

The Wicket Gate Magazine

A Continuing Witness



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Index

1. Thoughts on Reading the Bible – Letter from J. W. Seaton (May 1981)
2. Using the Bible's Built in Helps
3. Parables and Illustrations Etcetera
4. Some Thoughts from C. H. Spurgeon
5. The Bible Says – or Does It?
6. Gleanings in the Psalms – Psalm 91
7. The Dove is a gentle bird – Letter from Mrs Seaton to the Boys and Girls



At the Web Site of the Wicket Gate magazine www.wicketgate.co.uk you will also find the following recordings:

- Through the Bible with the Children – Bible Stories told by Mr Seaton.
- Congregational Praise – the singing of our Church during Worship Services
- Sermons preached by Dr Needham and Mr Seaton
- Historical Lectures given in the Church by Dr Needham
- Podcasts on Various Subjects
- Audio Archive of Sermons from 1970 to 2002. (A Work in Progress)

Thoughts on Reading the Bible

Letter from J. W. Seaton (May 1981)

Dear Friends,

One of the most important questions ever put to any one was the question that Philip the evangelist put to the Ethiopian eunuch when he discovered him reading the 53rd chapter of Isaiah: - “Understandest thou what thou readest?” he asked him. There is nothing more vital in the life of any one than to have some kind of a clear comprehension of what the Bible is actually saying to them; and so, on the following pages of the Wicket Gate I thought that we might devote the bulk of the space available to that subject.

Let me hasten to add, that what follows is not a detailed or “in-depth” study on how to read the Bible. There are several books dealing with Principles of Interpretation, and so forth, and any one who cares to go deeper into the subject may obtain any of these. What follows is more a series of “random jottings” – pointing to various areas in our everyday approach to the Word of God – and we trust that these might form seed-thoughts for those who read the magazine. The material is varied: anecdotal, serious, not-so-serious, humorous; but we trust that it all might prove to be “grist for the mill” in our endeavours to see what the Lord our God is saying to us.

There are two extremes to which we must never go in our whole general approach to reading the Word of God:

1. We must never approach it as though it were any other book.
2. We must never approach it as though it were *not* any other book!

Let me explain that, for it is not a contradiction in terms. It may appear to be something of a paradox; but then, doesn't the Christian mind learn to deal with paradox where such paradox is brought before us in the Word of God?

First, the Bible must not be approached like any other book, indeed. ‘The advice of a whole army of the Lord’s people, from Luther through to Whitefield, and those who went before, and those who came after, still holds good today; namely – that the best position in which to read the Bible is on your knees. That goes without saying, and ought to go without saying. The Bible is absolutely unique; the Bible is the Word of the living God from beginning to end, and there never was and never shall be any book even remotely like it on all the face of this earth.

Every statement *in* the Word of God *concerning* the Word of God and the uniqueness of the Word of God ought to be beyond question in the heart and mind of every believing man or woman. As the apostle John says, “These things are written that ye might believe.” The Bible has a unique purpose, and the Bible is a unique book in every way. For all that, however, we fall into a terrible trap if we fail to realise that although it is a unique book, it is, for all that, a book!

It is one of the glorious facts of the Word of God that our God in heaven above deigned to be an “Author” and write a Book for his people. He hasn’t left us without guidance, or counsel, or directive, or hope; He has written a book for us to read! *But* and this is very important; when God wrote His book for us to read, God didn’t abandon the “laws” of language, and communication, and so forth, in the writing of His book. Therefore, we must take into consideration those self-same things when we endeavour to read the book that the Lord has given us.

It must be said that if some Christians read other printed matter the way that they read the Bible their whole course of life would be in a shambles. The Bible is written in the form of poetry, or narrative, or history, or song – and a dozen and one other ways - and due attention must be paid to the very way in which a particular part of the Bible is written, as we approach it to read it. Could you imagine receiving a letter through your door from a friend and immediately turning to the middle of the third page, say, to start reading it. Worst still, who would

start to read in the middle of a sentence? Yet, that is precisely how many people treat the letter of the Word of God given to us.

There is a story about an old thief who made a profession of religion, but who still went on with his thieving unabated. The pastor of the church challenged him about this, but the old man said that he did it, because the Bible exhorted him to do it. He quoted Ephesians 4:28 – “let him that stole, *steal*.” Now it’s beyond question that the Bible *does* say that. As far as actual words are concerned, those very words are in the Bible, and the old fellow felt quite justified in repeating them as “the word of God.” What he had done, of course, was simply abandon any rules whatsoever for reading; not just for reading the Word of God, but for reading anything. He had repeated the sentence incompletely and had placed a convenient full stop of his own making after the word “steal.” What the sentence really says, of course is – “Let him that stole steal **no more**.”

Are we not careful in reading our phone bills, our fuel bills our road maps, our timetables, our children’s homework, our appointments and engagements? Surely, then, it is inappropriate to look on the Word of Eternal life in some haphazard and indefinite way. If God has become a gracious “Author” for us, it is only but right that we should endeavour to be careful and diligent readers for Him.

Yours sincerely,
W. J. Seaton

Editor’s remark: These first four articles were written in 1981. Today many use computerised Bibles and aids. However the principles set out in these first four articles are applicable even if you use computerised Bibles and their built in aids. God is still the author of His Word and being careful and diligent readers still apply to us all.

Using the Bible's Built in Helps.

Apart from the numerous Commentaries, Dictionaries and Bible Aids that are available, there is also something of a “built-in” helpmeet in most of our Bibles. This is found in such things as chapter headings, marginal references, and italics. The fact that these things have been inserted within the covers of our Bibles by men of the past need not deter us from their use, and it is always a good thing to look in the margin for a “cross-reference” to a particular verse or passage being read. Not only does this increase our understanding of the particular subject on hand, but it also helps to increase our overall knowledge of the content of the Word of God.

In reading the scriptures it is usually a worthwhile exercise to read on past a division of a chapter i.e., from chapter four, say of a book, on into a few verses of chapter five. The chapter divisions that we have in our Bible are, of course, not the inspired division and, whereas, for the most part, they are very helpful, there are occasions where we miss the fulness of what is being said if we stick too rigidly to them. The presence of “italics” in most Bibles comes into the same category. The older translators inserted italics to show that the words *in* italics were really “additions” that they were making for sake of clarity. We admire their honesty in this procedure. In some of the more modern versions this procedure is neglected.

Within the actual “text” of the Word of God itself, there are, also, some inbuilt aids to reading aright. One of the most effective of these is found in the right use of certain “key words” – joining words, and such like. One of the greatest of these is the word, “Therefore,” and, as someone said, “whenever you see a ‘therefore’ always look and see what it’s there for!” Others akin to it are words like, “But,” “now,” “seeing,” “If,” and so on. We once heard a man begin a series on Romans at chapter 12, because, as he put it, “The first eleven chapters only contain doctrine!” What didn’t seem to occur to him was that when Paul begins chapter 12 by saying, “I beseech you, *“therefore,* brethren.” He is throwing his readers back on those eleven chapters of

doctrine as the grateful basis for all the practical exhortations that are about to follow. And so throughout the whole of the Word of God. Words like “moreover,” “finally,” and phrases like, “What then?” “I say then,” – and so forth should all be noted as we read from day to day.

Attached to some Bibles, as well, you may find a short Concordance of Bible words and names; whether this is the case or not, every Christian desiring to realistically read the Word of God should have access to a concordance, and endeavour to make use of it. In the actual use of a concordance in finding where a particular text is, it is usually advisable to give a minute’s thought to the particular text; this can save a lot of time and effort. For example, a text like, “Behold then the goodness and the severity of God.” If I wanted to locate that text, how would I look for it in a concordance? Well, try and assess the *least common* word in the text. In this case, would it be “goodness”, or “severity;” A glance at a concordance will show that words like – Good, Goodly, etc run for pages; “goodness” itself has about sixty references in the average concordance. So, opt for “severity;” and, a pleasant surprise, only one reference.

In some concordances certain texts will be marked with some form of an asterisk * - + etc. This is to show that there is a marginal reading with the particular word involved.

The “Metrical” version of the Psalms in some Bibles should be well used where available. Very often it is easier to commit to memory something that is in metre than otherwise, and the metrical version of Psalm 19 – concerning the Scriptures themselves – speaks volumes

“They more than gold, yea, much fine gold,
to be desired are;
Than honey, honey from the comb
that droppeth sweeter far.

Moreover, they thy servant warn,
How he is life should frame:

A great reward provided is
For them that keep the same.”

Parables and Illustrations Etcetera

One of the most fertile fields for producing “tares” instead of “wheat” in our reading of the Bible is the misuse of the parables, illustrations, and such like that are contained in it. It is so easily forgotten that, generally speaking, a parable is essentially making one point, or, at most a couple of points. To go beyond this can lead into all kinds of queer notions and it is most often a futile exercise to go looking for “truths” in the parable that were never intended by the parable or the one who used it.

By far the most dangerous aspect of a wrong usage of parable or illustration is when the parable or the illustration becomes the very thing that overturns the truth that is being used to illustrate.

One outstanding example of this is the misuse of our Lord’s words in John chapter ten, where He is speaking about how He will keep His “sheep” so that not one of them shall ever be lost. In the course of proclaiming that blessed fact, our Lord likens Himself to a shepherd holding his sheep in his arms: - “I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” That ought to register quite clear and plain to any of our minds, but when those who oppose the eternal safe-keeping of the believer get their hands on it, it becomes a different story. “Oh yes,” they say, “no one can pluck them out of the shepherd’s hands, but a sheep could *jump* out of the shepherd’s hands; therefore, it is possible to be saved for a time, but finally lost.”

Apparently that kind of “expounding” an illustration finds acceptance with some; we all know that a sheep can jump out of a shepherd’s arms therefore ... And what has taken place is the addition of a notion to the illustration that was never intended.

We might reply, of course, that Christ would be such a Shepherd who would not permit His sheep to jump out of His arms, because he would hold them so securely and so safely for that to happen. But that, too, would be introducing something to the illustration. What we must do is simply look at the truth being stated; and the truth being stated is, “I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish.” Then the illustration about the shepherd’s hands. But the illustration as it is used in connection with that truth must never be made to overturn that truth. Seek ye first the stated truth of God, and all these lovely illustrative pictures may be added to it.

If this “rule” had been attended to in much that is termed “prophetic” ministry, the Church of Christ might have been a lot more clear in her calling today. The same holds good with regards to the Old Testament “types” and “shadows,” etc.

“The New is in the Old contained;
The Old is by the New explained.”

One parable that has received a tremendous amount of mistreatment at the hands of men is the Parable of the Prodigal Son, as it is normally called. B.B. Warfield highlights another kind of danger in dealing with parables etc., in his sermon on the Prodigal. He is warning against the idea that the parable of the Prodigal is really the gospel in all its fulness. It is not this of course, he says; “*it is that part of the gospel* that tells us that God receives wandering souls back to Himself.” There is no “atonement” in the parable, he reminds us; there is no “Holy Spirit” in the parable; indeed, there is “little of Christ” in the parable, he says. “Therefore, the parable of the prodigal son cannot in any way be thought of as the whole of the gospel.” And then, Warfield makes a tremendous statement full of weight and authority: - “... the exaggerated estimate which has been put upon this parable,” he says, “has borne bitter fruit in the world. Beginning with an effort to *read into it all the Gospel*, or at least the essence of the Gospel, it has ended up by reading *out of the Gospel* all that is not in the parable.

It was this very approach to the parable of the prodigal son that gave great impetus to the “social gospel,” and so, Warfield says aright, “... thus, this parable, the vehicle of a priceless message, has been Transformed into the instrument of a great wrong. *The worst things are often the corruption of the best*”

In a lighter vein, A.M. Hunter relates a story that ought to remind us that the essential part of any parable or illustration is the “heavenly meaning,” and not “the earthly story.” He tells of a certain “prodigal son” who had “wasted his substance on riotous living,” but who was then advised by an old minister to go back to his father; after all, the old ministers advice ran, “Didn’t the father in the parable kill the fatted calf for the returning son.” The “prodigal duly returned to his father, and in course of time met-up with the old minister again: - “Well, my boy,” he said, “and did your father kill the fatted calf?” “No,” came the rueful reply, “but he nearly killed the prodigal son!” Just so!

Some Thoughts from J. A. Spurgeon

Read the Bible confidently:

There are those in our day who attack the Bible: who read it to mark supposed defects in the Word – to discover fancied flaws. Well, we say to them, Go on, sir. The more you rub the brighter it will shine, and the letters upon its dial plate will come out the clearer for your exertions. I have a quaint old book of Quarles, well known for its odd woodcuts – and one of them represents a child with a small pair of bellows trying to blow out the sun. With all respect for your presumed wisdom, that picture reminds me of you in your equally foolish attempt to extinguish the Bible. You and your bellows will come to perdition, but the Word of God, like Him who gave it, shall abide for ever. If I saw a man on the seashore digging a little hole, and he were to declare that the object of his exercise was to drain the ocean dry, I should examine the string of his jacket to see if they were made to lace tight, for I should expect that workman to be mad. We fear not the assaults of men upon our Bible. It

is a rock, and their waves may beat upon it, but it shall abide, and they, like the bubbles of the spray, shall dash against it to be destroyed.

Read the Bible Without Partiality.

There are many in the Church who can read without really seeing many parts of Scripture, because these passages do not fit into their creed. There is such a thing as colour blindness, we are told, and we can certainly trace a doctrinal blindness in many good men. Some are never able to see election in the Bible, or some other doctrine revealed with equal clearness. There is a very large class of persons thus afflicted, and especially when the ordinance of Baptism is in question. Many have confessed to me that they had never looked the question at all, and you would marvel to know how many Christians are blind on that point, and only find it out after a long time. Nelson put up the glass to his blind eye to look at the signal flag telling him to cease firing. So, it makes a very great difference which eye is used when you read God's Word, for I fear we have most of us a film over one eye, in connection with one or more points of doctrine and precept.

Read the Bible Reverently.

There are some positions which best display the finish and beauties of a painting. The artists are always particular as to the light and place in which their pictures are to hang when exhibited to the public. The Bible is also seen to best advantage from one standpoint, and that is from beneath – when the reader humbly looks up to it – as to the sun shedding light down upon him in his ignorance and darkness. You remember the old story of the gate, with the low-hung knocker, and the inscription – “knock and it shall be opened unto you.” So it is with the Bible; it yields not a view of its inner meaning but to the humble in heart.

Read the Bible with Grateful Hearts.

We may believe the truth that we read and yet, at the same time, we do not lay hold of the blessings revealed, and live upon them, as we ought. There is a great distinction between a Lawyer reading the Title Deeds of an Estate – to see if they are genuine and secure – and the heir himself reading the same deeds, to learn how much he is worth, and what wealth

he has for the future to enjoy. I would have you thus to read the Bible; as if you felt it to be a letter from your Heavenly Father to your soul. It speaks to you. Lay hold of its promises; take heed to its warnings; follow out its directions; make it a lamp to your feet and a light unto your path; make it the man at your right hand at all times.

Read the Bible as Under the Holy Spirit of God.

You must read the Bible under the teaching of God's Spirit. I mention this last because I want it to abide in your memory. Unless the Holy Ghost shine upon the sacred page you will never read to profit. Human reason can comprehend what has sprung from the mind of man; but God's thoughts can only be comprehended aright by those who are taught by the Spirit. The well is too deep for man to draw water from, unaided by God; he needs to have help from on high. We need the lamp of the Spirit to shed His beams upon the written Word. We must offer the same prayer as an inspired man himself had to offer: - "Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." Thus perusing God's Word humbly and studiously, you shall be blessed, and your soul shall be satisfied with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock.

AMEN.

The Bible Says – Or Does It?

The practice of mis-quoting the Word of God in various ways is a practice that is, perhaps, more common than some realise. On account of this, it is very important that we learn to read exactly what it says on the pages of the scriptures and then, exercise a good deal of care in any "amplified" version of the text or passage that we then give. The omission of just one word can make all the difference, as the King's Printers in 1631 found to their cost, when they failed to insert the wee word "not!" in the seventh commandment relating to adultery. The resulting edition of the Bible became known as the "Wicked Bible."

We must be careful in reading not to over-emphasise words – where no emphasis is meant – not to add words, omit words, or reverse the order of words in some passages of scripture. A few examples of this that we have come across.

On the question of over-emphasis, we knew an evangelist once who had a sermon on the man sick of the palsy. It was a favourite sermon with this evangelist and received many an airing wherever he went. One of the “main points” that he made in this sermon revolved around the fact that “the Holy Spirit had purposely retained the word ‘*sick*’; the man was *sick* of the palsy”, he said, “absolutely *sick* of it!” He was “fed up” with it!

Now, we have no doubt that the poor man was “sick” of his palsy; but it’s hardly the point that the word is making. There is no “malice aforethought,” of course, in the particular overemphasis of that word, but there are other times when words or phrases can be made to say more than was really intended, and we need to try and be diligent readers with regards to these.

There is innocent intention, and sincere desire, no doubt, also, when folk sometimes pray and claim the promise that “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them – *and that to bless them.*”

Now, it doesn’t actually say that. Who could possibly doubt that where Christ is in the midst of His people, then, He does “bless them?” But Matthew 18:20 doesn’t make any mention of that. And, in fact, the issue that Matthew 18:20 is dealing with is Church discipline, not prayer. And the danger, of course, is that the real issue becomes blurred in people’s minds and they miss out on that particular passage of scripture relating to a very real aspect of the Church’s life.

Again, we emphasise the innocent intent that lies behind such usage, or mis-usage, of the words of the Bible, but there can be many far-reaching and dangerous examples of the practice, as well. For Example: -

We often hear 2nd Peter 3:9 quoted as a great “proof text” against the doctrine of election; the quotation normally runs like this: - “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” There you are, say those who would oppose the truth of election – the Bible says that God is “longsuffering, not willing that any should perish.” But does it? Does the Bible at 2nd Peter 3:9 really say that? Well, it doesn’t.

Here is the actual quotation: - “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to *us-ward*, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” “To usward.” And so, in the former quotation there has been an omission. When we ask who Peter means by “us” in his “usward,” we then see that far from the text being a case against the truth of election, it is rather a bastion in its favour.

Verse 1 of chapter three of 2nd Peter reads, “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you ...” So, the Second epistle of Peter was written to the same people as the First epistle; and when we read who they were – in First Peter 1:1 forward, we find that they are called “the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, *elect* according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ ...” The “us” – to whom God really exercises His longsuffering and is not willing that any should perish, are the “elect” of God. Watch out for wee words omitted.

Have you ever come across that hymn – “There is a Book, who runs may read”?

The general impression is that the Bible is so simple, and so simplistic, that even a man running past – even on horseback – could clearly read its message. It is based on Habakkuk 2:2. But, the word of the Lord to Habakkuk doesn’t say that the “vision” that he is to write is such a one that “he who runs may read,” but such and one that, “he who reads may run.” It is a call for *clear reading* of the Word of the Lord, that he who

reads clearly may then “run” into action. In this case, run to that great strong tower in the coming day of trouble, that “the justified shall live by faith.” Is it not ironical that a piece of scripture calling us to read the Word of God clearly ends up with its words reversed to read the very opposite! Indeed, we are “fearfully and wonderfully made.”

And now, what shall we say to these things? Surely this, first and foremost: - if we are the Lord’s then, even a few misreadings of the Will and Testament relating to the inheritance laid up for us, will not rob us of that inheritance. Nevertheless, if God has granted us such a written revelation of Himself, let us give all diligence to read that revelation aright.

“Holy Bible, Book Divine!
Precious treasure, thou art mine!
Mine to tell me whence I came;
Mine to teach me what I am.”



Gleanings in the Psalms

Psalm 91

After the humbling aspects of the previous Psalm – spending our years as a tale that is told – there now comes this “Lifting up for the Downcast.” The two psalms (the 90th and 91st) are well expressed in the hymn-writer’s couplet: -

“And though His arm be strong to smite,
‘Tis also strong to save.”

David Dickson darts about the present psalm pointing out many of the saving features of our God in it.

- “If the severity and justice of God terrify, the Lord offereth himself as a bird with outstretched wings to receive the supplicant, verse 4.
- If enemies that are too strong for us pursue us, the Lord opens his bosom as a refuge, verse 2.
- If his child is assaulted, he becomes a fortress, verse 2.
- If sought out, he becomes a secret place to hide him, verse 1. If persecution is hot, God gives himself as a shadow from the heat, verse 1.
- If the believer’s enemies are crafty like fowlers or hunters, the Lord promises to prevent and break the snares, verse 3.
- Whether evils come on the believer night or day openly or secretly, the Lord preserves his child from destruction verses 5 and 6.
- And if stumbling-blocks be laid in his child’s way he has his instruments, his servants, his angels, prepared to keep the believer in that, verse 11.

‘He shall give his angels charge over thee.’ Not one angel only, but all of them, or, at least, a number them.”

Verse 1. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” This is an expression that implies great nearness. We must walk very close to a companion if we would have his shadow fall on us. Can we imagine any expression more perfect in describing the constant presence of God with his people, than this – they shall “abide under his shadow”? In Solomon’s lovely allegory, the Church in a time of close communion with Christ, says of him – “I sat down under his shadow with great delight.” (Song 2:3) She “sat down” under his shadow – desiring not to leave it, but to abide there for ever. And it is he who chooses to dwell in the “secret place of the most High,” who shall “abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” There is a condition, and a promise attach to it. The condition is that we “dwell in the secret place,” – the promise, that if we do so, we shall “abide under the shadow.” It is important that we view both sides in

this way. For when we remember that the blessing is a *promised* blessing, we are led to feel it as a gift, and a thing, therefore, to be prayed for in faith and sought for by God's appointed means.

M. B. M. Duncan

Verse 1. "He that dwelleth ... shall abide" Take care to keep under the shadow of the attribute if you would expect the performance of this promise. The shadow will not cool unless you are in it. What good is it to have a shadow, though it be the shadow of a mighty rock, if we sit in the open sun? The saints, like the conies in Proverbs, are a weak people in themselves and their strength lies in the rock of God's almightiness, which is their habitation.

William Gurnall

Verse 3. "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler ..." It is the great concern of the devil to keep out of sight so that he himself is not recognised or seen in his temptations. As the angler keeps himself behind the bush, and the fowler hides himself from the birds, so the devil uses all his art to hide himself from the sinner's observation, so that the deluded soul shall little think that the devil is so near to him, and has so great a hand in the business. Perhaps, if the ambitious or covetous person saw the devil offer him the bait, and heard him say, "All this will I give thee," he would have less inclination to take the bait. If the devil appeared himself to the drunkard and presented him the glass, he might have little inclination to drink it down. If the proud and malicious saw the devil at their back, rejoicing in their sin and urging them on in it, it might frighten them half out of their wits. Therefore, the great endeavour of the devil is to persuade men that it is not he that makes the motion to them. Rather, it is such-and-such a friend, or neighbour, or gentleman, or minister, or wise man – is it not the devil! Only when the fish is caught, and the bird is in the net does the author of it all appear to kill them and carry them away quite openly.

Richard Baxter



*Mrs Seaton's Letter
To
The Boys and Girls*

Dear Boys and Girls,

Did you know that the dove is mentioned more often than any other bird in the Bible? We find it spoken of for the first time in chapter eight of Genesis. The flood had come upon the whole earth, and all the people were drowned except Noah and his family, who were saved in the Ark. After the waters had started to go down, Noah wanted to find out whether the earth was dry enough to leave the Ark. He first sent out a raven, but the raven kept flying about and did not return to the Ark. He then sent out a dove; and finding that the earth was still covered with water, the dove returned to the Ark.



After this, Noah waited seven more days, and then sent it out again. In a little while it returned, holding in its beak a leaf from an olive tree. Noah knew that the water was gradually going down. After this, he waited another seven days, sent out the dove, and this time it did not return. What a help the dove was to Noah!



Another thing we know about the dove is, that it could be offered to God as a sacrifice. When babies were presented to God in the Temple, if the parents could not afford a lamb, they could bring two doves instead. Imagine, when Jesus was taken by His

earthly parents they were so poor that it was two doves that they offered.

So the dove is connected in this way with the Lord Jesus. Remember, too, that when Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan, we are told that the heavens were opened above Him and the Holy Spirit came down “in the shape of a dove, and rested on him”. Isn’t it nice to think of the dove connected with Jesus in these ways?

When we look at a dove, boys and girls, doesn’t it remind us of all that is kind and gentle and peaceful? How different to us it seems that an eagle or a hawk. When we look at the strong beak or the sharp claws of an eagle or a hawk, we see in a moment that they are made for fighting and hunting. But it is very different with the dove. It has no strong beak and no sharp claws. This shows that fighting is not the dove’s purpose in life. It is gentle and loving and kind.

In the last edition we had two stories about doves, you may want to read them again. But you can read over the stories from the bible to learn more about the dove.

Genesis chapter 8; Luke chapter 2 verses 21-24 and Luke chapter 3 verses 21-22. Remember also, Jesus said, “Be ye ... harmless as doves”.

Love,
Mrs Seaton