

January 9th

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 the history of science¹

On January 9th 1839 the French Academy of Sciences made an important announcement: Louis Daguerre (1787-1851) had invented a method for recording pictures using a camera. This was the first ever commercially successful photographic process. Each daguerreotype was a unique image on a silvered copper plate. The daguerreotype gives an accurate, detailed and sharp image on a fragile mirror-like surface, easily vulnerable to scratching and damage. A portrait using this method was expensive and only well off people could afford one. The picture on the right shows the inventor Louis Daguerre himself.



Making a daguerreotype was tricky.² The silver plated copper plate had to be polished first to make its surface like a mirror. Then the surface had to be treated with fumes to make it light sensitive. Next the plate had to be put in a camera and exposed to light for as long as was necessary to make the image appear when the plate was treated with mercury fumes. The image was fixed with chemical treatment and the plate was then washed. Finally the image was covered by a protective glass plate to prevent it becoming damaged. Not many daguerreotype still survive today like the one of Louis Daguerre.

Something to make

A daguerreotype works by the action of light on the plate. You can use sunlight to make a image too. You can use sugar paper (what Americans call construction paper). Choose a bright colour such as red. Find some flat leaves with a pretty outline and arrange them on you paper. When you are happy with the arrangement you can tape them down with small pieces of clear tape. The flatter your leaves are the better the image will be. Now tape the paper into place in a window. South facing is best but other directions will work too, they will just take longer. Position the paper inside the window with the leaves touching the glass. Now leave the paper in position for several days. If there is bright sunshine the “picture” will develop more quickly than during dull weather and you will need to be patient. When you think the picture is ready remove it from the window. Carefully peel off the tape holding down the leaves. You should see the outline of your leaves on the paper.

¹ Information from <http://www.daguerreobase.org/en/> and other sources.

² This video by the Netherlands Fotomuseum shows how the process was done:
<http://www.daguerreobase.org/en/news/75-how-daguerreotype-were-made>

Something to listen to

The French composer Claude Debussy (1862-1918) heard a far-eastern “gong” orchestra, a gamelan, similar to the one in the picture, at the Paris international exhibition in 1889. “If one cannot afford to travel, one substitutes the imagination,” he said. He incorporated scales and rhythms from the gamelan orchestra's style of playing in his piano piece *Pagodas*, using his imagination to build a picture of graceful oriental pagodas and running water. The piece was first performed on 9th January 1904. Find a recording to listen to.³



Something to think about⁴

Have you ever wondered how old one has to be to be a Christian? Can only grown-ups be Christians? Do boys and girls have to wait until a certain age before they can trust in Jesus Christ as their Saviour from sin? Today's lesson about Lionel Thomson who died on 9th January 1952 will help answer this important question.

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8MaaPqYyig> for instance.

⁴ Information from *The Testimony of Lionel Thomson* by Fraser MacDonald second reprint 2013.

Lionel Thomson lived with his parents in the Scottish port of Oban. You can see it in the picture below. “... Christ beginneth young with many, and stealeth into their heart ere they are aware, and becometh homely with them, with little din or noise,” wrote Samuel Rutherford in a letter to James Bautie.⁵ This certainly seems to have been the case with Lionel.⁶ He seems to have known and loved his Saviour almost before he was able to express it.



As a tiny child Lionel was friendly with an old lady called Miss MacGillivray who lived nearby and he would make his way to her house and ask her to read the Bible to him. This she was glad to do and in those days when a small child could be allowed to play in the streets near his home without danger she would often find her young friend on her doorstep asking to be read to. If she accidentally failed to pray for God's blessing on the reading before they began Lionel would say, “You forgot to say, 'Lord, bless the reading of Thy Word.'” When he was old enough to go to school Lionel would be round at Miss MacGillivray's house so that he could hear her read the Word of God to him as soon as he was home in the afternoon.

One day Lionel asked Miss MacGillivray an important question, “What does it mean to be born again?” Miss MacGillivray thought carefully and made an answer that she thought little Lionel would understand. But he had obviously been thinking the matter over already in his mind and when she finished he said, “It is as simple as this, to come to Jesus,” and Miss MacGillivray agreed.

Lionel made it evident that he loved to be with the Lord's people worshipping Him on His Day. He noticed that Miss MacGillivray passed his house sometimes on the way to the midweek prayer meeting. One day he ran out of the house and stopped her. “Where are you going?” he asked.

“I'm going to the prayer-meeting,” she said.

“And what do you do there?” asked Lionel. Miss MacGillivray explained what went on at a prayer-meeting. “Oh, do take me with you!” he said, evidently charmed with the idea.

Lionel's grandfather was good to him also. Once when Lionel was talking to someone about his grandfather he explained that he loved him especially because he would read the Bible to him all day.

It was clear to Miss MacGillivray that Lionel spent a lot of time meditating on the things they read

⁵ *Letters of Samuel Rutherford* Banner of Truth Trust 1973 p.142 For more on Samuel Rutherford see the lessons for 7th and 30th March.

⁶ As with Anna Maria in the lesson for 5th November also.

together. He was very fond of Psalm 24 and when she read to him from Revelation about the sea of glass mingled with fire he would exclaim, "Isn't that lovely!"

And did Lionel become a minister when he grew up? Or perhaps a missionary? Or a Sunday school teacher? Some famous preachers, John Elias, Robert Hall, and Henry Rees came to know their Saviour when they were very young just like Lionel, did he join their ranks?

Lionel met with a small accident when he was six, cutting his head. His parents took him to the hospital for stitches but very unexpectedly he died while being treated. How sad his parents were to lose their little boy. But how glad in their sadness to know that six-year-old Lionel was now with the Saviour he loved so much.

So do you have to be a grown-up to be a Christian? No! The Bible depicts heaven as being full of boys and girls (Zechariah 8:5) and Jesus said of children, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 19:14). If you are reading or listening to these words you are old enough! Do not delay. As Lionel put it, "come to Jesus!"