

October 2nd

Memory Verse

Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee. Psalm 119:11

How can we know what to believe?¹

How you ever wondered how the Lord's people in the Old Testament knew to trust the the prophets that God sent them, such as Elijah and Elisha and to ignore the false prophets such as the 400 we read of in 1 Kings 22? No doubt they compared what the prophets said with what they knew of God's Word. This is one of the many good reasons for hiding God's Word in our hearts. If we really learn it and know it we will be able to compare anything that is told us with what it says and come to a good conclusion about whether or not what we have been told is true.

When it comes to predictions about the future, there is a passage in Deuteronomy 18 that gives some very clear and practical advice on the subject:

And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

In other words, watch what happens. If the prophet's words do not come true, he is a false prophet. This is still very wise advice today!

Have you ever encountered so called Jehovah's Witnesses? Their zeal for knocking on doors and selling their *Watchtower Magazine* often puts Christians to shame. Jehovah's witnesses are followers of a man whose prophecies definitely did not come to pass!

Today is a special day for Jehovah's Witnesses. Charles Taze Russell, the American who founded their movement prophesied that **2nd October** 1914 would be the end of the present system of things, the conclusion of Armageddon and the start of the earthly paradise. Here is what he wrote

We consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished near the end of A.D.1914... the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord – with knowledge and righteousness and peace...²

The beginning of the earthly phase of the Kingdom in the end of A.D. 1914 will, we understand, consist wholly of the resurrected holy ones of olden time-from John the Baptizer back to Abel – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the holy prophets.³

However, when that day, and indeed the whole year, passed a lot of rewriting had to take place. One of Russell's followers wrote:

Quite a few delegates... and, of course, members of the headquarters staff were present at the breakfast table on Friday morning, **October 2nd**. Everyone was seated when Brother Russell entered. As usual, he said cheerily, "Good morning, all." But this particular morning was different. Instead of proceeding promptly to his seat, he clapped his hands and joyfully announced: "The Gentile times have ended; their kings have had their day." "How we clapped our hands!" exclaims Cora

1 Information from <https://www.jwfacts.com/watchtower/failed-1914-predictions.php> and other sources.

2 *Studies in the Scriptures* - The Time is at Hand (1889) 1911 ed. p.99

3 *Studies In the Scriptures* - The Day of Vengeance p.625

Merrill. Brother Macmillan admitted: “We were highly excited and I would not have been surprised if at that moment we had just started up, that becoming the signal to begin ascending heavenward—but of course there was nothing like that, really.” Sister Merrill adds: “After a brief pause he [Russell] said: ‘Anyone disappointed? I’m not. Everything is moving right on schedule!’ Again we clapped our hands.”⁴

Alas, the prophecy had to be rewritten! *Nowadays* Jehovah's Witnesses claim that in 1914 the Gentile times ended, Jesus started ruling *in heaven* and the Last Days began – and they say that is what they always claimed. The evidence from their old publications tells a different story.

If anyone tells you they know the date when the world is going to end you can be sure they are a false prophet. Jesus said: “But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” (Matthew 24:36) We should keep our eyes on other sorts of prophecies too. Here are a couple I found:

A top climate scientist is warning that climate change will wipe out all of humanity unless we stop using fossil fuels over the next five years.

Greta Thunberg said this on June 21st 2018. It does not seem to have happened! Summer 2018 was very hot in the UK so Greta's words seemed more credible at the time.

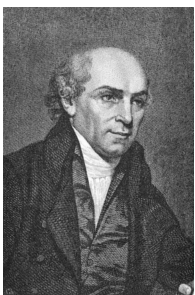
Prince (now King) Charles said that we had 100 months before there would be catastrophic climate change – a time period which expired in 2017.

...by 2070, much of the world's population is likely to live in climate conditions that are “warmer than conditions deemed suitable for human life to flourish.”⁵

The world’s leading climate scientists have warned there is only a dozen years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5C, beyond which even half a degree will significantly worsen the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people.⁶ 2018

You are young enough to be able to keep an eye on both these last two prophecies and test them by the Deuteronomy 18:21 rule. 2018 plus 12 is only 2030! How old will you be then?

A story from Missionary History



Today is an important anniversary in the history of missions. For some years the self-educated shoe maker, William Carey, (1761-1834) had been concerned that no one was going to India to preach the gospel there, despite the activities of British people to make money in India through the East India company. In the lesson for 6th February we read about Carey's sermon in Nottingham in 1792 that set the ball rolling but it was not until **2nd October** that Carey's efforts came to fruition and the Kettering Particular Baptists formed their missionary society. Here is Carey's biographer's description of what happened:

This memorable meeting was held at Kettering on the **2nd of October**, 1792. After the services of the day, the ministers, twelve in number, withdrew to the parlour of Mrs. Wallis, the widow of one

4 . Yearbook 1975 pp.72,73

5 <https://www.pnas.org/> 15/05/2023 quoted in USA Today News
<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2020/05/04/world-heat-conditions-unlivable-global-warming-unabated/3063849001/>

6 <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/oct/08/global-warming-must-not-exceed-15c-warns-landmark-un-report>

of the deacons, whose ancestor had established the first Baptist church in the town a century before.

They entered into a long and anxious discussion of the practicability of sending a Mission to the heathen. At the present day, when the various countries of the world are almost as well known as the counties of England were at that time, and the genius of the age has created such matchless facilities of communication, that Canton is as accessible from London as Edinburgh then was, the organisation of a society for any object in any part of the globe appears a matter of ease, and it is difficult to realise the obstacles which surrounded such an enterprise when it was debated at this meeting. The ministers felt that there was no experience of any such undertaking to guide their movements; they were ignorant of the mode of constructing a Missionary Association, or working its machinery; they knew of no favourable opening in any heathen land to which their efforts might be directed; they were without funds or influence, and their inland position in the centre of England was unfavourable for correspondence or action.

But all these objections were overruled by the vigour of Mr. Carey's arguments, and under the irresistible influence of his great mind, the ministers present were prevailed on to pledge themselves in a solemn vow to God and to each other, to make, at the least, an attempt to convey the Gospel message of salvation to some portion of the heathen world. A Society was constituted, and a Committee of five appointed, consisting of Andrew Fuller, John Ryland, John Sutcliff, Reynold Hogg, and William Carey. Mr. Fuller was nominated the secretary, and Mr. Hogg the treasurer of the new body, and a subscription was collected, amounting to thirteen pounds two shillings and sixpence, the harbinger of the millions which have since been laid on the altar of this sacred cause.

As soon as the subscription paper was filled up, Mr. Carey offered to embark for any country which the Society might select. His mind was imbued with that irresistible enthusiasm to which great enterprises owe their origin, and notwithstanding the ridiculous contrast between the resources obtained, and the magnitude of the enterprise, he was eager to enter upon it at once. The church at Birmingham, under the pastoral care of the ardent and amiable Samuel Pearce, on hearing of this missionary movement, immediately raised a subscription of £70, and became the first auxiliary of the "Primary Society," as the parent Society at Kettering was at first designated. Other churches in the country followed the example, and the Committee soon found themselves in possession of considerable funds.⁷

Something to make

In the lesson for 9th June we learned about the map that Carey made to help him study the need of the world for gospel preachers. He also made himself a globe in order study the matter. Being a shoe maker, the only material he had easily available for this purpose was leather off-cuts. If you would like to make your own globe I don't think leather would be the best material. However, polystyrene or wooden craft balls can be marked out with the continents and painted. Another idea is to paint a cheap football sized plastic ball with acrylic paint beginning with a coating of blue as a foundation and then doing the continents in green. If you use a polystyrene ball you can stick marker pins into it where you know of missionaries. More about Carey in a few days time in the lesson for October 9th.

Something to find out about

Richard III was born on 2nd October 1452 at Fotheringay Castle. What can you find out about him? Can you find out where he is buried?



⁷ John Clark Marshman, *Carey, Marshman and Ward. Embracing the History of the Serampore Mission.* (London, 1859)