January 10th

Memory Verse:

And God made two great lights;
      the greater light to rule the day,
      and the lesser light to rule the night:
he made the stars also. Genesis 1:16

This is an easy verse to learn if you break it down into parts. Tiny children can learn the lovely words in bold and know that "he" means God.

Something to read from History

Have you ever heard anyone use the phrase "to cross the Rubicon"? It means to take a decision or do something that sets you on a course of action from which there is no going back. In ancient times, the Rubicon, marked the boundary between the Roman province of Cisalpine Gaul and Italy. It was on 10th January 49 B.C. that Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon, starting a civil war in Rome, and his action on that day is the origin of the phrase. It was here too, so the Roman historian Suetonius tells us, that Caesar said *alea iacta est* ("the die is cast"), another phrase which has passed into common use. You can read all about this event in today's Optional Resources files which includes a simple version of the life of Caesar.

Julius Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon made it one of the world's most famous rivers. However, for a long time its location was lost and no one knew where it was! Three of Italy's rivers, the Pisciatello, the Fiumicino and the Uso all vied for recognition as the Rubicon and it was not until 1933 that the Fiumicino, which flows through the town of Savignano di Romagna, was definitely identified as the river crossed by Caesar on that fateful day. In 1991 this was confirmed when scholars consulted a medieval copy of a Roman road map along with some other ancient sources and confirmed the location. The distance given in the old map from Rimini is 12 miles and the Fiumicino is exactly 12 miles from Rimini. The picture above shows the marble Roman bridge across the Fiumicino at Savignano di Romagna. This was not the bridge by which Caesar crossed the Rubicon, though, but was but was built by a later Emperor, Hadrian. Caesar probably crossed by means of a little wooden bridge. Do you know of anything built by Hadrian in Britain?[1]

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1   Hadrian's Wall.

Can you make up a paragraph that uses either the expression "cross/crossing/crossed the Rubicon" or "the die is cast?" (Did you know that "die" is the singular form of "dice"?) You could make your paragraph the exciting beginning of a story.

Learn about the Bible

The picture below is part of a page from a very important edition of the Bible. The page shows today's memory verse although you will need sharp eyes to find it. The words you are looking for in Latin (there is no English in the edition) begin *fecit deus duo luminaria...*You will find them near
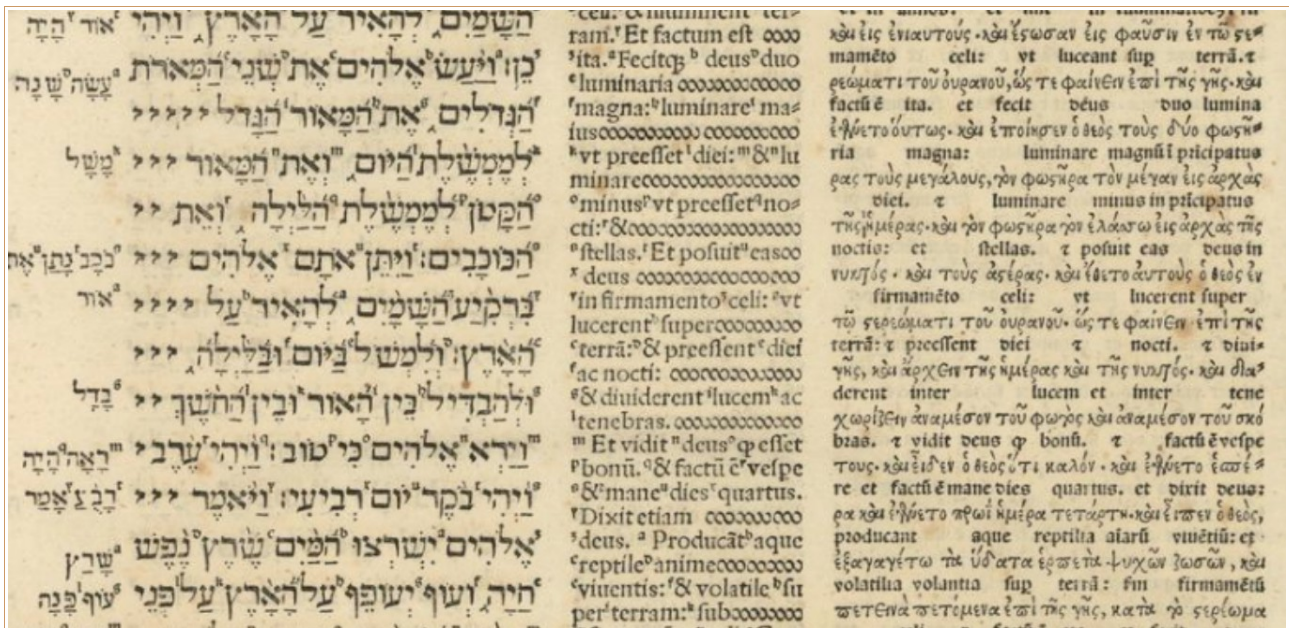
the top of the middle column which gives the words in Latin and again lower down in the right-hand column which gives the words in Greek with Latin words below them. The Left-hand column gives the words in Hebrew. A fourth ancient language, Aramaic, was included at the bottom of the page below the area shown in the picture. This edition of the Bible has a wonderful long name: it is called the *Complutensian Polyglot* (**Com – plu – ten – si - an Pol -y - glot** – can you say that?) and the New Testament part was finished on 10th January 1514 although the whole Bible was not published until later.

What was this edition of the Bible and why is it important? *Polyglot* means "many languages" and you can see from the picture that this is a Bible where different languages are set out together for easy comparison. *Complutensian* just means "from Complutum" which is a city in Spain not far from Madrid, now called Alcala de Henares. This edition of the Bible was put together by a team of Catholic scholars headed by Diego López de Zúñiga, an outstanding expert in ancient languages. It was the *first* such multilingual Bible to be published.

The Complutensian Polyglot was put together as a reference tool for Catholic scholars to help them combat the arguments put forward by Protestant theologians. At great personal expense, Cardinal Cisneros, who financed the project, acquired many manuscripts of the Bible text to help with the work of establishing the correct original text of the Bible. The careful work that went into this edition helped to clarify exactly what the Bible text was. In this way these Catholic scholars, although they were aiming to propagate Catholic teaching, actually helped in the work of bringing the truth to light. Along with the editions of the New Testament published by Erasmus, Calvin's friend Beza, and other reformation scholars, the Complutensian Polyglot helped to establish the standard text of the Bible, especially that of the New Testament.

Can you find out how today's Bible verse is written in other languages? Choose four or five languages (include any that you are learning yourself) and write the verse out on a page in your best writing. Can you think of ways to set out the verse so that the equivalent words in the different languages can be seen? You could decorate the finished page with a border showing the sun, moon and stars. You could include planets, comets and meteors too as the Bible word "stars" includes all these heavenly bodies.

10th January is the anniversary of the death of a great man of science, Carl Linnaeus (1701-1778).[3] Linnaeus is famous for having devised a simple system of classification that gave a pair of Latin words to every plant and animal. Plants and animals have different names in different languages. Scientists need to be able to know exactly what plant or creature they are talking about. Accordingly, they use Latin names rather than the names used in languages spoken today. In this way scientists who speak different languages can be sure they are referring to the same plant or animal. There were Latin names for various species before Linnaeus's time but they were long and unwieldy. A tomato plant, for instance was *olanum caule inermi herbaceo, folis pinnatis incisis, racemis simplicibus!* Linnaeus' father was a keen botanist and he wanted little Carl to follow in his footsteps. When Carl was a baby he decorated his cradle with flowers. As he got older he gave him flowers to play with. When he could talk he began to teach him those very long Latin names for plants. This was not as hard for Carl as it would be for you and I because his father was fluent in Latin and used to talk to his son in that language! However, little Carl naturally struggled with *olanum caule inermi herbaceo, folis pinnatis incisis, racemis simplicibus* etc. and he often forgot the names. After a while his father threatened that he would not tell him any more of the names if he continued to forget those he had already been told. But Carl wanted to keep on learning and he determined not to forget any more. He gave his whole attention to learning the names his father taught him.

Carl Linnaeus did not do well at school. Often he did not go at all, slipping away instead to look for flowers. His father had many botanical books in his library which Carl studied. He noticed the various herbal remedies and treatments and the recipes for these which the books included. Using the plants he found, Carl made imaginary medicines of his own with which he and his brothers and sisters would play at doctors. Then a friend who was a real doctor suggested that Carl might like to be a doctor himself when he grew up. Carl liked this idea and saw that he would have to apply himself to his lessons.

Linnaeus did very well at university and his ability with the long names of plants earned him the notice of the theology professor who became his patron. He toured Lapland looking for previously undiscovered plants. Here he found the pretty twin-flower which he adopted as his personal emblem. If you look closely at the picture you will see that each flower is one of a pair of bells attached

2   Information from https://creation.com/carl-linnaeus and other sources.
3   Illustration is a sculpture of Linnaeus in the Chicago Botanic Garden.

by a slender stalk to the main one.

While still a second year medical student, Linnaeus's abilities were such that he was asked to lecture on botany at the university and his lectures were so interesting that they were very popular. He qualified as a doctor, working for some time as a physician to the Swedish Admiralty and becoming president of the Swedish Academy of Sciences, which had just been founded.

In his *Systema Naturae* (1735) Linnaeus presented a classification system based upon the appearances of things. There were three Kingdoms: mineral, animal and plant. Things with similar features were classed together and then subdivided again according to their appearance. In the tenth edition Linneaus introduced his simple two-part Latin name system.

But where should human beings go in such a system? Human beings clearly belong in the animal kingdom; they are plainly not stones or plants! Classifying by appearance led Linnaeus to classify human beings with apes and monkeys which caused some controversy at the time. However, he did not believe that human beings evolved from an ancestor that was common to apes and monkeys and humans, or indeed that other creatures had evolved. His system was a system of classification by appearances not origin. Many things can be classified by appearance but this does not imply a common ancestor. You could classify vehicles, for instance, into those with two wheels, those with three wheels and those with four. You could subdivide these Kingdoms according to appearances, placing motor bikes closer to pedal cycles than to children's scooters. This would not imply anything about the origins of the vehicles. Linnaeus did not believe in evolution but he saw that there was variation within major groups, and this is what Bible-believing Christians understand today.

Something to do

Can you design a classification system? Think about something you could classify, Lego bricks for instance. Think of a major division, in the style of Linnaeus's Kingdoms (colour might do for Lego) then you can subdivide again (number of dots) and again... You could classify kitchen utensils, books, furniture or almost anything you are interested in. You could represent your classification system by means of a chart. Your chart would not show that red Lego bricks with six dots evolved from red Lego bricks with four dots would it?