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# THE CURFEW MUST NOT RING TONIGHT!

Years ago it was the custom in England to have a bell rung at nightfall, signalling to people that it was time to cover up their fires and put out their lights. Apparently the custom was established by William the Conqueror; and the bell thus rung was called the “curfew”.

The following story belongs to the 17th century. It is taken from a narrative poem written by Rose Hartwick Thorpe (1850-1939), a young woman then just 16 years old, who later became an accomplished writer of poems and books for children. She based this particular poem on earlier written material, and it was published in 1867 in a Detroit Newspaper. It became very popular and was said to have been a favourite of Queen Victoria.

The scene is set in an English village. The sun was sinking and the shadows were deepening towards night. There, in the jail, was a young Cavalier (a supporter of Charles I), who had been captured, tried and sentenced to be hanged “at the ringing of the curfew”.

This poor man, Basil Underwood, had a sweetheart whose name was Bessie, and although that evening many sat in their homes heart-broken and grieving, there was none so sad as this young woman who had heard the sentence uttered by the stern Judge – “At the ringing of the curfew, Basil Underwood must die.” In her heart she made a solemn vow – “Curfew shall not ring tonight!”

It was the aged sexton whose duty it was to ring the bell at sunset. In a short while he would appear and make his way towards the church-door and then, as he pulled upon the ropes, there would be the sound of the bell, and the jailer would lead the young prisoner out to die. His orders were to do so “at the ringing of the curfew”.

Bessie saw the sexton approaching. She ran to him, pleading with him not to do what he had seemed about to do – to ring the great bell. Wringing her hands, and with eyes red and swollen, she cried out to him in her agony: “The man I love is in the prison, doomed to die tonight. No-one is able to help. Oh,

Sexton, you must not, you must not – you shall not ring the bell!” The old sexton shook his head, and walked on, slowly but surely, towards the church tower. “Every evening, at sunset”, he said to her, “the bell tolls at the twilight hour: I have always done my duty; and now I’m old, I will not fail to do it. Curfew bell must ring tonight.”

Every step of the way towards that dreadful door she pleaded and wept. To be hanged herself would seem as nothing compared with her loved one being hanged. As the sexton put his hand on the belfry door, she cried out in sheer desperation, “Oh, you shall not! They will hang him!” But the old man was deaf to pity: he pushed her away and proceeded to open the door.

Inside the belfry, the young woman’s eyes fell upon the rope that pulled the bell. Then the dim shape of a ladder came into her view. It was the ladder to the bell-chamber. Swift as a flash she darted up while the old sexton was fumbling about, and when he turned she was nowhere to be seen. Higher and higher she climbed until she reached the top-most rung and entered the place where, above her, hung the huge dark bell.

Immediately, knowing that in a second it might be too late, she sprang at the tongue of the bell and clung on with incredible determination. She lifted herself higher, her soft arms wrapped around the big iron ball, and her heart throbbed with fear lest she should lose her hold when the great bell began to swing. The bell began to move and she was borne from one side to the other. It swung to and fro. Her head was struck, and then her limbs were dashed against the great iron sides. Three times the bell swung. Although in an agony, the young woman tenaciously held on. She did not seem to care at all. She knew her body was successfully muting the fatal sound of the great bell.

Listening, she faintly heard below, the old sexton go out and the tower-door close behind him. Very deaf, the old man did not realize the bell had never sounded.

At last, the young woman relaxed her bleeding arms and hands, and dropped to her feet. She felt terribly giddy. Everything around her seemed to be reeling. For several moments, she staggered; and then she slowly climbed down the

ladder and let herself timidly out into the twilight. In the jail all was still. The jailer was waiting, listening for the curfew. The young prisoner stood with his hands tied, awaiting his dreadful end.

Suddenly there was heard in the distance the sound of horses, galloping towards the village, and then appeared a company of troops with Cromwell at its head. Bessie dashed towards Cromwell's imposing figure. She threw herself before him, begging the life of Basil Underwood, the man she so much loved. She told what she had done and showed her bleeding hands. Cromwell was visibly moved, and tears began to appear in his eyes. With great tenderness, he told Bessie that her sweetheart was safe. He wrote out a pardon. "Go!", he said, "your lover lives." Curfew shall not ring tonight!"

With flying steps, she rushed to the prison and thrust the pardon into the jailer's hands. In a few moments the young woman and the man she so much loved were locked in each other's arms. It was a night never to be forgotten. It was the night when the curfew never rang.

Moving as this story is, there is another even more wonderful. It is the story of redeeming love in the Christian Gospel, which tells of sinners, guilty and condemned by the Law, redeemed from their awful predicament by Christ's sacrifice of love.

At Calvary the Lord Jesus, in His incomparable love, did what needed to be done to save us from the Law's dread sentence passed upon us, the sentence of death. He submitted Himself to unknown suffering: in body and soul, He was willing to hang on the cursed tree and there be bruised and broken to obtain for us a pardon for our sins. Raised from death, our Lord presents Himself, with wounds and scars still visible, before the face of God, the Judge of all the earth; and, on the basis of His pain and agony unto death, God is pleased to show us favour and grant us everlasting life.

How should poor wretched sinners respond to Him who died for them upon the Cross? Surely, they should come to Him and, with heart-felt gratitude; they should receive Him and give Him their hearts and their lives.

Jesus! My soul adoring bends

To love so full, so free;  
And may I hope that love extends  
It's saving power to me.

What glad return can I impart  
For favours so divine?  
O take my all – this worthless heart,  
And make it only Thine.

## FELLOWSHIP NEWS

The ordination of Simon Green to the Christian ministry, and his installation as Associate Pastor at Emmanuel Church, took place on Saturday 11 November 2017. This historic and memorable event was one of great joy as well as profound thankfulness to God, whose abundant blessings towards us have caused us to acknowledge with the Psalmist: "The LORD hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." (A full report of these services is found later in this issue of *The Messenger*).

At our midweek meeting on Wednesday 13 December we were pleased to have another visit from Mr. Graham Chewter representing the work of the Trinitarian Bible Society. Once again we were encouraged to hear of various translation projects, and in particular the Mandarin/Chinese edition of St John's Gospel which had been widely distributed. Work also nears completion of the Bible in the Romanian language. All translation work requires great dedication, concentration and a deep love of God's Word, and therefore calls for much prayer. Mr. Chewter closed our meeting by directing our thoughts to Hebrews 9:10 " . . .until the time of reformation." We were reminded that just as Martin Luther and other reformers sought to put an end to man-made rituals and ceremonies as a means towards salvation, so Christ was a fulfilment of all Old Testament ceremonial ordinances, which are now abrogated and removed. The Protestant Reformation brought all the great truths of the gospel to light, returning the Bible to its rightful place. The TBS seeks always to defend and promote sound translations of these precious scriptures. In these spiritually

dark days, may God be pleased to bring people back to his Word, working a true reformation in their hearts

*"As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever." Psalm 125:2*

# **THE ORDINATION OF SIMON GREEN TO THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY AND HIS INSTALLATION TO MINISTRY AT EMMANUEL CHURCH**

## **A Report by Simon Tyler**

On the afternoon of Saturday 11 November 2017 a large number of friends, family, and ministers, from churches across Britain and overseas, gathered at Emmanuel Church to attend the solemn Ordination Service of Simon Green to the Christian Ministry, and the Service of Installation of him as Associate Minister here at Emmanuel Church, to serve alongside the current pastor Rev. Malcolm Watts.

The Service of Ordination was led by Mr. Watts and the guest preacher was Rev. Maarten Kuivenhoven, Pastor of Heritage Reformed Congregation, Grand Rapids, U.S.A. After a Call to Worship, Mr. Watts led the congregation in prayer. Psalm 138:1–8 was then sung, followed by the reading of Ephesians 4:1–16. Mr. Watts welcomed all present, from near and far, observing that their presence with us on this special day was a precious token of their fellowship in the truth and in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In his explanation of Ordination, Mr. Watts began by stating some introductory and general truths:

1. The Church is a divine institution (Acts 20:28 – “the church of God”), its constitution being settled in God’s written Word (Isa. 33:22; Eph. 2:20; 1 Tim. 3:14–15; 2 Tim. 3:16–17).

2. There is an office of Ministry in the Church, a position of duty and responsibility, which is appointed by God and must be recognised by His people (Rom. 11:13; 12:4; 1 Tim. 3:1).

3. This office existed in the Old Testament Church (Mal. 2:7 – “the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts”; cf. 2 Chron. 17:9) and it is promised for the New Testament Church (Jer. 3:15 – “I will give you pastors according to mine heart”; Matt. 13:52; Rev. 2:1 – the word “angel” means “messenger” and can be used of human messengers (as in Luke 7:24; 9:52).

4. It is a high and holy place to occupy: “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 3:7–10; 1 Tim. 1:12–14).

5. No-one can enter upon the ministry without a call from God, a solemn communication of the divine will: “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God” (Heb. 5:4; cf. Acts 13:2; Rom. 10:15).

6. The Ministry involves the preaching of God’s Word and the administration of the sacraments (Matt. 28:19–20 – “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you”; Luke 22:14, 19–20; Eph. 4:11–12). “The Word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office” [John Calvin]; “Does the administration both of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper belong indiscriminately to all? By no means. It is confined to them to whom the office of teaching is committed.” [Catechism of the Church of Geneva]

7. Such as are appointed to this place and work must devote themselves wholly to it (Col. 4:17; 2 Tim. 4:5).

Following the statement of these things, Mr. Watts defined Ordination as the solemn and formal setting apart of a man to this office, which is properly done by “the laying on of hands”.

Thus Moses, when appointing Joshua, laid his hands upon him (Num. 27:18, 22–23) and the Levites were set apart in like manner (Num. 8:10–11). This

practice was retained in New Testament times: “Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away” (Acts 13:2–3) and, in the New Testament, it is “the laying on of hands of the presbytery” (1 Tim. 4:14 – “presbytery” refers to a body of presbyters or elders).

Mr. Watts then called upon Simon Green to speak of his call to the Ministry. Mr. Green recounted how in 2006 the Lord had spoken to him during a series of sermons at the High Leigh Bible Conference and given him an inner compulsion to make God and His salvation known, something for which he felt then, and still feels, his total inadequacy. Jonah-like he resisted the call for 4 years but, upon returning home from church one Sabbath evening, he retired to his room and, kneeling down in prayer, he submitted himself to God’s will. He concluded, “I never sought this office but God placed it upon me”.

After this Statement, Mr. Watts formally asked Mr. Green the five questions required to be put to the Ordinand, as laid down in the Church’s Constitution. These related to his belief in the inspired and inerrant Scriptures; his adherence to the London Baptist Confession of Faith (1689); his approval of reformed Church government by Teaching and Ruling Elders; his uncompromising commitment to purity of worship; and, finally, his acceptance of the office of Minister, in dependence upon God for strength, leading the Church in the way of His appointments, governing them according to Scripture, and setting before them, at all times, a godly and holy example. To all these questions Mr. Green responded affirmatively.

At this point in the service, the church elders were joined, in an expression of fellowship, by Maarten Kuivenhoven (Grand Rapids), David Allen (Walshamle-Willows), Aaron Lewis (Ibsley), Geoff Marshall (Totton), and Henk Roosink (Zuiderkerk, Rijssen, Netherlands. These all gathered around Simon Green and, while he kneeled, they laid their hands on him, Mr. Watts leading in solemn prayer, commending Simon Green to God and His grace.

After the singing of Psalm 68:16–20, Rev. Kuivenhoven preached the Ordination Sermon, taking as his text John 21:15–17, our Lord’s reinstatement and confirmation of Peter to the Christian Ministry.

Before opening up this passage, Mr. Kuivenhoven told of his friendship with Simon Green, explaining that he had been his mentor while he was a seminarian at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids. During his time in the U.S.A. Simon had also preached at Heritage Reformed Congregation where Mr. Kuivenhoven serves as Pastor. He said that he was greatly honoured and overjoyed to have been asked to preach at Simon's Ordination Service.

Turning to the passage before him, Mr. Kuivenhoven observed that, following Peter's triple denial, there was a triple confession and a triple commission. The risen Lord begins with a probing question: "Lovest thou me more than these?" It was pointed out that earlier, in his self-confidence, Peter had proudly boasted: "Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." (Matt. 26:33) In Peter's case, pride did go before a fall. Hence, there is a gentle rebuke here, followed by a searching test of his commitment to Christ. After all, he who has been forgiven much is called to love the Lord much. "Lovest thou me?" It is a question which strips away all of self, pride, learning, and intellect – it is a test of the heart. Jesus humbles Peter, only then to call forth from him his grateful love: "Thou knowest that I love thee".

Mr. Kuivenhoven continued, addressing Simon directly: 'You are to seek this position because Christ called you to it, not for money or for fame. In the future, you may well meet with strange providences, and some hard to understand, yet, whatever the situation, you must be able to say, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee."

The shepherd lives with the sheep, you are therefore not to live in your study. You are to care for the flock, especially when the sheep find themselves in a strange situation or in a sad condition. You will need to be there with them, feeding them with God's Word, praying faithfully for them, and comforting them in the Lord. You are not a hireling. A hireling flees when he sees the wolf coming, but, true to your calling, you must resist the temptation to do so, and stand by the dear people whom God has entrusted to you. Sometimes the sheep may not like the food provided for them, and their ingratitude and indifference may discourage you. However, when you know that what you provide is vital for their growth and strength, and what will keep them in

communion with Christ, you must always mind your duty and continue your ministry among them, remembering that they are God's dear people."

These were just some of the truths expounded and applied in this most helpful sermon.

After Mr. Kuivenhoven had concluded with prayer, Mr. Watts returned to the pulpit and then thanked him for the preaching of God's Word – "experimental preaching, from the heart; such preaching as we love".

The service was concluded with the singing of Psalm 22:22–28, followed by the pronouncing of the Benediction.

Between the two services, the congregation enjoyed a buffet tea, during which time Mr. Watts read out greetings and expressions of support and encouragement from those ministers (and their wives) who had been unable to attend, among whom were the following:

William Macleod (Glasgow), John J. Murray (Glasgow), Dewi Higham (Cardiff), Rowland Wheatley (Cranbrook), John Saunders (Chichester), Hywel Roberts (Southampton), Jonathan Munday (Exeter), Christopher Buss (Ashford), Philip Hopkins (Biddenden), Paul Karageorgi (London), Chalan Hetherington (Hemel Hempstead), Roy Mohon (Stockton), Ray Birch (Southend-on-Sea), David George (Maesycwmmmer), Timothy Nelson (Ballynahinch, NI.), Joel Brooks (Dores), and Stephen Toms (Chelmsford).

After the interval, the Service of Installation was held. Mr. Watts again led the worship, and at this service the guest preacher was Dr. David Allen (Walsham-le-Willows), Deputation Speaker for the Trinitarian Bible Society.

After the Call to Worship and the opening Prayer, the congregation sang Psalm 147:12–20. The reading was 1 Timothy 4:1–16. Mr. Watts then gave an explanation of installation to pastoral ministry in a local church. He began with a brief reference to the following truths:

1. Each particular church should have a stated ministry (1 Cor. 12:28; Col. 4:17).

2. The ministry does not 'lie in common'; that is, it is not to be exercised by anyone and everyone (Rom. 10:15; James 3:2).
3. There should be recognition of a person's gift and ability (1 Tim. 3:10 – "Let these also first be proved...").
4. Each church, under God, has the right to choose its ministers (Acts 1:15ff; 13:1–3; 2 Cor. 8:19 – "chosen of the churches").
5. The choice made, the church then has the right to call a man to minister among the Lord's people in that church (Acts 13:1–3 – the Lord made His mind clear to the church: the members then acted upon this; cf. 16:9).
6. If a positive response is given, the man must be 'received' as a Minister of Christ to that particular church (Eph. 4:11 cf. Col. 4:10).
7. Ideally, there should be both love and peace (2 Cor. 13:11; 1 Thess. 5:12–13).

An Installation – the placing of a man into his office in the church – is an act to be performed solemnly, in the fear of God, and with strict adherence to Scripture. The church does well to remember that the setting of a Minister in their midst is an evidence of God's great favour and His special goodness to us.

The formal installation procedure of Simon Green as Associate Pastor began with Mr. Watts putting three further questions to him, as set down in the church's Constitution –

"Do you accept the call of this church to be its Pastor, and promise, through grace, to perform all the duties of a faithful Minister of the Gospel among this people? (I do)

Do you declare full agreement with this church's Constitution, as teaching and applying the principles established in Holy Scripture? (I do)

Do you solemnly promise that, by divine and gracious assistance, you will always seek this church's purity, peace, unity, and extension? (I do so promise in the strength of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour)"

To all three questions Simon Green answered affirmatively.  
The members of the church then stood to answer this question:

“Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive Simon Green, whom you have called to be a Minister, and do you promise to receive the Word of Truth from his lips with meekness and submit to him in the exercise of scriptural discipline, giving to him all due honour, obedience and encouragement in the Lord?” All church members present answered, “We do”.

Mr. Green’s Installation concluded with Mr. Watts leading the congregation in solemn prayer, after which “the right hands of fellowship” (Gal. 2:9) were extended to him by the Elders and the Deacons.

Mr. Green then gave an account of his call to Emmanuel Church. In 2011, he had sought advice from Mr. Watts regarding his training for the Ministry. Subsequently, after completing his course at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, he had received a letter of invitation from Mr. Watts, the Elders and Members at Emmanuel Church to serve as a Minister; and although he could see many reasons why he should accept this call, he needed the Lord’s confirmation of the rightness of it, which in due time the Lord gave. When he informed Mr. Watts of his acceptance of the Church’s call, the Lord sealed His will to Simon’s heart with great peace and joy. During his statement, he gave heartfelt thanks to the church at Wattisham for all their care, prayers, and support during the past 35 years.

Mr. Watts responding, stated that we are an ‘Old Paths’ church (Jer. 6:16) and explained briefly what this meant. As a church, we hold God’s Word to be inerrant, authoritative, and sufficient; we maintain purity of worship, such as is instituted by God in Holy Scripture and which evidences true and appropriate reverence; we adhere to Westminster theology, as set out in the Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689; we believe in and follow after holiness of life, in strict accordance with God’s Moral Law; and we emphasise the grace of Christian love, such love as our Saviour had for His own.

Mr. Watts then warmly welcomed Dr. Allen and, before the sermon, Psalm 144:9–15 was sung.

In his introduction, Dr. Allen spoke of having known Simon Green for 25 years or so, including their time together at Stowmarket High School, Suffolk where he was a schoolmaster and Simon a pupil. He commented that they had both – but for different reasons – finished at the school on the same day. On a future occasion, when he was on a rail-journey to Inverness, he and Simon had travelled together on the same train, Simon travelling to Loughborough University where he was then a student. The spiritual conversation they then had together convinced Dr. Allen that the Lord had greater things in store for this young man. He therefore considered it a real privilege to preach at his Installation Service.

Dr. Allen then read Ephesians 3:7–11. He began by saying that Simon knew that without Christ he can do nothing; and that without his wife Anneke he will find his arm weakened.

He observed that we live in days of such spiritual declension that many professing Christians have no love or care for the Church of Jesus Christ, yet in this passage of Scripture the Church is said to be the most astonishing manifestation of God's infinite wisdom, which even the angels are moved to admire and with ever increasing wonder. The church is 'the body of Christ', sanctified, or set apart, in Christ Jesus, through eternal electing love; and God graciously gives to His Church "pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11–12).

Developing the theme, Dr. Allen spoke of the importance of the Church considered in the light of Christ's atoning work, for "Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).

He further noted the importance of the Church as emphasised by the Holy Spirit in the inspired writings of the apostles, such as in Ephesians 1:22–23 and in Acts 2:47; also Acts 9:26 where we read that Saul, after his conversion, "assayed to join himself to the disciples" (the church in Jerusalem). To fully establish this point, he drew attention to the fact that most of the New Testament Epistles were written to various churches.

Dr. Allen urged the congregation always to remember the importance of the Church of Christ. His sermon was concluded with prayer.

Mr. Watts then thanked Dr. Allen for his faithful and heart-warming ministry. He added that the whole day had been singularly blessed – “We will remember this day for years to come”. He then, once again, thanked all the friends present for joining with us on this occasion, and concluded with the words, “May God revive His work in the midst of the years”.

After this, Psalm 22:22–28 was sung, and the Benediction pronounced, thus closing an historic and blessed day for Emmanuel Church.

## **SOME LANDMARK DATES**

An outline of the main events in the Reformation and Puritan Movements:

- 1377** John Wycliffe becomes a reformer, assailing the errors of Popery. He sends out his ‘poor priests’ as itinerant preachers to declare the pure gospel of God’s grace.
- 1401** The persecution of Wycliffe’s followers, the Lollards, leads to their first martyrdom. William Sawtree, parish priest of St. Osyth, in the city of London, was charged with eight articles of ‘heresy’ and burnt to death at Smithfield.
- 1483** Martin Luther was born on 10 November in the small village of Eisleben in Germany.
- 1509** John Calvin is born at Noyon in northern France.
- 1513** John Knox was born at Giffordsgate, a suburb of Haddington.
- 1517** Luther wrote his concerns over the doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church and nailed his Ninety-five Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Church.
- 1520** The Pope “excommunicates” Luther from the Roman Church. Luther then excommunicates the Pope!
- 1521** Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, called a Church Convocation in the city of Worms – the Diet of Worms, at

which Luther was called to recant. There Luther confessed his faith: “My conscience is captive to the Word of God, I cannot and will not recant anything.”

- 1522** Luther publishes his translation of Erasmus’s Greek New Testament into German, followed, in 1534, with his translation of the whole Bible.
- 1526** William Tyndale completes and publishes his English New Testament which very quickly reaches England.
- 1536** Calvin’s first edition of the Institutes of the Christian Religion is printed in Basel
- 1536** Henry VIII and the English Parliament separates the Church of England from Rome.
- 1536** At the age of 27 Calvin, under great pressure from William Farel, begins his ministry in Geneva.
- 1536** Tyndale was betrayed and executed, his last words at the stake were: “Lord! Open the King of England’s eyes.”
- 1545** As a response to the Reformation the Roman Church called the Council of Trent, held in Trento, capital of Trentino. This Council strongly condemned Reformation doctrine and cursed all who disagreed with Roman dogma.
- 1547** Edward VI becomes King. The Protestant Reformation in England advances dramatically.
- 1553** After a nine-day reign, Lady Jane Grey is sent to the scaffold, and Mary, daughter of Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII, and a very strong Roman Catholic, becomes Queen. Three hundred English Protestants are subsequently martyred, and eight hundred flee to the Continent, where, by God’s over-ruling grace, they imbibe the doctrinal tenets of the Continental Reformers.
- 1558** Queen Elizabeth I succeeds to the throne and establishes the Elizabethan Compromise, which is insufficiently reformed to satisfy those who would soon be known as Puritans.
- 1559** The Act of Uniformity authorizes the Anglican Prayer Book for public worship and lays down penalties for those who refuse to use it or who speak against it.
- 1560** After fleeing to the Continent, where he pursues studies under Calvin, John Knox returns to Scotland to promote a thorough

Reformation of Religion; and, under Knox's preaching and influence, the Scottish Parliament establishes the Reformation and Reformed doctrine.

- 1560** The English Geneva Bible appeared.
- 1567/68** A vestments controversy of long standing reaches its height in the Church of England. The immediate question is whether preachers had to wear the prescribed clerical garments at church services, but this is only a symbol of the bigger issue of ceremony, ritual, and liturgy in the church. The controversy marks growing impatience among the Puritans over the situation of a "halfly reformed" church.
- 1569/70** Thomas Cartwright, professor at Cambridge University, upsets the Anglican establishment (and loses his position) with his lectures on the first two chapters of Acts, in which he argues for a simplified Christianity and a Presbyterian form of church government.
- 1583** John Whitgift becomes Archbishop of Canterbury and enforces conformity to the ceremonies of the Anglican Church, leading to oppression of Puritan nonconformists.
- 1603** James I becomes king. Puritans initially have hopes that their situation will improve. In 1604 they meet with the new king at the Hampton Court Conference to present their requests. The king threatens to "harry them out of the land, or else do worse."
- 1605** A group of English Roman Catholics attempt to blow up Parliament when King James and his son were present. Their hope was that, in the ensuing confusion, Roman Catholics would have the opportunity to seize power.
- 1618** The Book of Sports is first published (renewed in 1633), encouraging sports on Sunday afternoons in direct contradiction of Puritan Sabbatarianism. This is cited by the seventeenth-century British church historian Thomas Fuller as one of the leading causes of the English Civil War.
- 1620** On 6 September, Puritan Separatists left the English Port of Plymouth aboard The Mayflower. On 11 December they reached Plymouth, Massachusetts.
- 1625** Charles I, totally unsympathetic to the Puritans, becomes King.
- 1628** William Laud becomes Bishop of London (and Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1633) and undertakes stringent measures to stamp

nonconformity out of the Anglican Church. Laudian oppression is a leading contributor to Puritan migrations to America.

- 1630** John Winthrop leads a large body of Puritans to Massachusetts Bay.
- 1640** Summoned into session by Charles I, the Long Parliament curtails the power of the king. Migration to New England largely stops.
- 1643/6** The Westminster Assembly, a synod called by Parliament to act as a consulting council on matters of church polity and doctrine, prepares a *Directory of Worship*, the *Westminster Confession*, a *Larger Catechism*, and a *Shorter Catechism*.
- 1645/6** Oliver Cromwell's parliamentary army defeats the King's army to end the Civil War.
- 1646** The Episcopalian form of church government (i.e. government by bishops) is abolished in the Church of England.
- 1647** The army debates at Putney, England, over the question of how universally the vote will be extended.
- 1649** Charles I is executed, whereupon Oliver Cromwell assumes the leading role in English government until his death in 1658. As Lord Protector of England, Cromwell tries to implement Puritan ideals in Church and State.
- 1660** As Charles II accedes to the throne, monarchy is restored and episcopal polity is re-established in the Church of England.
- 1662** By a new Act of Uniformity, exclusive use of the newly revised Anglican Book of Common Prayer is enforced, as more than two thousand Puritan pastors resign or are ejected. Non-Anglicans are prevented from taking degrees at Oxford and Cambridge universities, leading to the founding of Dissenting academies.
- 1688** With William and Mary proclaimed King and Queen of England, the "Glorious Revolution" restores the liberty of Puritans to preach and to establish independent churches.

## THE VIADUCT OF SALVATION

**A.J. Parry**

The bridge across the picturesque valley of Crumlin is a notable structure. Its airy lightness and symmetrical form suspended so high in space makes it a

thing of singular beauty. But it is as notable for the ingenuity of its construction as for the beauty of its form. One principle in its construction is that it can yield ten inches under pressure without affecting its safety.

We well remember the occasion of its opening, when it's bearing power was most severely tested. A long train of trucks, each one laden to its utmost capacity with heavy material, was drawn slowly over it. In the meantime there were persons placed in convenient situations to watch the effect of so much weight upon the bridge; the dense crowd below holding its breath with expectation to hear the verdict. At last the burst of shouting and cheering was deafening which greeted the announcement that it yielded but three inches, leaving a margin of seven between it and danger.

God's way of salvation is a structure built on a principle incapable of yielding a hair's-breadth. How grandly it was tested on the great day of Pentecost! On this, its inauguration, it carried over from death to life three thousand souls, including some of those who had with wicked hands crucified and slain the Lord of glory, and it yielded not under the weight of their guilt. Surely men can afford with great confidence to rest their souls' salvation upon a scheme thus buttressed by eternal truth.

## **LOOKING UNTO JESUS**

**James Hervey**

**(1714-1758)**

In every *enjoyment*, O Christian, look unto Jesus; receive it as proceeding from his love, and purchased by his agonies. In every *tribulation* look unto Jesus; mark his gracious hand managing the scourge, or mingling the bitter cup; attempering its severity; adjusting the time of its continuance; and making it productive of real good. In every *infirmity* and failing look unto Jesus, thy merciful High Priest pleading his atoning blood, and making intercession for transgressors. In every *prayer* look unto Jesus, thy prevailing Advocate, recommending thy devotions, and "bearing the iniquity of thy holy things." In every *temptation* look unto Jesus, the Captain of thy salvation, who alone is

able to lift up the hands which hang down, to invigorate the enfeebled knees, and make thee more than conqueror over all thy enemies. But especially when the *hour of thy departure* approaches, when thy flesh and thy heart fail, when all the springs of life are irreparably breaking – then look unto Jesus with a believing eye. Like expiring Stephen, behold Him standing at the right hand of God, on purpose to succour his people in their last extremity. Yes, when thou art *launching out into the invisible world*, and all before thee is vast eternity – then, oh then, look unto Jesus, and view him as the only "way" to the everlasting mansions.

## **GEMS FROM MATTHEW HENRY**

You may as soon find a living man without breath, as a living Christian without prayer.

Whatever is the matter of our care must be the matter of our prayer.

What can we say more for ourselves in our prayers than God has said for us in His promises?

Prayer is the midwife of mercy, that helps to bring it forth.

Those who pray constantly when they are well, may pray comfortably when they are sick.

God will have His children when they want, not only to wait on Him, but to wait for Him.

Prayers of faith are filed in heaven, and not forgotten, though the thing prayed for is not presently given.

God is always punctual to His time; though His promised mercies come not at the time that we set, they will certainly come at the time that He sets, and that is the best time.

Our business in prayer is not to prescribe, but to subscribe to the wisdom and will of God; to refer our cause to Him, and then leave it with Him.

Faithful prayers may presently be turned into joyful praises.

## **THE NAMES OF GOD**

### **Malcolm H. Watts**

In the Bible, God's names are ways by which He makes Himself known. In other words, they are revelatory of Him. As Herman Bavinck has written "God is what He calls Himself, and He calls Himself what He is." He gives Himself many and various names because there is a wonderful fullness in Him and no one name will do. His names make known the glories of His Being.

One of His names is "Jehovah", derived from *hayah*, the verb "to be". The meaning of this name is made known in what God said to Moses: "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM" (Exod. 3:14). It has been variously translated and understood. "I AM; I WAS; AND I WILL BE" (Rev.1:8). Essentially, however, it means that God is, in contrast to the non-existence of other gods. It further suggests that He is eternal: only God is, everything else becomes itself – "the eternal God" (Deut. 33:27); that He is immutable (unchangeable) – "thou art the same" (Ps. 102:27); and that He is faithful, especially to His covenant – "great is thy faithfulness" (Lam 3:23).

There are several compound names, in which Jehovah appears:

**1. Jehovah-El Elyon:** Jehovah Most High (Ps. 7:17), a name that indicates transcendence and exaltedness. God is higher than the highest and altogether beyond our thought and reason (Ps. 97:9; Isa. 57:15). He is to be worshipped with godly fear and in great reverence (Ps. 89:7; Heb. 12:28, 29).

**2. Jehovah-tsabaoth:** Jehovah of Hosts (1 Sam.1:3), indicating that He is the God of the, sun, moon and stars (Deut. 4:19), and God of angels (Ps. 103:21). and men (1 Sam. 17:45). He is the Creator, Preserver and Governor of all (Dan. 4:35).

**3. Jehovah-tsidkenu:** Jehovah our Righteousness (Jer. 23:6), through the promised Saviour's active and passive obedience we become righteous before God (Rom. 5:19; 1 Cor. 1:30).

**4. Jehovah-rapha:** Jehovah thy Healer (Exod. 15:26), again referring to Him in whom is to be found, not only physical, but also spiritual healing (Pss. 103:3; 67:2).

**5. Jehovah-shalom:** Jehovah is Peace (Judg. 6:24), Christ is our peace, making peace with God through the shedding of His blood and then filling us with the peace that passes understanding (Eph. 2:14; Col. 1:20; Phil. 4:7).

**6. Jehovah-meqaddishkem:** Jehovah who Sanctifies thee (Lev. 20:7,8), that is who sets us apart as His and calls us to holiness of heart and life (Jude 1; 2 Cor. 7:1).

**7. Jehovah-roi:** Jehovah My Shepherd (Ps. 23:1), who leads us safely through the wilderness of this world and through its every changing scene (Ps. 31:3; 80:1).

**8. Jehovah-jireh:** Jehovah will Provide (Gen. 22:14), providing for our every need, both in things temporal and spiritual (Matt. 6:25-34; Phil. 4:6, 19).

**9. Jehovah-nissi:** Jehovah is My Banner (Exod. 17:15), the One who defends us from all evil, enabling us to overcome to the end - and in the end (Isa. 11:10; Rom. 8:37; 1 Cor. 15:55-57).

**10. Jehovah-shammah:** Jehovah is There (Ezek. 48:35), a name which looks to the time of Israel's restoration and, beyond that, to the heavenly city, the everlasting home of the spiritual Israel (Rev. 21:22, 23). In heaven, and for ever, God will be there, bringing to His people everlasting happiness. As in time, so in eternity: our God will live up to His great and glorious names.

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD**  
**Douglas MacMillan (1933-1991)**  
(who once worked as a shepherd on the family croft)

**‘He maketh me to lie down in green pastures’**

What a picture of satisfaction is here – ‘He maketh me to lie down’! If I were not a shepherd, I think I would wonder what on earth the psalmist meant by these words; but because I am a shepherd I know that one of the most difficult things to attain among a flock of sheep is to get them to lie down. There are four things that will keep a sheep from lying down, and I think we can take these four things and apply them in Christian experience.

The first thing is *fear*. A sheep which is afraid will never lie down. Sheep came right around our farmhouse, and if a strange car drew up, the sheep that were lying there would all stand up and look, as if to say, ‘Who’s arriving now?’ They did that before we did! If a strange dog came out of that car, their eyes would get big and their ears would go forward and they were ready to be off. A sheep which is afraid will not lie down, and a sheep is very easily frightened. So is a Christian, because sin brought fear along in its wake. ‘I heard thy voice... and I was afraid... and I hid myself’ (Gen. 3:10). Why did Adam say that? Because he had sinned. Sin had come home to his mind and heart, and fear is one of the strange but inevitable results of sin. We see that at every level of human life, and it tends to follow the Christian believer. One of the things that Christ wants to do in your life is to dispel fear and give you rest and quiet. ‘Come unto me... and I will give you rest’ (Matt. 11:28). Only Christ can take away our fears. A knowledge of theology cannot do it; even a bare knowledge of the Word cannot do it; the lovely presence of our lovely Saviour, that does it every time.

Then there is something else that keeps a sheep from lying down, and that is *antagonism* from within the flock. We have what I used to call ‘bully-boy’ sheep. If it was a hen-house they would call it the ‘pecking order’! There is always a sheep that wants to be the big sheep, that wants to be the boss, that wants to shine, that wants to say to the shepherd, ‘Look at me, I’m looking after all the others’. You find the same thing in almost every congregation of Christian

believers. I knew one woman (I believe she is in glory now), and her job took her through various congregations in our denomination in Scotland. In every one of them she wanted to be the big sheep, and in every one of them she caused a lot of heartache and anguish. Don't want to be a big sheep! They are a perfect pest to the shepherd. Sometimes I had to get hold of a sheep and chastise her and say, 'You leave that alone!' – and the sheep would know.

When sheep lie down, as the psalmist tells us, they want to lie down in green grass; they would not lie down in the heather. So you would find all the sheep gathered together on green knolls and lying there. But sometimes I would see them standing up, and I would know right away what was wrong with them. I would say, 'Ay, ay, one of the bully-boys at it again.' There she would be, the big sheep, showing what a fine sheep she was. She would go up to a sheep that was lying down, and stamp her foot and dilate her eyes and look very fierce, and you would see the other poor sheep getting up and running off four or five yards. Then she would go to another sheep, and so on until she had the whole flock up, and she would not stop until she saw me. I had a special whistle for that kind of sheep! Once I had whistled she would calm down and in a wee while they would all be lying down again. Sheep will not lie down if there is any kind of antagonism or frustration or tension.

Now just think how often we allow tensions to arise in ourselves and antagonisms to simmer within us against our brothers and sisters in Christ! Yet we are warned against this – 'lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you' (Heb. 12:15). As soon as these things surface in our hearts we should be taking them to the Shepherd and putting them under the blood of Christ, because they are the root of sin. Yet how often, even among godly people, jealousies arise! You have the 'butting order' we shepherds spoke of. You get it even among ministers – professional jealousy: 'I wish I could preach the way he does.' But God has not made you that kind of preacher, and maybe you should be thankful for this. Let's be content not to be big guns, but to be what God has meant us to be, and thank Him for the least gift that He has given us.

There is something else that will keep a sheep from lying down, and it is something to which a shepherd has to pay very careful attention. *A sheep which is annoyed by flies or insects will not lie down.* I remember in the summer

months when I began shepherding (I was still under 14 years of age), I had to spend the long, hot summer days walking the hills watching for sheep that were coming under the 'strike', as we called it. Every ten days we had to take every single sheep on our hill and spray it and dip it and powder its head, etc. We used stuff called 'MacDougall's Dip', and I used to think that instead of it frightening away the flies, the flies bred on it! If they got maggot strike, sheep could die; it was horrible – they could be eaten away! Just for the flies to be around the sheep was enough. This would lift them all off their feet, set them running, and make them hide in bushes where they would often get caught.

Again, in the Christian life we allow things that are really just insects, trifles, details, to annoy and frustrate us. What should we do with them? Take them to the Shepherd, because they are disturbers of our peace. It may be worry about how on earth you are going to manage to preach for another winter to the same people, or how you are going to manage to listen for another winter to the same dry minister. We worry about the future, about what may or may not happen. These are the flies of Satan, to distract us and annoy us and disturb our rest.

Then there is a fourth thing: *a sheep that is hungry will never lie down*. 'He maketh me to lie down' – He has led them into finest pastures. You have often seen a sheep lying down in green grass, but one kind of sheep that you have never seen doing that is a hungry sheep. A hungry sheep will not lie down; it will stand there and eat. Then, when it has eaten to satisfaction, it will lie down, and you have never seen such a picture of contentment! What is the green grass for the Christian? What does the Shepherd feed His sheep on? The Word of God and the means of grace. Green grass is always living grass, full of sap and nourishment and good for sheep to feed on. The living Word of God is where the soul must feed. Young Christians, let me say something to you. Do you want to get to know the Shepherd better? He is here, in this Book. If you want to feed on Him, do it from His Word. Why do young Christians find the Christian way so difficult? Why do they get cold and wander back into the world? Why do they become afraid and not make a strong and uncompromising stand for Christ? Nearly always because they are neglecting God's Word.

Peter tells us, ‘Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ’ (2 Pet. 3:18). How do you grow in grace and knowledge? It is by the Word that you grow. Don’t feed a sheep, and it will not grow. Don’t feed a Christian, and he will not grow either. The Shepherd’s concern is that you should be often in your green pastures. One of the things that strikes me when I read the Puritans is how these men knew the Word of God. They could quote and quote and quote, and they did not have a man called Cruden behind them! They found out where things were and they found it out for themselves. Read the Puritans, and do so with your Bible in your right hand and the Puritan in your left. Read Louis Berkhof too – he is worth reading – but read him with your Bible in your hand. When you see Scripture references, look them up. Make God’s Word your own, don’t make it always at second hand. That is what is wrong with half our preaching. We go to William Hendriksen, and instead of taking our Bible along with us we leave it on the desk. William Hendriksen is one of the best commentators of the present day; read him all you can, but read him through the Scriptures. Use the helps that God has given you, but remember they are helps. Make the Bible the primary thing, because here are the green pastures of God’s living Word.

*Submitted by Caroline Gahan*

## **GODLY COUNSEL**

Thy God, thy sin, thy death, thy Christ,

The eternal pains of hell,

The joyes of heaven, the day of doome,—

These seven, remember well.

*(17th Century Verse)*

## EPILOGUE

*“Unto you therefore which believe he is precious...” 1 Peter 2 v 7*

We need to consider who “he” is in this verse. It is the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. He is the chief corner stone, elect and precious (verse 6) laid by the Father in Sion, upon which foundation the whole church of God is built.

This same verse also makes us think about what it is to believe in Christ. We need to realise that we are sinners, completely incapable of escaping the just wrath of God for our sins by our own efforts. But God has provided a way by which we can be clothed in the righteousness of Christ – only by grace through faith. ‘By grace are ye saved through faith’ – Ephesians 2 v 8. We must therefore accept Christ by faith, as our personal Saviour. Such faith is more than mere mental assent to the truth – even the devils have that, but they are not saved. We need to trust that Christ has fully satisfied the justice of God for our sins, and therefore there is now no condemnation for us.

When we meditate upon our natural condition before we accepted Christ as our Redeemer, and how we have been changed by the grace of God, we have so much to thank Christ for. Not one of us will fully comprehend the enormity of all that Christ has accomplished until we reach heaven. But Scripture does reveal a great deal. We have seen already how we have been saved from eternal punishment for our sins, but now we are in union and communion with Christ by his Holy Spirit. We have been made the sons and daughters of God by adoption into His family and have divine help and strength in our daily lives. When He decides that our time upon earth is over God will call us home and we will spend eternity in heaven with all the redeemed and holy angels for ever praising God and worshipping Him.

These marvellous blessings (and no doubt many more) are ours through the work of Jesus Christ our Saviour. It is no wonder that the Apostle Peter says that Christ is ‘*precious*’! We must humbly confess our sins, praying for repentance and remembering with grateful hearts all that we have gained by the grace of God.

*Bill Norton*