

October 6<sup>th</sup>

### Memory Verse

**Thy word have I hid in my heart**

that I might not sin against thee. Psalm 119:11

Today, **October 6<sup>th</sup>**, is the anniversary of the day in 1536 when William Tyndale was put to death for translating the Bible into English.

We cannot easily hide God's Word in our heart if we cannot read it for ourselves. Before he began his work of translation and before he even had to leave his native England for ever in order to make it, Tyndale started to see the truth more and more clearly in the Greek New Testament. When a Catholic scholar told him that we would be better off without God's law than the pope's, he uttered the words that have now become famous:

“I defy the Pope and all his laws. . . . If God spare my life ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough, shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost.”

We learned about Tyndale yesterday so if you did not do yesterday's lesson you could look at it now and find out just how he achieved that wonderful ambition.

### Something to read from history<sup>1</sup>



On Tuesday **6<sup>th</sup> October** 1164 Thomas à Becket (1119/20-1170) archbishop of Canterbury, arrived in Northampton. With him was a large retinue of monks, chaplains, forty clerks and a military escort. When he arrived he found that the lodgings allocated to him and his retinue had been taken by the squires of the king, Henry II! Becket was forced to suffer this indignity as the king was out hawking at the time and so nothing could be done about Becket's lodgings. He moved to a nearby priory instead.

Becket had come to Northampton to participate in the Council of Northampton to be held at Northampton Castle in a couple of days' time. The Council was effectively his trial on charges relating to a suit brought against him by nobleman John Marshal about lands that Becket had confiscated. It was to lead eventually to one of the most famous events in all of English history, the murder of Thomas à Becket at Canterbury Cathedral.

Becket had once been such a friend of the king that he had sent his son to Becket for care and education. But now things were different. Henry regarded Becket as a threat. How did this happen? It all began with Henry's attempts to improve the criminal justice system of his day. Henry wanted the clergy to be tried in exactly the same courts as the ordinary people. The pope insisted they be tried only in church courts which could only order small punishments.

Henry wanted support for this idea and so he appointed his friend Thomas à Becket to the post of Archbishop of Canterbury. But Becket changed completely on becoming archbishop. Now he was the pope's man, not Henry's and he opposed Henry's reforms.

The king, as we have seen, called Becket to Northampton and Becket arrived with his retinue on **6<sup>th</sup> October**. This king's disfavour extended beyond just forcing Becket out of his lodgings. It soon

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *The Story of God's Dealings with our Nation* Volume 1 available here: <https://www.creationresearchstore.com/s/search?q=The%20Story%20of%20Gods%20Dealings%20with%20our%20Nation>.

became clear that Becket would be sentenced to death. Becket pretended to spend the night at the high altar of the priory. In the darkness he made his escape to France. From here he made his appeal to the pope against Henry.



The quarrel between the king and the archbishop was patched up and Becket returned to England. At once he began to punish the bishops who had supported the king's reforms. This made the king furious. He was in France when the news was brought to him and he flew into a rage. Listening to Henry as he ranted, and screamed, were four knights who had their own grudges against Becket. They left the court, crossed the channel, rode to Canterbury and killed Becket in the cathedral.

There was horror in England when Becket was murdered. That such a murder could happen in Canterbury Cathedral appalled people. Becket was “made a saint” and people began to go to his tomb in Canterbury to pray to him and his tomb became a centre of pilgrimage. People flocked to “pay” for their sins by travelling to visit it.

There was no possibility now of Henry’s plan for the church courts being carried out. For centuries to come any man who could say the Lord’s prayer or read some Latin was able to claim Benefit of Clergy and so escape punishment even for dreadful crimes. Later Henry himself made a pilgrimage to Becket’s tomb where he allowed himself to be beaten by the clergy as a punishment for what had happened. Becket’s murder prevented Henry from loosening the pope’s grip on England.

### Something to think about

If you go to Canterbury today you will find that the veneration of “Saint” Thomas is still very much alive and well in the cathedral. Thomas's shrine was removed at the time of the Reformation along with many superstitious practices.<sup>2</sup> However, the loss of the shrine is today very much lamented and the place where Thomas is thought to have been murdered is now marked out with a modern sculpture with votive candles lighted, as a symbol of prayer. Can the dead help us if we pray to them?<sup>3</sup> What does the Bible call praying to the dead for help or advice?<sup>4</sup> Is it something Christians should do? Why did the reformers remove such objects as this tomb? I have put H E Marshall's delightful retelling of Thomas à Becket's story in today's optional resources files for you to enjoy.

### Some astronomy<sup>5</sup>

How many planets are there? Do you know? How many of their names can you remember? In what order do they occur in terms of their relationship to the sun?

Jot down your answers here before you turn over the page:

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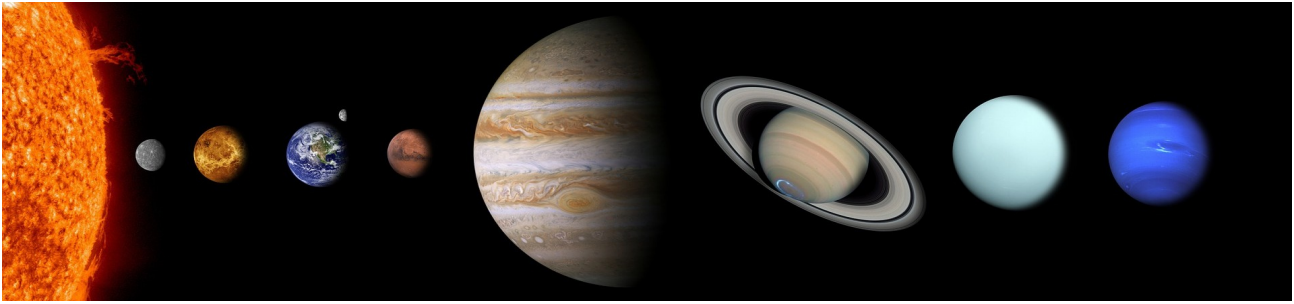
2 By this time the shrine looked like this <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8eYsnZGcKQs&t=1s> according to modern experts.

3 Sick people often came to the cathedral to get help from Thomas à Becket's shrine. You can see a tragic reconstruction of what this might have looked like in the middle ages here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-t7M9A3R24>.

4 Deuteronomy 18:11.

5 Information from <https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/extrasolar-planets/exoplanets-unpredictable-patterns/>, <https://creation.com/the-existence-and-origin-of-extrasolar-planets> and other sources.

Can you identify the planets in this picture?<sup>6</sup>



Of course, these are the planets that orbit the *sun*. But could there be other planets, orbiting round stars far away? Indeed there are! Such planets are called exoplanets. They cannot be seen with ordinary telescopes because of the glare of the star itself around which they are orbiting. Although astronomers guessed that there might be such things and some exoplanets were discovered in the early 1990s, it was not until **6<sup>th</sup> October** 1995 that discovery of an exoplanet orbiting a “normal,” or main sequence star, 51 Pegasi b, was announced. This rather unromantic name just means that the star 51 Pegasi is being orbited by a planet designated b.

The astronomers who were looking for exoplanets had a number of ideas, based on their evolutionary theories, of what they were going to find when they did discover exoplanets. When they found 51 Pegasi b they were rather shocked. It was a big planet made of gasses rather like Jupiter in the solar system. But it was very much closer to its star, 51 Pegasi, than it should be according to their ideas. The astronomers dubbed it a “hot Jupiter”. To fit in with the secular long ages theory of the origin of the universe, a giant gas-ball planet should not occur *near* its star. In our own universe, the rocky planets are closest to the sun and the gas giants furthest away. The scientists who discovered 51 Pegasi b were expecting this to be the case with all exoplanets too. They thought that such planets all began with icy cores many ages ago. But this icy core would have melted away because of the heat in a planet so close to its star. How could a giant gas-ball planet like 51 Pegasi b be where it was?

The astronomers decided that since they could not understand how a giant gas-ball could be near its star and yet 51 Pegasi b was just such a phenomena it must an anomaly, something very rare that did not quite fit in. However, when they began to discover more exoplanets there were so many “hot Jupiters” that they out numbered the other types found! They were not anomalies: they were normal.

As time went on and more exoplanets were discovered astronomers found they did not fulfil their evolutionary expectations in other ways too. Their often elliptical orbits were a surprise and at least two exoplanets appear to orbit their star backwards.

God has created so much diversity, so much rich variety, that to those of us who believe the Bible, these discoveries though wonderful, are not a surprise. Nor is it surprising that those who do not believe that God created the world in the way He describes in the Bible cannot predict what they are going to find next nor make it fit with their inaccurate theories.

As I write this in 2022, the giant gas-ball planet Jupiter in our own solar system is visible to the naked eye in October. Can you find it in the night sky?<sup>7</sup>

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6 The eight planets are Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Pluto, once also considered a planet has been re classified as a “dwarf-planet”.

7 Help to do this can be found here: <https://www.skyatnightmagazine.com/advice/skills/astronomy-guide-viewing-planets-night-sky/>.

## Round the world<sup>8</sup>



We have looked at a number of circumnavigations<sup>9</sup> of the globe in these lessons. We have learned about circumnavigations that used submarine, sail and cycle power. **October 6<sup>th</sup>** is the anniversary of the completion in 2007 of one of the most amazing circumnavigations ever. The craft you see pictured on the River Thames is a tandem pedal powered boat. Stevie Smith and Jason Lewis circumnavigated the world using this boat as well as bicycles, kayaks and skates. They did not use any other form of power such as a sail to catch the wind.

Only Jason Lewis completed the journey in the end. This he did despite having had both his legs broken in an accident with a drunken lorry driver while skating in Colorado. The journey of 46,505 miles began (on 12th July 1994) and ended at the Greenwich Meridian.

If you have a bike, make sure it is in good order and try to go out for a ride this week. You don't have to go right round the world to do some enjoyable exploring.

It is always inspiring to read about people who have overcome obstacles. Imagine being determined to carry on round the world under your own steam even if you have to wait part of the way through while you recover from having two broken legs! If we belong to the Lord Jesus we will no doubt have difficulties that will seem (at least to us) at times even harder to overcome, although they may be less physical than broken legs. Jason Lewis recalled how encouraging it was when he found himself in a hospital bed in Colorado, that Stevie Smith's father flew straight out to be with him until he was better. Our heavenly father has promised "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Hebrews 13:5.

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<sup>8</sup> Image: By Tammie6123 - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=81826018>

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Stevens (lesson for 22<sup>nd</sup> April), Captain Beach (May 10<sup>th</sup>), Ferdinand Magellan (lesson for 10<sup>th</sup> May), Francis Drake (lesson for June 17<sup>th</sup>) Captain Cook (lesson for June 25<sup>th</sup>) Joshua Slocum (lesson for 1<sup>st</sup> July)