meet her can see that there is something special about her. She walks with God in a cheerful way and she depends on Him for everything, even for the food she is going to have each day. She reads her Bible constantly and she knows something of the truth of Jeremiah 15:16: “Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart”. People enjoy being with her very much, and even those who are not the Lord's people prize her company.

After the six months had passed, her friends' hopes came true. Her new landlord told her that she could continue living there for as long as she wanted.



But here was one problem: the rent was becoming a burden to her. As she was getting older, she would not be able to do so much work and she began to wonder if she would be able to afford it in the future.

When I visited her last year I was surprised to learn about something that had happened just a few days before I arrived. This conversation took place:

“I’ve got some good news for you: I’ve got a house”, she told me.

“A house?” I asked, very surprised. “Do you mean a proper house?”

“Yes, the Lord has given me a house.”

She then explained to me what had happened. A Christian couple lived in a nice house on a corner, not far from hers. After much prayer and concern for Mrs Andrade’s future, they decided to share their house with her. They gave her two large rooms which suited her very well. They also gave her half of their garden, because they knew that she loves plants and flowers. The next thing Mrs Andrade had to do was to hire a builder to make some changes to the rooms. She also needed to have a wall built to divide the garden.

But would she be able to afford the work? The Lord had planned everything and He provided for all she needed. One friend gave her a sink; some kind friends from abroad had sent her some money, which arrived just before she needed it. She used it to pay for everything she had to buy, including a second-hand wardrobe. All this came in the Lord’s perfect timing!

All the work went as planned. She wasted no time in moving in. Her landlord and family were very sorry to hear that she was moving out, for they enjoyed having her living close to them.

I had already come back to Great Britain when she moved in but we were able to talk on the telephone. She told me how beautiful her new house looked. She was very happy to think that she now had a house of her own and that she did not have to worry about paying rent or moving out anymore. She then added: “My new home is lovely and peaceful. If my new home is so beautiful, imagine my heavenly home! I am thankful for this home [God] has provided me with, but how can I thank Him enough for my heavenly home? How can I thank Him for His “unspeakable gift”, His only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ?” She was looking beyond this life, and how right it is for Christians to do so, especially when they receive temporal blessings!

The Word of God says that God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20). And so He is. Houses in Brazil are very expensive and very few people can afford to buy one. Who would have thought that Mrs Andrade would be provided with such a lovely house for the rest of her life?

We should also consider her friends’ act of kindness to Mrs Andrade. But what love the Lord has shown to His saints! And now that Mrs Andrade is

living next door to her friends, they offer her support with everything she needs. But they do not act in such a manner only towards Christians. They always have time for the poor and needy and help them in very practical ways. Those who are helped by them are attracted to Christianity because of their warmth and concern for others. This is soul-searching in days when there seems to be so much indifference and coldness towards other people, and even towards our fellow Christians. Our hearts should not grow cold towards the needs of our fellow Christians and of our fellow men. Let us pray that the Lord will open our eyes to the needs of those around us. May He enable us to help them, for His glory.

The most precious part of all this is the fact that Mrs Andrade has secured a home in heaven through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But what about you? Can you say that you have a home above, in heaven, at the end of your journey through life? It is either that or a home down below in hell! You have heard of God's hatred for sin; you have heard of the way to have your sins forgiven. Do make sure that you find the way to that place where "there are pleasures for evermore".

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## The Sin of Dancing

This piece has been taken from a letter written in 1911 by Rev Neil Cameron, who was the first minister of St Jude's Free Presbyterian Church in Glasgow.

I am pleased that you have not, like some others, written in an unchristian strain because I pled with them against dancing, but that you have put it down to the credit of consistency on my part, which it really is. In my younger days I was given to dancing, but when it pleased the Lord to awaken me to a sense of my sins, the sin of dancing looked very black and terrible to me. I decided that I would warn my fellow sinners against it all my lifetime, and I have hitherto done so. The only reference to dancing in the New Testament does not endear it to the Lord's people, as it was the cause of beheading John the Baptist. You don't find any mention of these sinful follies except to forbid them to true Christians.

Please read 1 Peter 4:1-7. You will see by this that it is your duty, as followers of Christ, to abstain from all the sinful folly of the unregenerate, to set a sober and godly example before them, and that we should rather reprove sin than give the least favour to it. I do trust that upon further consideration you will discard it at your marriage, as I am sure you will admit that that will be more in keeping with the fear of God. . . . That our Lord went to a marriage does not encourage dancing and drinking, as you know.

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# Looking Around Us

## Children Being Damaged?

We in the western world live in a time when most people are far better off than a few generations ago. Is that good for children? Clearly there are many benefits – not least that few children now die, which is a marked contrast with the past, when serious illness swept away many babies and young people and when many went hungry.

But is it a change for the better in every way? Probably not. Indeed, according to a survey in the UK, most adults – about 89% of those questioned – believe that the well-being of children is being damaged, because they are more materialistic than in previous generations. In other words, what they possess is more important for today's children than anything else, including religion and relationships with other people.

Most seriously, God is ignored and so children do not get the benefit of the teachings of the Bible. That is largely their parent's fault. Their parents too are materialistic; they live for the world and for the things of the world. So it is no wonder if the children grow up focused on toys, gadgets, clothes and other possessions.

Some people are afraid about the dangers arising from advertising directed at children and the pressure it puts on them. Yet it is no surprise that companies are chasing a bigger share of children's spending; it adds up to an estimated £30 billion a year. A spokesman for the Children's Society was concerned about "creating a generation who are left unfulfilled through chasing unattainable lifestyles". Presumably what he meant was that children may be damaged when they realise they cannot share in the kind of lifestyle presented to them in adverts and television programmes.

If people would listen to the Bible's teaching, they would use the word *covetousness* to describe desires for what is out of one's reach. And the Tenth Commandment is forceful enough: "Thou shalt not covet". That command is also relevant for advertisers and companies which produce goods which are intended to appeal to children. It forbids them acting in such a way as would influence children to become covetous, to want things that they cannot afford, or what their parents cannot afford, or things that they do not really need. The Bible also tells us that we should "be content with such things as [we] have" (Hebrews 13:5). This applies to children as well as to adults. It is something we all should learn.

But there is one thing we should desire with the greatest possible earnestness, and that is the salvation of our souls. This is something God Himself encourages us to do. We can never want it too much.

## **Youth Conference in Australia**

Plans are underway for a Youth Conference in Sydney, from 29 Sep to 1 Oct 2008, God willing. Those interested are invited to contact Mr Jake van Praag, e-mail: [jnvp@bigpond.com](mailto:jnvp@bigpond.com). The cost is expected to be around A\$100.00. More information will be available later.

## **Spring – in Nature and Grace**

“From thy long winter sleep, poor nature rise!”  
So speaks the voice divine from yonder skies.  
Then murmurs sweet and low answer the call,  
Voices of bird and bee, and fountain’s fall.  
The balmy breezes come, the gentle rain  
All over vale and hill life wakes again.

“From sin’s long deadly sleep, poor soul, arise!”  
So heavenly mercy spoke from yonder skies.  
Then Satan’s captive rose and burst his chain.  
The dreams of midnight fled, all false and vain.  
The mighty Friend drew near, faithful and true.  
Old things had passed away; all was made new!

“From sorrow’s heavy sleep, poor heart, arise!”  
Thus spoke the voice of love from yonder skies.  
Then through fast-falling tears hope’s rainbow stole;  
Her soothing cry was heard within my soul.  
“His promise has not failed through the sad past;  
Weeping has long endured, joy comes at last!”

“From death’s long winter sleep, My people rise!”  
Soon shall that summons sound from yonder skies.  
Then from far-severed graves o’er land and sea  
How gladly shall we haste, O Lord, to Thee!  
Soon shall that morning dawn, this night be gone.  
Beloved ones, till then in hope rest on.

*HLL*

**Price 70p**