

5th June

Memory verses

I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. [And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh;] and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

Genesis 9:13-15

An adventure to read¹

Raymond Martin, an 18-year-old Aircraftman attached to No. 22 Squadron of the RF Search and Rescue Service helped to save two people from a wrecked yacht on **June 5th** 1956.

It was a wild, stormy day and the boat had run aground off Hayling Island near the entrance to **Chichester** harbour. A call for help was received at the RAF station at **Thorney Island** and although it was almost as difficult to control a helicopter in a gusty wind as it was to steer a small yacht into the harbour, Flying Officer Cox set off immediately to the rescue in a Whirlwind helicopter.

When they arrived over the yacht the pilot held the aircraft in position while his navigator lowered a rescue harness on the end of a cable. With the waves buffeting them the man and woman on the yacht could not move towards the harness as the wind sent it swinging past them, they were too busy clinging to the rigging. Then a strong gust sent the harness and cable twisting round the mast. The navigator tried to wind it up but it had stuck fast. He seized an axe and cut the cable as the rolling ship threatened to tug the helicopter down into the sea.

Flying Officer Cox kept his helicopter circling over the yacht while he radioed back to Thorney Island for help. When the second helicopter took off, Aircraftman Martin was on board.

As soon as they reached the wreck the pilot knew that there was only one way to save the people on deck. Aircraftman Martin would have to strap the harness on himself and be lowered onto the yacht. Then he would have to secure the couple in the harness, one at a time, staying on the yacht until both were safe.

Soon Martin was standing on the pitching deck. He saw that the man was very weak, much weaker than his wife, so he fastened him in the harness and waved to the pilot to draw him up slowly and steadily.

He knew the helicopter would have to take the man back to base, then return for the woman, so he lashed her to the rigging to stop her being swept overboard by the waves. Then, as the yacht threatened to heel right over, he tied himself next to her.

Though it seemed like ages to Martin, the helicopter was soon back. He untied himself, caught the harness as it dangled at the end of the cable like a conker on a string and secured the woman in it.

When she was safe in the helicopter, the harness was lowered again and this time Martin buckled it on himself. With a grateful kick he was hauled off the doomed yacht and within minutes was on his way back to Thorney Island.

He was later awarded the George Medal for his bravery.

¹ Adapted from Adapted from Owen, Evan, *What Happened Today* Volume 2 Available on the *Mothers' Companion* Flashdrive. <https://motherscompanion.weebly.com>

Map Work

Find Chichester Harbour and Thorney Island. Is there still an RAF base there? Look at an Ordnance Survey map if you can.² I think I can see where the yacht may have run aground – can you?

Something to make

A helicopter was the perfect thing for a rescue such as the one described above. The Westland Whirlwind Helicopter used is a helicopter built by Westland under licence from the American firm Sikorsky Helicopters which you will remember from the lesson on 25th May. If you did not make a helicopter then, you could do it today.

Family history

Medals are a way of recognising brave deeds and actions. There are a number of them and they are awarded for different circumstances and to different people. For instance, the George Medal is awarded for acts of bravery (“conspicuous gallantry” are the actual words) “not in the face of the enemy” so it is not the kind of medal a soldier would get if he did something brave under attack. The George Medal was designed during the Second World War primarily for civilians. During the Blitz there were many heroic deeds done and the King wanted to be able to recognise them. Servicemen like Raymond Martin were eligible too, if the brave deed they had done was not “in the face of the enemy”. Do you remember Peter Hey from the Lesson on 7th May?³

There are many other medals which can be awarded, some of them by organisations such as the Royal Humane Society. Medals were also awarded not for specific deeds but, for instance, to all the men who served in the First World War.⁴ A similar medal was awarded to those who served in the Second World War.⁵ You may have seen some of these medals as many families have them. Ask your grandparents about it. Peter Hey's medal was the British Empire Medal. This is given out for service to the community. You can sometimes come across medals given for much smaller things. We have a set of four medals awarded to my father when he was a child for regular Sunday School attendance, for instance.

Some things to do

Ask about medals in your family: you may be surprised at what you find! Ask if you may borrow the medals and make some rubbings. These are a good way to preserve an image of anything engraved in metal. Many people enjoy collecting rubbings of coins, medals, and even drain covers! Place your medal under a piece of paper and rub gently over the top with wax crayon or a thick soft pencil. You have to be very careful that neither the medal nor the paper move or the image is spoilt. When you have made a good rubbing you can mount it on a piece of paper and note who it belonged to, who it was awarded to and why and when. If you have several medals to rub you can mount them on a page together. If you really can't get hold of any medals to rub, coins are good to do and specially interesting if you have some old or foreign ones.

Perhaps you could make your own medals to be awarded when you have learned a certain number of Bible verses. You could make them out of cardboard and stick on a design. There are a number of complicated rules for wearing medals correctly and of course you should not wear a medal that you have not earned yourself!

² They can be seen here: <https://www.bing.com/maps>

³ You can find a picture of a George Medal here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/medals-campaigns-descriptions-and-eligibility> if you scroll down the page.

⁴ The first medal shown on this page: <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals>

⁵ The first medal shown on this page: <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/medals>

Something to think about⁶

China's communist leader Hu Yaobang died in April 1989. Hu had worked to move China toward a more open political system, and he had become a symbol for democratic reform. After his death, thousands of people in China called for an end to their country's oppressive form of government. A Democracy Movement began demanding free speech, freedom of the press and free association. The Chinese communist government moved in the army with tanks and massacred the protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square.⁷ No one knows how many were killed, certainly hundreds possibly thousands. Thousands more were arrested and executed. The movement was ruthlessly suppressed.



On **5th June**, as the tanks were leaving the square a remarkable incident happened. A man, carrying two shopping bags deliberately stood alone in the middle of a wide avenue, in the path of a column of tanks. The tanks stopped in front of him. They then tried to go round him but as they turned he ran in front again so that they could not carry on without knocking him down. The tank stopped again and the man climbed onto the armoured hull of the tank. As far as could be seen from the balcony where western reporters were watching, he even seemed to hold a conversation with one of the tank crew. At the time there was gun fire and other people were running for cover. It has been speculated that the man may have been deliberately making a path for them to escape by his actions. Eventually the man was pulled away, some say by Chinese police other say by concerned members of the public.

No one knows his name. No one knows what happened to him. Non one knows what he said to the member of the tank crew. But the reporters were filming and taking pictures. Those pictures of a lone, unarmed man stopping a column of tanks quickly became some of the most famous photographs in the world. The Chinese authorities tried to confiscate the camera film but they could not get hold of all of it. One roll of pictures was smuggled out of China in a box of tea. The photo of "Tank Man" appeared on the front page of almost every European newspaper and video footage can still be seen today.⁸

Inside China, the suppression of the knowledge of the Tiananmen Square Massacre, of the objectives of the protesters and the methods used to deal with them has been very thorough. Chinese people are not allowed to see the photos and videos of "Tank Man" which we in the West can easily access. Any reference to the Massacre is banned in China. Today most young Chinese people have little or no knowledge of what happened. The rigorous suppression of history is part of the Chinese government's method of keeping its people under its control.

We can be grateful to God today that we still live in a society where history is not suppressed totally. There are, however, people in our society who do want to suppress our history. No doubt you have heard about people who want to take down monuments to past heroes and benefactors on the pretext that they had some involvement in slavery. What is worse still, perhaps, than a society where history is suppressed is one where no one is really interested in it. Make sure you learn everything you can about history – while you can!

6 Image: By Jiří Tondl (Blow up) - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=68125236>

7 See the lesson for 15th April.

8 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YeFzeNAHEhU>