

# The Explorer

December 2008



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## Puzzles

Young folk are encouraged to complete the various puzzles in the magazine and send them in to:

Mrs Kirsteen Murray  
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Younger readers who find the questions too hard may like to do a drawing based on one of the articles and send it to the same address.



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[Unattributed articles ought not to be considered the work of the Editor.]

## Repairing the Walls



I used to like to watch my Dad repair the dykes which were on the farm. He would start by making sure that the foundation was secure and then start building on that.

Small stones would be fitted in between the larger stones so that there would be no spaces. As well as separating the fields the dykes would provide shelter for the cows and sheep. Often in the winter the animals would huddle against the dykes to keep warm.

We read about walls being repaired in the book of Nehemiah.

Nehemiah lived in the palace of the king of Persia and he was the king's cupbearer. Nehemiah was sad because he had heard that the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and that the gates had been burnt.

Nehemiah prayed to God that the king of Persia might be willing to let him go to Jerusalem to build the walls again.

The king let him go and also sent letters to the keeper of the forest so that Nehemiah would get wood for building the walls.

After Nehemiah had looked at the city walls and saw that they were broken he arranged for the men to rebuild the walls.

Some of the enemies of the people mocked them and tried to stop the work but Nehemiah prayed to God to help them. The people worked hard to finish rebuilding the walls.

Some of the men held weapons in case their enemies came to stop the work.

Eventually after fifty-two days the walls were rebuilt.

The people gathered together in the street and Ezra the scribe read out of the Book of the Law of Moses. After hearing this, the people wept because they realised that they were sinners. Nehemiah and Ezra told them not to weep because God had been good to them and would show mercy to those who confessed their sins.

Then the people made a covenant with God that they would keep his commandments.

Do we keep the commandments of God?



# A New Song

This article originally appeared in the October 1997 issues of *Young Foundations*

In this article we are taking a look at the subject of the way that we worship God — and in particular, how we praise him together.

## Guidance

When it comes to worship, we take our guidance from God himself. How else can we know what's really appropriate? Our worship ought not to be simply a matter of doing something we enjoy with a view to pleasing ourselves — our worship is to be directed towards God. So it's not just a question of what appeals to our own minds, but what's appropriate in God's terms. And God hasn't left us guessing on that subject — he has given us guidance in the Bible.

## Privilege

It is a privilege to sing. Singing, of course, is only one part of our worship, but it is a very important part. This is the part of public worship in which the congregation have the opportunity — and duty — of taking a very active part. We ought always to make good use of it. And it's worth remembering that in heaven, singing is the privilege of redeemed souls.

## Psalms

We sing the Psalms. Why? Because the Book of Psalms is the great song book that God himself has given us. Of course it was given in Old Testament times — but it is still as relevant as ever. The worship of the New Testament Church largely followed the form of worship in the Synagogue, with the singing being drawn from the Book of Psalms as the praise book God himself has given. One of the advantages of using God's song book is that we know there are no doctrinal errors or misleading lyrics in it. This cannot be said for many human hymn books.

## Christ

We sing of Christ in the Psalms. One of the most wonderful things about the Psalms is how they are so full of predictions about the Saviour — his person, his

work, his sufferings and his victories. We should search for Christ until we find him in every Psalm we sing.

## Verse

We sing in verse. That is not the only way we could sing the Psalms. In the earliest times the style of singing — secular as well as sacred — was much more like chanting and that is the way the Psalms were sung in the early years of the Christian Church, too. Much later, in the years before the Reformation, church music became so complicated that it required trained choirs. Congregations were often encouraged to be quiet in case they spoiled the singing. However the Reformers placed a great emphasis on the Biblical importance of the congregation participating in singing. They encouraged the translation of the Psalms into a form which could be recognised as poetry. This would then be sung to readily recognised tunes in the sort of musical form that ordinary people, not just professional musicians, could cope with.

## Unaccompanied

We sing unaccompanied. In the Old Testament form of Temple worship, musical instruments most certainly had a place — but the symbolism of the Old Testament Temple worship (it symbolised and pointed forward to the Messiah who was to come) has been fulfilled. In the New Testament Church — as in the Old Testament Synagogue — the singing was unaccompanied. And so is ours. Not simply because we like it that way, or because we can't play instruments, but because that is the best example we have from the New Testament Church.

## Best Words and Best Way

We have got the best possible words to sing — words given us by God himself. Let us sing them in the way he himself shows us in the Bible as most appropriate and pray that he would bless them to us as he has done to so many others.



## 'ABOVE THE ORDINARY'

One of the first things which strike you as you look at a picture of Henry Martyn, our Missionary explorer this month, is his youthfulness. This is not surprising as he died at the age of thirty one. He was, as the title suggests, an extraordinary man. Who was Henry Martyn and what did he do, in such a short life, that marks him out as a singularly remarkable man?

### **HE WAS NOT AN ORDINARY SCHOLAR**

Henry Martyn was born in Truro, Cornwall in South West England in 1781. From an early age he showed unusual brilliance and it was obvious that if God spared him, and opportunity allowed, he would go far in this world. God did spare him and in his providence allowed the young scholar to go to Cambridge University. There he studied with some of the brightest students of the day and proved himself more than able to keep up with the best of them. He won the prize for best mathematics student at the University. His later skill in languages was apparent in his University days when he won the University Latin prize. Life in university was not just about studying however; it appears that it was during his time in Cambridge that he became a Christian. There was a famous minister in Cambridge at the time called Charles Simeon and he was a great help in spiritual things to young Henry Martyn.

When he first went to university it was with the intention of becoming a lawyer but after his

conversion he began to wonder whether the Lord had a different plan for his life. One day he heard Rev. Charles Simeon speaking about a famous missionary called William Carey. His interest in mission work was further heightened through reading the life-story of the North American missionary David Brainerd. Having completed all his studies he was ordained into the ministry of the Church of England and served for two or three years in various English congregations. His heart was set, however, on being a missionary overseas and eventually it was possible for him to set off for India.

### **HE WAS NOT EVEN AN ORDINARY MISSIONARY**

That is not intended as a slight on the many other missionaries who have served the Lord down through the years in different parts of the world but even by the standards of these great men and women Henry Martyn was an extraordinary pioneer. He arrived in India in April 1806 and lost no time in getting a reasonable grasp of the local language. As we have already seen he was good at languages and soon had sufficient grasp to begin translating the Bible for the Indians. Most people would reckon they were doing very well if they managed to translate the Bible into one language but under the hand of the Lord Henry Martyn achieved even more than that. He was able eventually to translate the whole of the New Testament into Urdu and Persian. He also got to work on a revision of the

Arabic Bible, translated the Book of Common Prayer into Urdu and also made a translation of the Book of Psalms. In a letter in 1809 asking for more dictionaries he reveals that he had in his possession dictionaries and grammar books in seventeen languages.

Besides his work in translating the Scriptures he also found time to preach regularly and was frequently engaged in discussion and debate with Muslim and Hindu leaders. In these debates he would defend the Bible and present the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Despite his devotion to the Lord and his constant defence of the truths of the Bible he was apparently very gentle in his dealing with these people. He himself says that he had learned “the great blessing of the power of gentleness”.

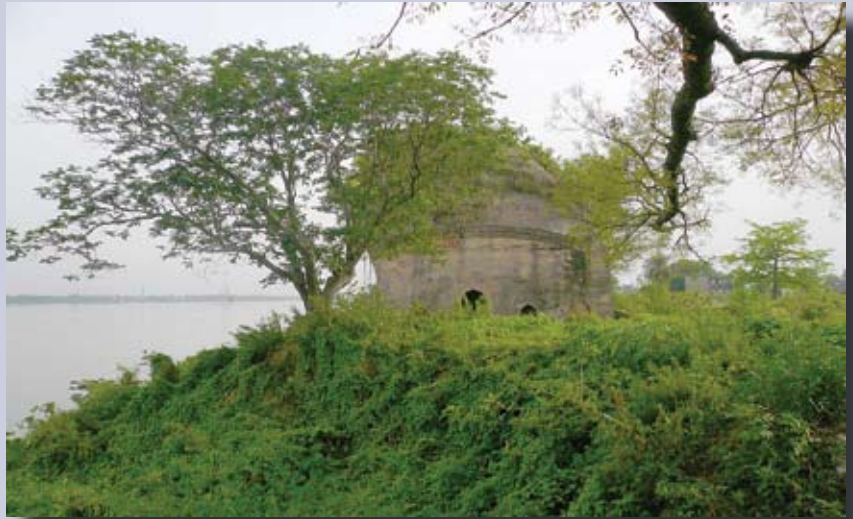
#### HE DID NOT DIE AN ORDINARY DEATH

In 1812 Henry was eager to travel further in Asia. His plan was to visit a part of Persia where he intended to spend some time in Bible translation. From there he intended, as soon as possible, to return home. There he hoped to have a chance to regain his strength and recruit other missionaries for India. Some of his friends were worried that he was attempting too much. One such friend wrote that he was trying to achieve what was “beyond his feeble and exhausted frame”. Sadly this proved to be true and Henry Martyn never made it back to England. Ill with fever, weak and tired he died on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 1812. His old friend Rev. Charles Simeon



Henry Martyn preaching

wrote, “What words can express the loss which India and the whole world has sustained”. What is his legacy? Without a doubt he helped to open up India to other missionaries. He appears to have been aware himself that this was a part of what he was engaged in. He used to encourage himself, at times, with the thought



Henry Martyn's Pagoda, Aldeen, Serampore

that “even if I never see an Indian converted, God may design, by my continuance in the work, to encourage future missionaries”. He was mindful of the sovereignty of God who would work things out as he saw fit.

No estimate of his legacy would be complete without remembering his great work of Bible translation. Only eternity will reveal how many came to faith through hearing Martyn or reading the Bible he had so diligently translated. In 1833 Joseph Wulff travelling in Persia found many copies of the ‘Martyn’ Arabic Bible.

One young man called Shaikh Salih on a visit to his family home discovered that the young English missionary lived next door. From his father’s backyard he could hear Martyn preach to a little group. He became curious about Christianity and befriended Martyn. He began to assist him with binding the new Bibles he was producing. This was blessed to his soul and, while binding and reading the newly completed Urdu New Testament, he saw in the Word of God a “true description of his own heart”. Seeing his need of a Saviour he fled to Christ as the only refuge for sinners. He trained for the Christian ministry and became an evangelist and medical missionary in Agra.

Henry Martyn’s final diary entry is for the 6<sup>th</sup> October 1812. It reveals a man who longed for the day when sin and its effects would no more trouble the children of God. It reveals a man who looked for a “better country, that is, an heavenly”. Are his desires your desires? Are his hopes your hopes? Is his God your God? “Oh when shall time give place to eternity? When shall appear the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness? There, there shall in no wise enter in anything that defileth, none of that wickedness which has made man worse than wild beasts, none of those corruptions which add still more to the miseries of mortality, shall be seen or heard of any more”.

# PUZZLE PAGE

## Bible Maths

1. Take the number of cows in Pharaoh's dream \_\_\_\_  
2. Add the number of days Jonah was in the belly of the fish \_\_\_\_  
3. Subtract the number of sons Adam had \_\_\_\_  
4. Divide by the number of times Joshua and his army marched around the city on the last day \_\_\_\_  
5. Multiply by the number of times Peter denied Jesus \_\_\_\_

What is your answer \_\_\_\_\_

1. Take the number of days Jesus fasted in the Desert \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Divide by the number of people in the Ark \_\_\_\_\_  
3. Multiply by the number of times Daniel prayed each day \_\_\_\_\_  
4. Add the number of Commandments \_\_\_\_\_  
5. Subtract the number of years Jacob worked before he could marry Rachel \_\_\_\_

What is your answer \_\_\_\_\_

1. Take the number of brothers that Joseph had \_\_\_\_  
2. Add the number of days God took to create the world \_\_\_\_  
3. Subtract the number of disciples \_\_\_\_  
4. Multiply by the number of hours it was dark while Jesus was on the Cross \_\_\_\_  
5. Divide by the number of loaves used in the feeding of the 5000 \_\_\_\_\_

What is your answer \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in this form if you are sending the puzzles in.

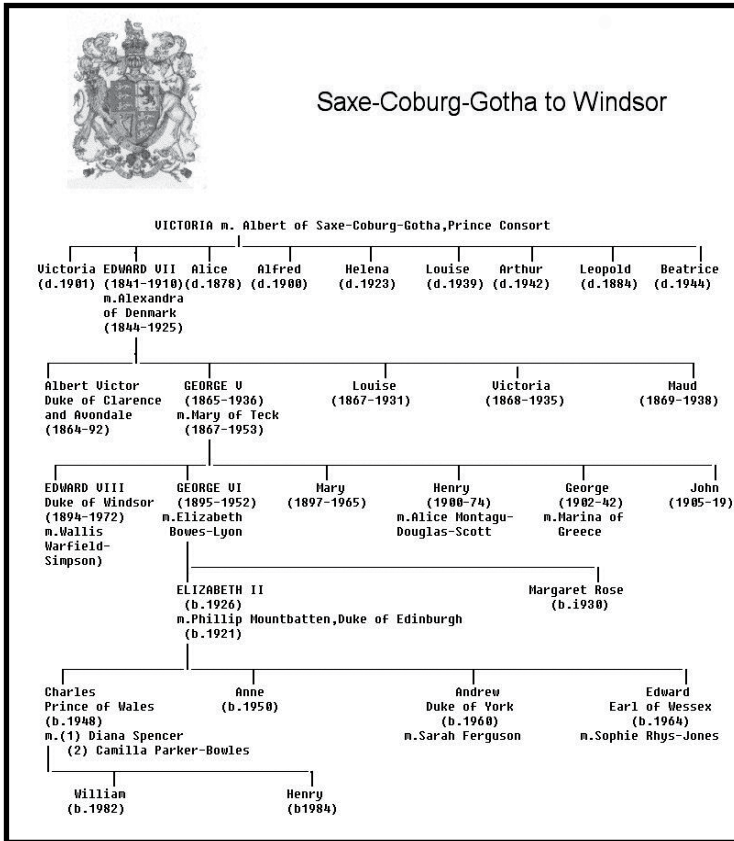
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# What's in a Name?

Opposite is an example of a genealogical table.

It is a very good idea to have a hobby — but only if it does not take up the time that should be spent on more important things. I recently read of a man who made a hobby of tracing his family tree and, I think, he traced his family back for over 1,000 years.

In the Bible there are a number of places where we read of family trees. The first is in Genesis 4:16 onwards. Another starts in Genesis 5:3, and yet another in Genesis 10:1. The book of Numbers has lots of family trees, as do 1 Chronicles, and Ezra. Very importantly Matthew's and Luke's gospels trace the family tree of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Perhaps when you have family prayers and are reading the Bible, you come to these long lists of difficult names, and think that they are not so interesting or exciting as the Old Testament battles or the miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whatever you may think these names are very important.

Over a period of about four thousand years, men of God were inspired by him to record these names. When they wrote they wrote exactly what God said they should write — no more, no less. That is why these genealogies (to give them their proper name) all agree. What Moses wrote agrees with what the Chronicler, Ezra, Matthew, and Luke wrote even though these men probably never met, or knew what some of the others had written.

There are people who come to the Bible just to find fault, and they would like to find fault with the genealogies and then say, 'Look! What Matthew has written is different to that in the Chronicles, and Numbers disagrees with Genesis so I can't believe your Bible.' But no one can do that because the Bible is in agreement with itself, even in the extensive and detailed genealogies.

In 1601 James Ussher was appointed as a minister of the gospel. In the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century he published the results of his detailed study of the Bible. He would have paid special attention to the age of those included in the genealogies. His research enabled him to put dates to all the events recorded for us in Scripture. These dates are widely accepted even now and are included in the margins of some Bibles. While his dates are not inspired as the Bible is inspired, his researches help us to grasp the timing of events throughout Scripture.

The genealogies also add to the uniqueness of the Bible. It provides us with a huge amount of information which can be tested for accuracy — even these long lists of (to us unpronounceable) names. The Bible will pass any test we subject it to with flying colours. That is one reason, among many, why we may confidently believe every word of Scripture, and take note of the very real danger in failing to come to the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness and everlasting life.



# Laura's Bible Dictionary

On Sunday morning Laura was very bad in church. She just couldn't sit still, and she even grabbed her Mum's arm a few times to look and see what time it was. She knew the minister would be nearly finished if the big hand was pointing straight up. He was taking so long today and Laura didn't understand what he was talking about.

When she got home Mum was very angry with her and asked her why she was so bad. 'I didn't understand what the minister was saying,' said Laura. 'He used so many big words.'

'But you have to be good, even if you don't understand,' replied her Mum.

Then her Mum had an idea. 'Let's make a Bible Dictionary,' she said.

'What's that?' asked Laura.

'It is a book for you to write in all the words which you don't understand, and your Dad or I will tell you what they mean when we get home. The next time the minister uses that word you can look up your Dictionary to find out what it means,' explained her Mum.

That afternoon Laura and her Mum made a Bible Dictionary. It had twenty six pages in it — a separate page for each letter of the alphabet. They wrote each letter at the top of the page in fancy lettering which Laura enjoyed. She made it as fancy as she could using lots of different colours and really curly writing. When it was finished Mum bound it with a special ribbon that had the letters of the alphabet on it. It was a lovely little book and Laura had loved making it.

Laura couldn't wait to get to church that evening so that she could start using her Bible Dictionary. She found herself hoping that the minister would use lots of big words that night in his sermon so that she could write them in her new Bible Dictionary.

That night in church Laura was very well behaved because she was so busy listening out for all the words to write in her Dictionary and trying to think what letter they started with and how they should be spelt.

As soon as they got home Laura showed Mum all the words she had written. She had written lots of words — some that she didn't know the meaning of and a few she did know the meaning of but they were all big words. They sat together at the kitchen table and filled in what the words meant and re-wrote some of the words which Laura had spelled wrong — just as well she had used a pencil. Laura looked at her Bible Dictionary again and wondered how long it would be before she had words on every page.