

16th November

Memory Verse:

Nevertheless we,
according to his promise,
look for new heavens and a new earth,
wherein dwelleth righteousness.

2 Peter 3:13

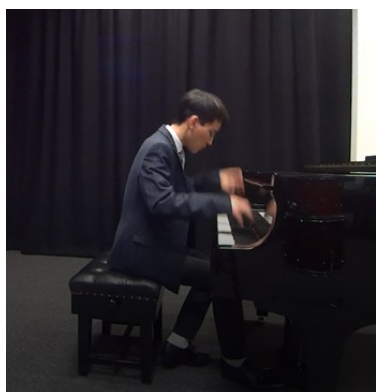
The Apostle Peter has been explaining that this present world is not our home. One day “the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat” he writes. Then he explains, in the words of our memory verse, what God has promised to his children. “Look for” is more like “look forward to” than “search for” and younger children may need to have “dwelleth” (“lives”) explained.

Some music to listen to



On **16th November** 1848 Frederick Chopin (1810-1849), Polish composer and pianist played to great acclaim at London's Guildhall as part of a “Grand Dress & Fancy Ball” in aid of Polish refugees. It was his final appearance in public. Throughout Chopin's lifetime Poland was partitioned (divided) between Russia, Prussia and Austria: the Poles did not rule their own country. There was resistance to this situation by many Poles throughout the nineteenth century and some left Poland to carry on the campaign for Polish independence elsewhere in the world. This is why there were Polish refugees in England. Like many Polish patriots, Chopin did not live in Poland as an adult but he longed for his country to be free. Chopin's music contained echoes of Polish national music, heard in his childhood. “More than once his tones seem to be the happy echo of our native harmony,” wrote a Polish listener at one of his concerts.

If you did the lesson for 8th June earlier this year you might remember the composer Robert Schumann. Schumann not only wrote music but he wrote about music in magazines and journals, trying to promote the very best new compositions. He was often very perceptive about what he heard. In the first article he ever wrote (he was just 21) he wrote a review of a set of variations for piano and orchestra that he had heard by the young Chopin. Chopin had written this piece a couple of years earlier when he was only 17. “*Hut ab, ihr Herrn, ein Genie!*” wrote Schumann, “Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!” Later in the article he added more praise, “such genius, such aspiration, such mastery!” This was very astute. It is obvious to us now but when Schumann wrote those words, very few people had heard any of Chopin's music – in fact most of it was not yet written!



In today's Optional Resources files you will find a piece by Chopin to listen to.¹ The pianist, young Elias Ackerley, writes:

Hi, my name is Elias and I have been learning the piano since I was 5. I thank God for the gift of music, not least the music of Chopin which is so beautiful. This is one of his *etudes* – which is the French word for “studies”. He composed two sets of 12. Each study focuses on

1 If you would like to watch Elias play as well as listen go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CcE6Wi7KV5I>

improving one part of piano playing. This one is all about playing on the black keys – which are thinner than the white ones. I hope you enjoy it!

Chopin was a master of the piano, although his first teacher was not an expert and the young Chopin simply had to teach himself many things. If you have ever wondered about how a piano works there is some information in today's Optional Resources files. If you or someone you know has a (real) piano, ask them if you could be allowed to see the insides and what happens when it is played.

Chopin was a wanderer from his home where he longed to be but which was controlled by enemies. This is a feeling Christians understand. We have a heavenly home and a “new heaven and earth” which we long for. This present world seems to be in the grip of God's enemies – but righteousness lives in the *new* heavens and earth. Alas, Chopin never returned to his native land but one day God will call every one of his children home.

Map Work²

On November 16, 1855 the Scottish missionary-explorer David Livingstone (1813-1873) made a great discovery.³ He had heard from some Africans about “smoke that sounds” and it proved to be the most wonderful of all the amazing sights he had seen in Africa; a sight no Englishman had ever seen before. Over a mile wide, the Zambesi River rushes along until it reaches a chasm, over which it falls nearly 120 metres (400ft). Below the massive waterfall the river channel is narrow, and the wide stream is now squeezed into about 100 metres. Columns of fine misty spray, some 600 metres high leap into the air, and are blown about by the breeze. Livingstone watched this majestic spectacle from a tiny island on top of the falls. Then he planted coffee beans as well as apricot and peach stones by the edge of the falls hoping that trees would grow. He gave the falls the name “Victoria Falls” in honour of Queen Victoria and carved “D.L. 1855” on a nearby tree. There is a picture of Livingstone at the Victoria Falls in the Optional Resources files for today which you can print out and colour if you have printer available.



The coffee beans and fruit stones are a significant part of the story...

Livingstone had gone to Africa to bring the Gospel message to people who had never heard it and to work against the slave trade. Slavery had been abolished in British colonies such as the West Indies and South Africa since 1834 but it carried on in Africa where Arab slave traders trading through the slave market on the island of Zanzibar provided African slaves to work on the plantations of Arabia, Persia, and India. The slaves were captured with great brutality by the Arab traders whose inhumane treatment of the Africans horrified Livingstone and made him determined to bring the trade to an end. Livingstone always treated African people with dignity and honesty because he knew that like himself, they were made in the image of God. Whenever he could, he released captive Africans from the slave traders. One slave who was freed in this way, an eleven year old boy called Chuma, became his devoted friend and helper for the rest of Livingstone's life.

At first Livingstone thought that the best way to tackle the problem of the slave trade was to provide an alternative trade that could replace the human traffic. Africa is a most fertile continent. Livingstone hoped that trade in coffee and fruit could be the answer to ending slavery. This is why he planted the coffee beans and fruit stones by the Victoria Falls. Livingstone also hoped that cotton

² You could also look at Poland, Russia and Austria while you have your atlas out. Prussia

³ Information from, Anon., *Heroes of the Cross* Vol. 1, (London, c.1934) and other sources.

could be grown in Africa which could be exported to Britain. This would, he hoped, replace American imported cotton grown on slave plantations.

Livingstone worked tirelessly towards this objective but it became obvious that the slave trade in Africa would not be ended just by promoting other trade instead. He set out to Africa again to solve a geographical puzzle: where does the great **River Nile** begin? To solve this, he thought, would give him sufficient publicity to succeed in his objective of ending the slave trade. He wrote:

“If the good Lord permits me to put a stop to the enormous evils of the inland slave-trade, I shall not grudge my hunger and toils. I shall bless His name with all my heart. The Nile sources are valuable to me only as a means of enabling me to open my mouth with power among men.”

Two years passed. Back in England there was no news of Livingstone. People became uneasy and wondered if he had died on his quest. Then a newspaper sent Henry Stanley to search Africa until he had found Livingstone. Taking food and medicines with him, Stanley set off. Meanwhile Livingstone, sick and exhausted was lying in a hut at a place called **Ujiji** (in modern-day western Tanzania) where he had expected to find stores, medicines and letters from home. Alas, when he reached the place he found the store had been plundered and there was nothing the sick man could do but send to Zanzibar for more supplies. Here Stanley found him and everyone knows the famous words, “Dr Livingstone, I presume,” with which he is supposed to have greeted him.

It was Stanley's energetic promotion of Livingstone's exploits that helped provide the impetus (push) that was needed to end the hated slave trade. His book *How I found Livingstone* was very popular in England and in America. Livingstone resumed his search for the source of the Nile but his strength was failing. Soon he was unable to walk. His faithful African friends including Chuma stayed with him to the end, carrying him, then building a hut near modern day **Chipundu**, Zambia to shelter him from the weather and watching over him until he died. Their devotion was such that they then carried Livingstone's embalmed body nearly 1,000 miles across rivers and through swamps to **Bagamoyo** on the coast of modern-day Tanzania. Here it was taken back to England by ship. Huge crowds turned out for a massive state funeral at Westminster Abbey but before that (although after his death) Livingstone's work had been competed. The Sultan of Zanzibar was told by the British that his country would face a naval blockade unless he agreed to a treaty, under the terms of which the slave trade was to be rigorously suppressed. The Zanzibar slave market closed.⁴

Something to do

I'm not sure what happened to those beans and stones planted so long ago by the Victoria Falls. Did they grow, I wonder? All sorts of seeds and pips that we usually just throw away can be planted and will often grow into interesting plants as suggested in the lesson for April 10th.

If you planted some pips in April and have baby trees now it may be time to think about re-potting them into larger containers. You can use scissors to prune (trim) the branches and also the roots to prevent them from growing too big. If you did not plant pips in April you can plant some now. Try orange pips, lemon pips or grapefruit pips which will often make pretty little trees with glossy, sweet scented leaves if grown indoors. The stones from dates can be planted too and although they germinate and grow very slowly they are interesting to watch. Don't plant coffee beans though. The ones we buy in this country have been *roasted* before we get them!

Something to think about

Today the slave trade has ended, hasn't it? The answer is no! Africans are still being enslaved. For instance many young women in countries such as Cameroon, are tricked by Turkish men who tell them they are taking them to a place where they can have a job or a university education. They are

4 More about David Livingstone next month in the lesson for 8th December.

taken by plane to northern Cyprus, which is ruled by Turkish Cypriots but when they arrive they find they have been tricked. They are used as slaves with great cruelty. They are guarded and cannot escape and if they do manage to get away and go to the police they find the corrupt police are in league with their captors and they are returned. When they are unfit and useless for work any more they are dumped over the border into Southern Cyprus (which is ruled by Greek Cypriots) penniless and often ill.

Christian missionaries are allowed to work in the south of Cyprus and they help these poor people. We can pray for all slaves today and especially for missionaries who try to help them.