

19th September

Memory Verse

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits:
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
who healeth all thy diseases;
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Psalm103: 2-4

More about today's memory verse in tomorrow's lesson.

Some exercise to do

How fast can you cycle? Over 86 miles an hour??? On 19th September 2015 cyclist Todd Reichert reached 86.65 mph on a very special recumbent bike, the Aerovelo *Eta*, on a highway near Battle Mountain, Nevada, USA. Because State Highway 305 here is nearly level and very straight, it is the venue for the annual World Human-Powered Speed Challenge. Todd Reichert's machine was faired, or enclosed, like the Dutch machine pictured on the right but it had two wheels rather than three. In the interests of speed, the rider's head was also full enclosed so he could not see out and he had to “navigate” by means of a computer screen inside the bike fairing!¹



If you can, go out for a (slower) bike ride yourselves today. If you have a stationary bicycle you could set yourself a target (not 86.65 mph!) and see how long it takes you to reach it for a steady 60 seconds in gradually faster daily sessions. Or even if you can only ride up and down a garden path you could time yourself. We all need physical exercise and cycling is a very good way to get it – and to get yourself from A to B too.

Do you know how a bicycle works? If you did not research this topic on 7th May today would be a good day to look into it. Find out from an encyclopedia or ask for a book from the library.² Do you know how to look after your own bike if you have one?³ It is very important to have working brakes and well pumped up tyres. If your tyres are not up to pressure you will find cycling much harder work than if they are correctly inflated.

1 You can watch highlights from the ride and also the construction of the bike here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BC5KIFHd5Ao&t=22s>

2 There is a good description here: here: <https://blog.pitsco.com/blog/how-do-bicycles-work-the-science-behind-this-simple-machine>

3 As we noted on 7th May, you can find out here: <https://brightkidz.co.uk/initiatives/cycling/cycle-maintenance>

Frozen in time: something to write⁴



On 19th September 1991 a German couple Helmut and Erika Simon on holiday hiking high in the Ötztal Alps on the Italian-Austrian border were shocked to discover a body in the ice of the Similaun glacier. It turned out to be one of the most ancient human remains ever found.

Over 5000 years had passed since the death of the man, whose body was preserved in a mummified condition due to the ice of the glacier.

It was not long before specialists had examined the remains in great detail. The site where the body was found (you can see the glacier in the picture above) was combed and all sorts of associated bits and pieces were discovered including an axe made of pure copper, some clothing, a quiver with arrows, a bow made of yew wood, tinder for starting a fire and a frame that some say was a kind of rucksack and others consider might have been snowshoes. The remains were preserved in a special ice environment in a museum and experts examined the DNA, stomach contents and the artefacts found with the man to tease out the maximum possible about his way of life. They found that, not long before setting out, the man had eaten a meal containing a kind of bread, meat and some green vegetables.



The pictures⁵ above shows a reconstruction of what the “Iceman” might have looked like. You can see his quiver of arrows on his back, his leather boots. He is carrying his axe and at his feet is a cannister made of birch bark in which he carried provisions.

What was his occupation? What was he doing high in the Alps? There have been many suggestions: shepherd, farmer, trader even explorer but nothing that can be definitely proved. When an ex-ray examination revealed an arrow head in the “iceman's” back it was realised that he had not met his death by accident or from exposure but was killed by someone else. This caused more mysteries. Was he a fugitive from justice? A victim of revenge? What an intriguing puzzle!

The man's age at death is another puzzle to experts. Evidence from his body seems to indicate than he was quite a young man, perhaps in his 20s or 30s. And yet his teeth are worn down like those of a much older person. Was he old or young then? There seems to be no solution to this mystery and it has affected the various reconstructions and pictures which try to show what the “iceman” looked like, some showing him as quite young looking and others as old.

But there is a strange solution to this dilemma. Perhaps the “iceman” was both old and young! If the man's remains date from over 5,000 years ago, and there is no reason to doubt this, he lived at the time of the Exodus. Although lifespans decreased steadily throughout Genesis from the 900s to around 110 (Joseph), at the time of the Exodus long lifespans were still not uncommon. Moses lived to 120 and remained healthy until his death and Joshua reached 110. A long lifespan might well

⁴ Information from <https://creation.com/tyrolean-oetztaler-ice-man> and other sources.

⁵ Pictures by kind permission of Don Hitchcock. <https://www.donsmaps.com>.

indicate slower development. A person could be 60 and yet be developmentally much more like a 20 or 30 year old. However, wear on teeth depends on the type of food eaten and length of life just in actual years. His maturation therefore would be at the level of a young man even though he was perhaps 60 years old and had worn his teeth accordingly. Perhaps if “Iceman” had not had an arrow in his back he would have lived to a very great age.

There are many mysteries that will never be solved surrounding the “Iceman”. What he was doing and how he met his end are really anybody's guess. If you enjoy writing you could take the facts we *do* know about him and his way of life and weave them into a story of you own in which he could be either the hero or the villain. What can you come up with?