

21st March

Memory verse for the week:

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude,
and as the voice of many waters,
and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying,
Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.
Revelation 19:6¹

Something to pray about

Today is a sad day for Wales. On **21st March**, 2022 the Welsh Assembly Government introduced a new law that makes criminals out of loving Christian parents. In view of this we have prepared a special lesson for today which covers the topic of discipline. The lesson can be found in today's optional resources files. Since this touches on the issue of the extent of government powers, it might be helpful to look at the section "Something to think about" in the lesson for **8th August** today. This is especially true if you are likely to be on holiday in August. This lesson deals with the issue of the limits of government in relation to the Nuremberg Trials. Whether you live in Wales or not this is an important matter and those who do live in Wales continue to value your prayers.

Something to read from history²



On **March 21st**, 1556, Thomas Cranmer, who had been appointed Archbishop of Canterbury by Henry VIII, was burned at the stake in Oxford, on the very spot where Latimer and Ridley had been martyred a few months earlier.

Cranmer had been a good friend to Henry VIII, supporting the **dissolution of the monasteries** and the break with Rome. He devised the Book of Common Prayer for his church and wrote a preface to the new translation of the Bible that was chained up in all the parish churches for people to read.

When Henry VIII died in 1547 he was succeeded by his young son Edward VI. The young king was a Christian with a sincere desire to do the best for his country and to promote the gospel. With Cranmer's help, he greatly advanced the **reformation** in England.

Unfortunately for Cranmer (and indeed for all England), Edward's early death in 1553 brought his sister, Mary, to the throne. She was a fervent Catholic and although in response to her threats Cranmer recanted (or went back on) his reformed ideas "for fear of death and to save my life if might be," Mary was determined that he should follow Latimer and Ridley to the stake.³

It became clear that Cranmer would not escape martyrdom whatever he said. He withdrew his recantation.

On **March 21st**, at the service that preceded his death, he made the following declaration in St. Mary's Church, after offering up prayer to God:

¹See lesson for 23rd March for tips on learning this verse.

² Adapted from Owen, Evan, *What Happened Today?* Book 1 available on the *Mothers' Companion* flashdrive <https://motherscompanion.weebly.com/>

³ More about this in the lesson for 18th May.

And now I come to the great thing that troubleth my conscience more than any other thing that ever I said or did in my life; that is, the setting abroad of writings contrary to the truth. Which here I now renounce and refuse as things written with my hand, contrary to the truth which I have in my heart.

And forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, therefore shall my hand first be punished. For if I come to the fire it shall be first burned.

He then stated his opposition to the Roman Church and to the pope and was carried off to the stake.

An eye-witness described Cranmer's brave bearing and wrote:

Fire being now put to him, he stretched out his right hand and thrust it into the flame, and held it there a good space, before the fire came to any other part of his body, where his hand was seen of every man, sensibly burning crying with a loud voice, "This hand hath offended." As soon as the fire was got up he was very soon dead, never stirring or crying all the while.

The picture on the right shows the Martyrs' memorial in Oxford. It is near the spot where Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer were martyred and was erected in the nineteenth century. At that time there were many in the Church of England who were afraid that Roman Catholic ideas were creeping back into the church again. Some of them raised the money for the building of the memorial as a reminder of the University of Oxford's Protestant traditions and associations.

The inscription on the monument reads:

To the Glory of God, and in grateful commemoration of His servants, Thomas Cranmer, Nicholas Ridley, Hugh Latimer, Prelates of the Church of England, who near this spot yielded their bodies to be burned, bearing witness to the sacred truths which they had affirmed and maintained against the errors of the Church of Rome, and rejoicing that to them it was given not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for His sake; this monument was erected by public subscription in the year of our Lord God, MDCCCXLI.



The actual execution site is close by in Broad Street just outside the line of the old city walls. The site is marked by a granite cross sunk in the road. Do you know what year MDCCCXLI is?⁴ How long after the year in which Cranmer died was that?⁵

Find out more

You can read more about this topic and also find out about the highlighted words in *The Story of God's Dealings with our Nation* Volume 2.⁶ The optional resources files for today include an excerpt from H E Marshall's *Our Island Story* which tell you more about the background to today's history story.

4 1841.

5 285.

6 Available here: <https://www.creationresearchstore.com/s/search?q=The%20Story%20of%20Gods%20Dealings%20with%20our%20Nation>.

Something to look for

There are martyrs' memorials to those who suffered under Queen Mary in many places all over the country. Some are much less magnificent than the one in Oxford. Is there one near you that you could go and look at? Ask in your local library or Tourist Information Centre.

Something to think about

There are many places round the world where Christians are still put to death for their faith today. Can you find out about some of them? Where do Christians find the strength to undergo such trials? Matthew 5:10-12 will help you answer this question.

Something to tell

Every one should be able to tell at least one good story. Nobody knows, for instance, when they may have to entertain a small child for a while and telling a story is one of the best ways of doing it. Today is the anniversary of the originator of one of the most well loved children's tales. The poet Robert Southey (1774 – 1843) who first published the tale of *The Three Bears* died on **21st March**. As a poet and a biographer we owe him a great debt but countless generations who have never read any of his poems or biographies have loved this tale since they were small.



You will be surprised to know that although the three bears were in the tales from the beginning, Goldilocks herself did not make her appearance until much later. The original intruder in the bears' house who stole their porridge was an old woman!

Today would be an excellent opportunity to practice the great art of telling a story. I have included a version of the story in today's Optional Resources files⁷ which will refresh your memory if you have forgotten exactly how it goes. Read it through and then *tell* the tale as well as you can without reading it. The file also has some hints on how to tell the story to young children and encourage them to join in. Older children might enjoy this with younger siblings. Younger children could just enjoy listening to the tale being told and join in in the way suggested in the Optional Resources file.

But if the original story was about an old woman, where did Goldilocks come in? It was not until *Old Nursery Stories and Rhymes* (1904) that this name appears, although the old woman had been replaced by a little girl with various names – Silver-Hair, Silver-locks, Golden-Hair – long before. But Goldilocks she has been since 1904 and probably will be for many years yet!

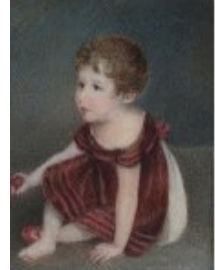
⁷ Permission sought from <https://wwhomeliteracy.org.za/> 21/10/21 by email.

A poem to read

Today's memory verse compares the sound of the multitude in heaven praising God to “the voice of many waters”. It is a beautiful comparison. Have you ever stood at the foot of a big waterfall and listened to its tremendous sound?

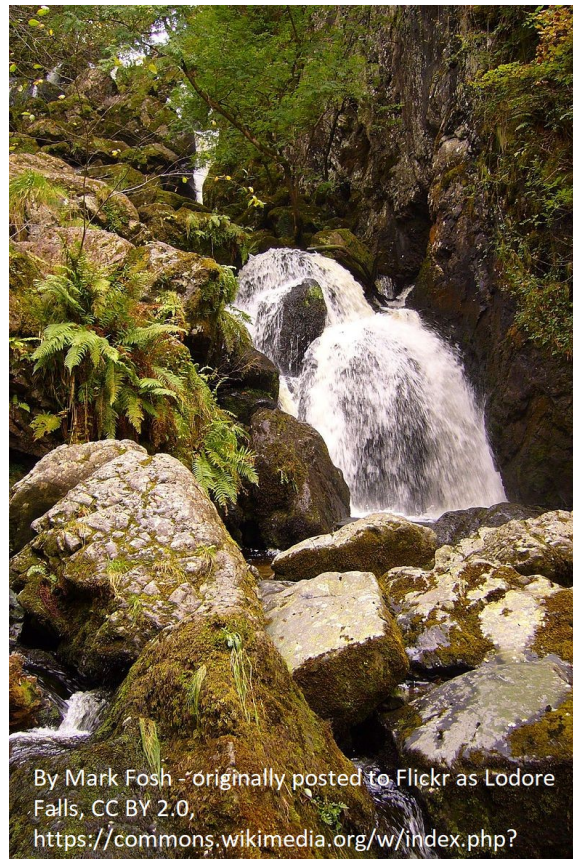


Below is one of Robert Southey's best loved poems. It has a rollicking use of words that makes it a joy to read – and it was written for his own children. They had asked him a question about the waterfall at Lodore in the Lake District and they wanted the answer in rhyme! Robert Southey was Poet Laureate which was a royal appointment but you will see if you read it that he regarded himself also as his children's Poet Laureate! The pictures here are of two of Southey's daughters.



The Cataract of Lodore By Robert Southey

“How does the water
Come down at Lodore?”
My little boy asked me
Thus, once on a time;
And moreover he tasked me
To tell him in rhyme.
Anon, at the word,
There first came one daughter,
And then came another,
To second and third
The request of their brother,
And to hear how the water
Comes down at Lodore,
With its rush and its roar,
As many a time
They had seen it before.
So I told them in rhyme,
For of rhymes I had store;
And 'twas in my vocation
For their recreation
That so I should sing;
Because I was Laureate
To them and the King.



By Mark Fosh - originally posted to Flickr as Lodore Falls, CC BY 2.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?>

From its sources which well
In the tarn on the fell;
From its fountains
In the mountains,
Its rills and its gills;
Through moss and through brake,
It runs and it creeps
For a while, till it sleeps
In its own little lake.
And thence at departing,

Awakening and starting,
It runs through the reeds,
And away it proceeds,
Through meadow and glade,
In sun and in shade,
And through the wood-shelter,
Among crags in its flurry,
Helter-skelter,
Hurry-skurry.
Here it comes sparkling,
And there it lies darkling;
Now smoking and frothing
Its tumult and wrath in,
Till, in this rapid race
On which it is bent,
It reaches the place
Of its steep descent.

The cataract strong
Then plunges along,
Striking and raging
As if a war raging
Its caverns and rocks among;
Rising and leaping,
Sinking and creeping,
Swelling and sweeping,
Showering and springing,
Flying and flinging,
Writhing and ringing,
Eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking,
Turning and twisting,
Around and around
With endless rebound:
Smiting and fighting,
A sight to delight in;
Confounding, astounding,
Dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound.

Collecting, projecting,
Receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking,
And darting and parting,
And threading and spreading,
And whizzing and hissing,
And dripping and skipping,
And hitting and splitting,
And shining and twining,
And rattling and battling,
And shaking and quaking,
And pouring and roaring,
And waving and raving,

And tossing and crossing,
And flowing and going,
And running and stunning,
And foaming and roaming,
And dinning and spinning,
And dropping and hopping,
And working and jerking,
And guggling and struggling,
And heaving and cleaving,
And moaning and groaning;

And glittering and frittering,
And gathering and feathering,
And whitening and brightening,
And quivering and shivering,
And hurrying and skurrying,
And thundering and floundering;

Dividing and gliding and sliding,
And falling and brawling and sprawling,
And driving and riving and striving,
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,
And sounding and bounding and rounding,
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
And clattering and battering and shattering;

Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,
And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
And flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping,
And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,
And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;
And so never ending, but always descending,
Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending
All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar, –
And this way the water comes down at Lodore.

If you began a poetry memorisation programme on 5th January (if not look at that lesson and begin one now) you could include this poem.