

May 11

### Memory Verse

Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket,  
and are counted as the small dust of the balance:

**behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.** Isaiah 40:15

The verse tells us how immense God is and gives us a picture of his power in comparison to a geographical feature with which we should be very familiar because we live in a group of islands – the British **Isles**.

### Map Work

The British Isles consists of over 6000 islands or isles! The largest two are Great Britain and Ireland (which consists of the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland) and of the others fewer than 200 are inhabited all year round. Find the most detailed map you can that shows our islands. Which one of the islands do you live on? Do you have any friends or family who live on one of the other islands? If so, you could write to them this week and maybe send a home-made card with your memory verse on the front. More about our islands later this week!

### Something to learn from history

Spencer Percival (1762-1812) was murdered in the House of Commons on **11<sup>th</sup> May**. He was the only Prime Minister to be **assassinated**. This unhappy **distinction**, however, is not the most interesting thing about Spencer Percival by a very long way. Unlike any of our other Prime Ministers, he was an avowed Christian with a life, public and private, which brought honour to his Saviour's name.

Spencer Percival was Prime Minister at a difficult time (1808-1812). Britain had been at war with Napoleon for five years when he took office, there were insoluble problems in Ireland and King George III was so ill with porphyria – and the **inhumane** treatments he was given for the disease – that he was unable to rule. The war and other factors were causing great poverty and hardship in the country and meanwhile the Prince Regent, an immoral scoundrel, was a dandy who wasted public money on extravagant entertainment and buildings.

At this time much money was earned by the City of Liverpool through the slave trade. Percival had worked tirelessly with William Wilberforce towards a ban on slave trading from the moment that Wilberforce demonstrated to him what was involved in the trade. Wilberforce considered that slavery would cease if people knew what it entailed. If someone had the whole horror of slavery **exposed** to them, they had to make a choice.

“You may choose to look the other way,” Wilberforce said, “but you can never say again that you did not know.”

Wilberforce made sure that Percival *did* know and Percival made his choice: he became one of Wilberforce's **allies** in the fight against slavery. William Pitt the Younger was not prepared to stand against the slave trade although he admitted privately that he knew it was wrong and wished it could be stopped. It was Percival who found a way to take the first step towards the abolition of the slave trade in 1805, in spite of Pitt, who was Prime Minister at the time. Percival was a lawyer by training and he showed Wilberforce that a ban on the import of slaves to Dutch Guiana (modern Suriname), a territory Britain had recently occupied due to the war, could be inserted into the Orders in Council which were being enacted to prevent **neutral** countries trading with Napoleon's France. Orders in Council did not need parliamentary **approval** and Pitt at once took the opportunity: 6000 slaves a year were no longer sent to be worked to death in Dutch Guiana. The slave trade had received its first check. The Act that ended the slave trade was passed in 1807 but

there were ways round, and on becoming Prime Minister in 1808, Percival worked and worked to give the act real teeth.

Percival loved his thirteen children and was never so happy as when playing with them. They in their turn loved him “without fear” – something that was unusual in days when fathers were often harsh.

By the time of his death the Prince Regent had come to **begrudgingly** respect him. He realised that the Prime Minister's family now had no income and asked Parliament to vote them some money and a pension. Lord Castlereagh, had the task of reading the Prince’s request in Parliament. He became so **emotional** that he was unable to carry on reading and sat down leaving another member to finish it. “In most faces, there was an agony of tears,” wrote someone who was there.

I think Spencer Percival’s Christian character shows in his face; what do you think?

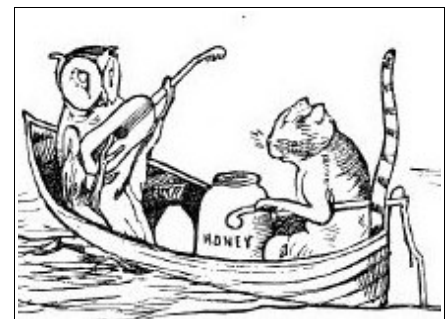
I have highlighted some words in **purple** for you to look up.



### Something to Read Aloud

Edward Lear (1812-1888), whose charming nonsense poems and Limericks have delighted generations of children and adults, was born on **11<sup>th</sup> May**. Here is his famous *Owl and the Pussy-Cat* which he wrote for a little girl of three years old – and his own picture of the happy couple.

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea  
In a beautiful pea-green boat,  
They took some honey, and plenty of money,  
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.  
The Owl looked up to the stars above,  
And sang to a small guitar,  
“O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,  
What a beautiful Pussy you are,  
You are,  
You are!  
What a beautiful Pussy you are!”



Pussy said to the Owl, “You elegant fowl!  
How charmingly sweet you sing!  
O let us be married! too long we have tarried:  
But what shall we do for a ring?”  
They sailed away, for a year and a day,  
To the land where the Bong-Tree grows  
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood  
With a ring at the end of his nose,  
His nose,  
His nose,  
With a ring at the end of his nose.

“Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling  
Your ring?” Said the Piggy, “I will.”  
So they took it away, and were married next day  
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.  
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,  
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;  
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,  
They danced by the light of the moon,  
The moon,  
The moon,  
They danced by the light of the moon.

### Something to write

Have you ever eaten quince? I'm sure it would not be at all nice with mince even though it rhymes so well! Edward Lear often used nonsense, or made up, words in his poems. Can you find one in *The Owl and the Pussy-Cat*? Writing nonsense is not as easy as it sounds. Have a go at writing a short nonsense poem yourself. Don't forget to make up a nonsense word or two as well!

### Something to draw

Edward Lear was probably thinking of his own cat, Foss, when he wrote this poem. Here she is as he drew her. Do you know what the French word *couchant* means? Notice how he has written “Foss” with the first of the two s's very long. I think he has caught his cat's personality beautifully.

Lear has used a very simple technique to do this drawing which you could copy. Sketch the oval shape of the cat's body first. Now position the head – shaped like a triangle with curved sides.

After that it is just a case of adding the details – the ears, eyes and whiskers, then the back leg and tail. Lear has just suggested the position of the front legs in his drawing as well as the stripes on the back and head. You can do the same.

