

27th April

Memory verse

If we confess our sins
he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
I John 1:9.

So many interesting things seem to have happened today that I don't quite know where to start! I'll delve into as many of them as I can and you can choose which to follow up for yourselves. There are two aeroplane items so cast your mind back to the 8th of April when we read about the first jet planes, get out your paper aircraft ready for another test flight and we'll begin...

Something to read

Today marks the birth of English pilot Sheila Scott (1922 – 1988) the first person to fly directly over the true North Pole in a single engine aircraft. She did this in 1971 as part of a “round the world one and a half times” trip in a Piper Aztec plane.

While over the pole itself Sheila had a problem with a nose wheel that slipped from its casing and would not retract. This slowed the Piper down and caused an increase in the plane's fuel consumption but she was able to battle on. She had already had problems with her autopilot which was not working, making it impossible for her relax her concentration at all during the trip. On board she carried some special equipment to help NASA carry out an experiment to test its Nimbus orbiting satellite. “Sheila Scott's record-making, historic flight confirmed the satellite's ability to collect location data from remote computerized and human-operated stations with a unique 'mobile platform' location test,” said NASA. Sheila made many other record breaking flights and broke over 100 aviation records, always flying barefoot to allow her to better sense the vibrations of the aircraft.

Also today in 2005 the superjumbo jet aircraft Airbus A380 made its maiden flight from Toulouse, France. The plane, still the largest of its kind, returned safely after four hours of tests, during which it performed well. About 30,000 spectators came to watch the test flight take off which was described as the most important event in aviation history since the first flight of Concorde.¹ The plane has four engines and a double deck that can accommodate up to 500 passengers. Although impressive, the A380 has not been a great commercial success. Its large capacity gives airlines less flexibility and its four engines need correspondingly more maintenance time than a conventional twin engine jet. Although there are a number of A380 in service today, Airbus plans to withdraw the plane.²

A game for younger children (older ones can help organise)

Perhaps you would enjoy taking an aeroplane flight – in the comfort of your own home. A point of departure and destination can be decided on beforehand and don't forget to check in the passengers at the desk before you allow them onto the plane.³ Chairs can be arranged in a line to form the aircraft and remember: a pilot always makes a visual check of his plane, walking round it on the ground before taking off. The pilot and co-pilot (if available) can sit at the front. The steward or

1 See the lesson for 22nd November.

2 Older children might enjoy a live map of where aircraft are in the sky over Britain here:
<https://www.flightradar24.com/52.67,-3.27/8>

3 If you want to do things really properly you can watch how to check passengers in before a flight here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWn6-Ff-i00>.

stewardess should demonstrate the safety procedure⁴ and can also hand out refreshments (real or pretend) at appropriate times. The pilot can point out things that will be visible en route, “Ladies and gentlemen we will shortly be passing over the pyramids. Visibility is good so you should get a clear view to your left...” etc. Seatbelts should be fastened during take off and landing. The pilot can imagine his bank of instruments, communicate to the control tower etc. Will you fly barefoot like Sheila? If there are not very many passengers available, soft toys will always be willing to fill vacant seats.

Something to research

What exactly is the *true* North Pole? Had anyone flown over the North Pole before Sheila Scott?⁵

A building in history



Today in 1840 the first stone of the present House of Commons was laid. This may sound rather surprising as we read about parliament meeting in Westminster much earlier in history than the 1840s but the fact is that in 1834 a fire burnt down the old buildings. Can you find out who designed the present buildings?⁶

Something to listen to

In 1867 a German music scholar published a piece of music dating from 1810 which he had discovered, the manuscript of which was headed: *Für Elise am 27 April zur Erinnerung von L. v. Bthvn* which means “For Elise on **April 27** in memory of L[udwig]. v[an]. B[ee]th[o]v[e]n.” This famous piano piece is now one of Beethoven's most well loved works, although it was never published in his lifetime. We do not know who Elise was but she probably was not a pianist of more than average ability as the piece is not more than about grade five to six in the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music's Richter scale of difficulty. Find a recording to listen to.⁷ The

4 See how this is done here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtMzngYdx4s>

5 An American called Byrd claimed to have flown over the magnetic North Pole in 1926 although there is doubt, given the inaccuracy of his instruments, that he actually did so. You can watch him here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDemEj2MjNU>

6 You can read about the reconstruction here. <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/building/palace/architecture/palacestructure/rebuilding-palace>

7 This one, for instance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EIrlTznkSrM>

score can be found in the Optional Resources File if you would like to try to follow the music as it is played or if you have access to a piano and feel like having a try at playing it. The beginning is very easy.

Beethoven was born in 1770 so you can work out how old he was when he wrote this piece. The tragedy of Beethoven's life was his deafness which began with buzzing and other noises in the ears in about 1796. By 1801 he had lost 60% of his hearing and by 1816 he was completely deaf. So if this piece was written in 1810 he probably had little hearing left when he wrote it. Listen to the piece again but this time turn down the volume and put a your head under a cushion. That's probably all Beethoven himself could hear of his beautiful piece of music.



A Poem

And now from a deaf composer to a blind poet.

John Milton (1608-1674) sold the copyright of his epic poem *Paradise Lost* on 27th April 1667. He was a poor man by this time and was glad to get a total of £10⁸ for it.

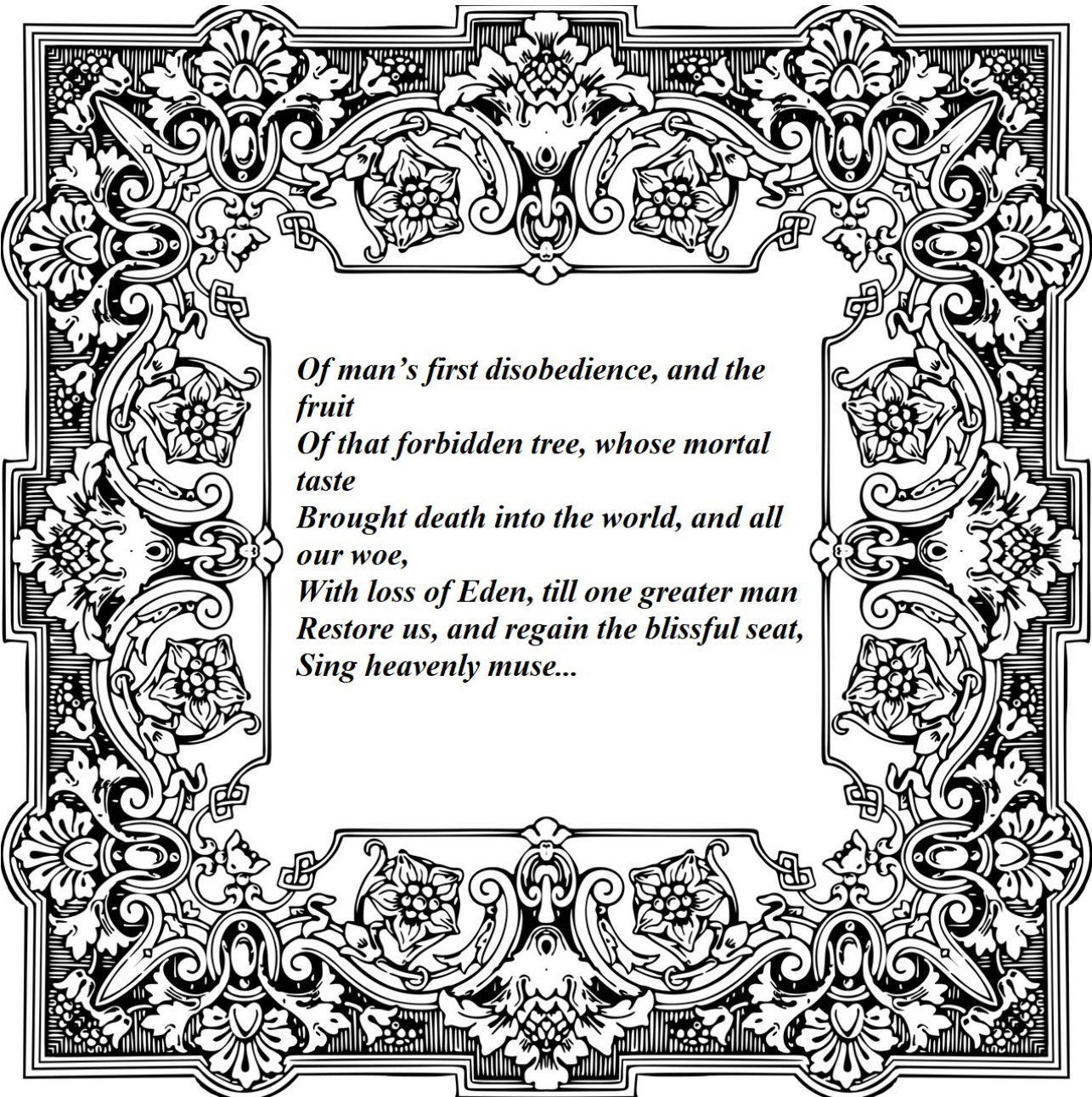
Milton had been Oliver Cromwell's Latin Secretary during the Commonwealth but when the Commonwealth disintegrated and Charles II came back at the restoration, Milton was no longer in favour. He was a puritan and believed passionately in freedom of religion and conscience. There was no place for such a man in the dark days of Charles II. He lived through years of persecution protected most of the time by respect for his poetic genius. By the time he wrote *Paradise Lost* he was blind and depended on his daughters to write down his work for him. This poem is one of the greatest works of literature in any language. Find a copy and read some of it yourself.⁹

Everyone should know at least the opening lines of this poem so I have set them out for you on the next page on a colouring sheet. If you cannot print the page don't worry. Copy the words as neatly as you can on a piece of paper or card and make your own border full of beautiful fruits and flowers to represent the Garden of Eden. Try to learn the words by heart as you colour or draw the border. If you began a poetry memorisation programme on 5th January (if not look at that lesson and begin one now) you could include it. Say the words aloud. When you do this do not pause at the end of each line but read it as you would a prose sentence. The poetic rhythm will come out on its own. The only hard word here is *seat* which does not mean something to sit on. It means a beautiful home in the countryside such as a duke or lord might have – a stately home or mansion. In these introductory words Milton tells us what the poem is going to be about. If you find it difficult to understand what Milton means, take the last line and put it at the beginning. Then you will see that taken together the lines make an imperative or command sentence. The command is, “sing!” The person commanded is the “heavenly muse” who is to sing about the things in the other lines. Find out who a “muse” is. Whom does Milton mean when he writes *one greater man*?¹⁰

8 It is difficult to calculate the worth of £10 in today's prices but using commodity prices as a guide it comes to about £1500.

9 It is available here with modern spelling that helps to make it easier to read: <https://www.paradiselost.org/8-Search-All.html>.

10 This can be tied into the week's memory verse.



*Of man's first disobedience, and the
fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal
taste
Brought death into the world, and all
our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing heavenly muse...*