

November 28th

Memory verse

These all died in faith,
not having received the promises,
but having seen them afar off,
and were persuaded of them,
and embraced them,
and confessed
that they were **strangers and pilgrims on the earth.** Hebrews 11:13

Very small children can learn the words in bold and understand that Christians are **strangers** because they do not belong here and **pilgrims** because they are travelling to heaven. More about today's memory verse in tomorrow's lesson.

All about lessons – or lack of them today!

A good example¹



John Jenkins, D.D. (1779-1853) was born in the parish of Llangynider,² Breconshire, on **November 28th**. His life story is an outstanding example of a self-educated man. His father was a labourer, with a family of seven children. He could not afford to send them to school. John Jenkins never went to school for so much as one day and could not read until he was over 15 years old.

At that time he was a farm servant Llangynider. His master, the farmer, was in the habit of going to hear the Baptist preachers who came to the area and he was also a fluent reader.

At that time Mr. Morgan John Rees, of Pontypool, visited Llangynider, among other places, to encourage the people to set up Sunday and week night schools, for the benefit of the neglected poorer people. Mr. Rees had written reading books in the Welsh language and John Jenkins bought one of them for threepence. Then he got a few lessons in reading at a night school that had been set up in the parish and so learnt to read the Welsh Bible.

We have no firm indication of when he was converted but he joined the baptist church at Llanwenarth.³ At the age of 21 he began to preach. By this time he was working in the iron ore mine at Sirhowy. Whether by accident or some other reason he got a sore leg from this employment and while recovering he got a fellow lodger to write the alphabet out for him to copy so that he could learn to write. This was something he had never been able to have time to attempt before but in just one day he learned to write a legible hand. The following year he married a poor widow with a family and he had to work hard to provide for them. In addition to his hard manual labour he was now preaching two or three times on a Sunday in different places, walking 15 or 20 miles to and from the various chapels.



¹ Adapted from Thomas Rees *History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales* (1861)

² Illustration: By Jennifer Luther Thomas, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4424813>

³ Illustration By Jaggery, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=47157360>



And now a Baptist church was formed at the place of his birth, Llangynider and in 1806 he became the pastor. It was a poor area and the congregation could not afford to pay him very much so he still had to work with his hands during the week.

In 1808 he became the minister of the church in Hengoed,⁴ Glamorganshire. Here he remained for the rest of his life. The congregation was able to pay him a little more but he still had to work to support his family.

And now John Jenkins began to write. In 1811 he published *Gwelediad y Palas Arian* which means *The Vision of the Silver Palace* a small book of theology. In 1817 he began work on his Commentary on the Bible, which he finished in 1831. This was a much larger three volume work. "It is throughout characterized by sound common sense, and nowhere disfigured by strange and extravagant views," says Thomas Rees in his history book. From time to time he also published essays on various Biblical topics as well as a Baptist Catechism.



In 1852, the year before his death, the University of Lewisburgh, USA, which had been founded as a Baptist theological college not long before, conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

John Jenkins is a shining example of what God can do through his servants even if they have very slender means of getting an education!

A letter to read⁵

On **November 28th** 1783 Thomas Jefferson who was later to become President of the United States of America, wrote to his daughter, Patsy. She was 11 years old at the times and her mother had recently died. The picture of Patsy below shows her as a grown up lady.

Annapolis Nov. 28. 1783.

My dear Patsy,

After four days journey I arrived here without any accident and in as good health as when I left Philadelphia... The **acquirements** which I hope you will make under the tutors I have provided for you will render you more worthy of my love, and if they cannot increase it they will prevent its **diminution**.

Consider the good lady who has taken you under her roof, who has undertaken to see that you perform all your exercises, and to **admonish** you in all those wanderings from what is right or what is clever to which your inexperience would expose you, consider her I say as your mother, as the only person to whom, since the loss with which heaven has been pleased to afflict you, you can now look up; and that her displeasure or **disapprobation** on any occasion will be an immense misfortune which should you be so unhappy as to incur by any unguarded act, think no **concession** too much to regain her good will.



⁴ [The National Churches Trust, CC BY 2.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons

⁵ Adapted from Owen, Evan, *What Happened Today?* Book 3 available on the *Mothers' Companion* flashdrive <https://motherscompanion.weebly.com/>

With respect to the distribution of your time the following is what I should approve.

from 8. to 10 o'clock practise music.

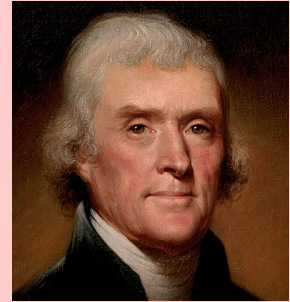
from 10. to 1. dance one day and draw another

from 1. to 2. draw on the day you dance, and write a letter the next day.

from 3. to 4. read French.

from 4. to 5. exercise yourself in music.

from 5. till bedtime read English, write &c.



Communicate this plan to Mrs. Hopkinson and if she approves of it pursue it.... I expect you will write to me by every post. Inform me what books you read, what tunes you learn, and inclose me your best copy of every lesson in drawing. Write also one letter every week either to your aunt Eppes, your aunt Skipwith, your aunt Carr, or the little lady⁶ from whom I now inclose a letter, and always put the letter you so write under cover to me. Take care that you never spell a word wrong. Always before you write a word consider how it is spelt, and if you do not remember it, turn to a dictionary. It produces great praise to a lady to spell well. I have placed my happiness on seeing you good and accomplished, and no distress which this world can now bring on me could equal that of your disappointing my hopes. If you love me then, strive to be good under every situation and to all living creatures, and to acquire those accomplishments which I have put in your power, and which will go far towards ensuring you the warmest love of your affectionate father,

Th: Jefferson

P.S. keep my letters and read them at times that you may always have present in your mind those things which will endear you to me.

What do you think of Patsy Jefferson's timetable? I wonder when she ate! What subjects do you study that Patsy did not have to learn? What did she study that you do not? How would you improve her daily curriculum? I have highlighted some words you might need to find in your dictionary. Can you use them in sentences of your own?

Something to think about

Patsy's father makes it quite clear in his letter that his affection for his daughter depends on her attainments. What do you think of this attitude? In the Bible we find that God is the Heavenly Father of his children. Romans 5:8 explains God's attitude to his children. Does Patsy's father reflect God's attitude?

Something to write

Imagine you are Patsy. Write a letter to your father in reply to the one above and tell him what you have been doing.

⁶ I presume a younger sister.

Something to listen to



One of the best loved and most performed piano concertos received its first performance on 28th November, 1811. Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major, Op. 73, was first heard at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig. As you may remember from the lesson for February 20th, the soloist was Beethoven's friend and pupil Carl Czerny. Find a recording to listen to today.⁷

A piano concerto is a piece of music usually in three movements (or separate parts or sections) for a symphony orchestra and a piano. The composer can do many beautiful things with this combination, the orchestra can accompany the piano, the piano can accompany the orchestra, they can dialogue back and forth or comment on each other or even interrupt each other. Watch out for these things as you listen.

As you will remember if you did the lesson for April 27th Beethoven's big difficulty as a composer was his increasing deafness. By 1811 he was already so deaf that he could no longer be the soloist himself in the first performance of this concerto. Beethoven wrote the concerto in Vienna during a time when that city was under attack from Napoleon and told his publisher that there was “nothing but drums, cannons, men, misery of all sorts.” Concerned that the noise of the canons would damage his hearing still more, Beethoven hid in his brother's cellar and tried to keep out the sound by covering his head with a cushion.

The concerto certainly has a heroic feel to it. It is now called the “Emperor Concerto” although Beethoven did not give it that name. The only Emperor in Europe at the time was Napoleon and Beethoven was very disappointed in him indeed. He had expected Napoleon to be the bringer of freedom. But this is what Napoleon said: “It is necessary always to talk of liberty, equality, justice, and never grant any liberty whatever.”

The concerto is about 40 minutes long. This was extensive for a concerto at this time and some of the critics at the first performance said it was too long. The opening is quite unusual for a piano concerto which often begins with the orchestra alone. How does Beethoven begin his concerto? Look out for the hymn-like melody that opens the slow second movement. Notice how the orchestra and piano interact in this movement.⁸ Which plays first? The third movement follows straight on from the second without a break⁹ and after the calm second movement it is electrifying.

If you find it hard to listen for 40 minutes and keep your mind on the music, it can help your concentration if you have a piece of paper and a pencil and doodle quietly while you listen. If you can doodle things, or even patterns or shapes that the music makes you think of, so much the better. Try to listen without any other distractions just as you would do if you were at a real concert. Careful listening to extended pieces of music and concentrating on what you hear all the time is very good for your brain and helps it grow!

⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-hn8WH_-3U for instance.

⁸ 21:27 in this performance https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-hn8WH_-3U.

⁹ About 40:00 in the https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-hn8WH_-3U performance.