

July 4<sup>th</sup>

### Memory Verse

**If God be for us,  
who can be against us?**

He that spared not his own Son,  
but delivered him up for us all,  
how shall he not with him  
also freely give us all things?

Romans 8:31b-32

More about today's memory verse in tomorrow's lesson.

### Some History and Geography to read

**Today** is a public holiday in Rwanda, Liberation Day. Get out your atlas and find **Rwanda** on the map. Three sorts of people live in Rwanda. There are farmers, (**Hutu**) and herdsmen (**Tutsi**). There is also a small group of Pigmy people (**Twa**) who hunt and trade.

Rwanda was part of German East Africa until the end of the First World War. After that the Belgians were given the mandate to rule Rwanda under the League of Nations. Neither the Germans nor the Belgians were good rulers.



The Germans ruled in Africa with a barbarous cruelty borne of their evolutionary ideas.<sup>1</sup> They considered that white people were more highly evolved than black people and treated the black people as little better than animals. The Belgians viewed Rwandans through an evolutionary lens too. They decided that of the two main groups of people in Rwanda, the **Tutsis** (since they often looked more like the Belgians) were more highly evolved. Accordingly, they allowed the **Tutsis** to receive more formal education than the **Hutus** and gave the **Tutsis** positions of authority, keeping the **Hutus** back from any power. In fact, the difference between the two groups was largely one of occupation. It could sometimes be difficult to work out, just from appearance, whether someone was a **Hutu** or a **Tutsi** although there was often a family resemblance.

The Belgians needed to know the difference, however, in case someone from the **Hutu** swapped themselves into the privileged **Tutsi** category in order to get a good job or some higher education. They hit on the idea of “scientifically” measuring the facial features of everyone to determine whether they were evolutionarily “advanced” enough to qualify as **Tutsi**. Identity cards were issued which all Rwandans had to carry to ensure that the “race” of the holder was known. This policy was continued right up to the 1950s.

It is not surprising that under this evil system Rwandan **Tutsis** became proud and the **Hutus** felt oppressed.

The United Nations took on the rôle of the League of Nations after the Second World War. Hitler's treatment of the Jews in Nazi Germany had been driven by evolutionary ideas of race. This made theories of racial superiority and inferiority unpopular after the war although the evolutionary theory that underpinned them was not abandoned. The Belgians were therefore prodded into reluctantly giving **Hutus** more of a place in government and education in preparation for Rwandan

<sup>1</sup> Information from <https://creation.com/african-holocaust>

independence. After independence, the country would be run on democratic lines which would bring majority rule. The dominance of the **Tutsis** would end. The Belgians made a few changes. They were not enough to satisfy the growing number of **Hutus** who felt aggrieved at their treatment. They *were* enough to make **Tutsis** fearful. Tensions between the two groups began to grow. Some **Tutsis** began to hope they could get rid of the Belgians *before* majority rule was imposed and so hang on to the power they already had. Some **Hutus** began to hope *they* could get control of the political system before the Belgians left. Actual fighting began in 1959 and continued in the early 1960s. **Hutus** killed **Tutsi** officials and drove many **Tutsi** into exile. In the years that followed these exiled **Tutsis** attacked Rwanda from outside its borders and the **Hutus** in Rwanda took revenge on the **Tutsis** inside Rwanda as a result, saying they had helped the attackers.

In the eyes of the **Hutus**, “democracy” meant the right of the **Hutus** (who were in the majority) to rule over the **Tutsis** in the same way as the **Tutsis** had ruled over them. Rwanda was now a republic but the degrading identity card system established by the Belgians continued. Its function was now reversed and the ID cards were used to discriminate against the **Tutsis**. **Tutsi** numbers in Rwanda declined as more of them fled. There was now a growing number of **Tutsi** refugees in the countries around Rwanda.

The situation in Rwanda deteriorated with rival **Hutu** groups from the North and South of the country also vying for power. A military coup followed in which **Hutu** General Habyarimana took power with the promise of restoring order in the country. He established a one-party state. Democracy in Rwanda, if it had ever really existed, was over. Habyarimana put in place a thoroughgoing communist-style police state.

After some initial improvements, the economic situation worsened and this led for calls for a return to democracy. Habyarimana began to plan for some changes in response to this. But the refugee crisis outside Rwanda was growing. The **Rwandan Patriotic Army** (RPA) which had grown up in the refugee camps decided to invade Rwanda with the objective of getting rid of Habyarimana and establishing a fairer system. When the attack began, Habyarimana imprisoned **Tutsis**, and any **Hutus** who were not Habyarimana supporters, as accomplices of the enemy. With the help of Belgian, French and Zairian troops, Habyarimana drove the **RPA** back to the Ugandan border.

Pressure inside and outside Rwanda forced Habyarimana to allow first more than one political party, and then a coalition government. Then Habyarimana was assassinated. His plane was shot down by **Hutus** who said **Tutsis** had done it. A campaign of retribution was unleashed by the **Presidential Guard** who targetted not only **Tutsis** but any moderate **Hutus** who did not want the retaliation. A huge massacre began. Neighbours were encouraged to join in killing all **Tutsis** and any **Hutus** that sympathised with them. A manifesto was broadcast on the government radio: “every **Tutsi** is a threat to **Hutu** security, and every **man, woman, and child** must be killed.”

The massacre did not end until **July 4<sup>th</sup>** when the **Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front** (RPF), captured the capital, Kigali and overthrew the **Hutu** government. By then over a million Rwandans had died, not only **Tutsis** but also **Hutus** that did not agree with the **government**. The **new government** announced a policy of “unity and reconciliation.”

More than one million **Hutus**, including many of the killers, fled to neighbouring countries. In Zaire,<sup>2</sup> the refugees’ presence helped spark two international conflicts and a lawlessness (that continues to this day) in which more than five million have died.

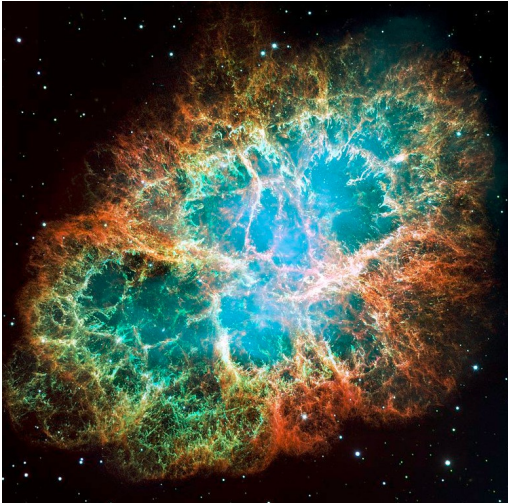
Today Rwanda is still ruled by the **RPF** which bans opposition parties, which arrests or assassinates its critics and which regularly commits electoral fraud.

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2 Now the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Ideas have consequences. Things that seem theoretical, like the idea of evolution, can play out in unexpected ways. One untruth can become the foundation of a system that leads to ruin and death for millions.

### Some astronomy and something to do<sup>3</sup>



On the night of July 4<sup>th</sup> 1054, people in China left their homes and stood out in the open looking up at the sky. A star, that until then had been just one speck of light among millions, was shining so brightly that it outshone everything in the night sky except the moon. It was so bright it could even be seen in the daytime. After some months had passed it had faded out of sight to the naked eye, but modern telescopes show it as a great cloud of gas called a supernova remnant, known as the Crab Nebula.

It was not until 1731, when telescopes had been around for over 100 years, that John Bevis (1695-1771) spotted a nebula at the spot where the supernova had been. Then in 1840, William Parsons, third Earl of Rosse (1800-1867) gave the nebula its name because he thought it looked like

a crab. Neither of these astronomers realised the exciting significance of the position in the sky that the crab nebula occupies. We now know that it was not a coincidence that the 1054 supernova and the Crab Nebula were in the same place. What they were looking at were *the remains of the supernova of 1054*.

You can model what happens when a supernova explodes using the instructions in today's Optional Resources files<sup>4</sup> and some tennis balls and ping pong balls.

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Adapted from Owen, Evan, *What Happened Today?* Book 2 available on the *Mothers' Companion* flashdrive <https://motherscompanion.weebly.com/>

<sup>4</sup> Courtesy NASA Night Sky Network [Night Sky Network \(nasa.gov\)](http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/night_sky_network/).