

THE ORANGE BANNER

"The Protestant Religion and Liberties of England I will maintain"
- William III, Prince of Orange

*"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee,
that it may be displayed because of the truth" - Psalm 60:4*

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January/February 2008

The Future of Ulster Unionism

Historically the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) have been the traditional unionist political party in Northern Ireland. Founded in the Home Rule crisis of the early 1900's it has had many notable politicians within its ranks and the Orange Institution in Ireland was instrumental in its formation. In fact many of its leaders have also been members of the Orange Order.

It was the Ulster Unionist Party who was the main unionist party involved in the signing of the Belfast Agreement which led to devolved government again in Northern Ireland. The Democratic Unionist party (DUP) led by Dr Ian Paisley opposed the Belfast Agreement and fought the Assembly elections from that position.

Discontent within the unionist population with regard to the Belfast Agreement then led to the Democratic Unionist Party overtaking the Ulster Unionist Party as the leading unionist party. It was, therefore, rather surprising that after the political talks at St Andrews in Scotland that the Democratic Unionist Party entered into power sharing with Sinn Fein.

Whether the Belfast Agreement was good for the unionist position is open to debate as is whether it has been strengthened by the St Andrews talks. Both the Ulster Unionist Party and the Democratic Unionist Party see a balance of benefit in the deals that they consented to rather than a deficit.

From being a party that invariably said no, the Democratic Unionist Party have, for the first time, found themselves under the spotlight and under criticism from within its own ranks. The sight of Dr Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein together in government has been too much for some Democratic Unionist Party supporters.

Many Bible-believing Christians have found it a step too far. The political shock waves even washed into the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster where Dr Paisley has been its Moderator for over fifty years. The conclusion of this is that Dr Paisley will be standing down as Moderator when there is an election for the position in January. In effect this seems to have prevented a split within the church with people questioning the political and spiritual roles of Dr Paisley.

From within the Democratic Unionist Party there has been a number of resignations, notably that of Jim Allister MEP. This has led to the formation of a new unionist movement called "Traditional Unionist Voice". They question the Democratic Unionist Party assertion that it was a Plan B of the British Government that coerced them into devolved government with Sinn Fein, it highlights supposed broken election pledges of the Democratic Unionist Party, and it argues that there is a viable alternative to the present power sharing at Stormont.

Further details of the Traditional Unionist Voice can be obtained from 139 Holywood Road, Belfast BT4

3BE.

Since the Belfast Agreement there has been a number of small unionist parties established, such as the UK Unionist party and the Northern Ireland Unionist Party, but all of these have since fallen away. Proportional representation in elections was meant to help smaller parties, but at the last election they were all but wiped out. Whether the Traditional Unionist Voice will suffer the same fate remains to be seen.

Lodge News

William Anniversary in London

On Saturday, 3rd November 2007, Orangemen from Ireland, England and Scotland celebrated the anniversary of the landing of William, Prince of Orange, with a series of events centred on Westminster in London.

In the afternoon, a party led by Bro. Jeffrey Donaldson MP, and including Bro. David Burnside MLA, and Bro. the Lord Kilclooney, laid a wreath on the tomb of King William III in Westminster Abbey. Bro. Donaldson spoke words of appreciation of the contribution made by King William to the cause of civil and religious liberty. Canon Robert Wright offered prayers of thanks.

In the evening, a service was held in the crypt chapel of the House of Commons, when Bro. Revd. Sam McKay ministered the word to a large and receptive congregation, and the proceedings concluded with a dinner in the Churchill Room, with approximately one hundred guests dining. Present at the dinner were members of the Houses of Parliament Loyal Orange Lodge – Bro. Jeffrey Donaldson MP, Bro. David Simpson MP, Bro. Nigel Dodds MP, Bro. the Lord Kilclooney, and Bro. David Burnside MLA. Also present were Bro. Robert Saulters, Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, and Bro. John McCrea, Imperial Grand Secretary. Bro. Donaldson proposed the Loyal Toast, followed by Bro. Robert Saulters, who proposed “The Glorious, Pious, and Immortal Memory”, and, on behalf of the visiting brethren, said a few words of appreciation of the hospitality afforded.

Bro. M.E. Phelan
W. Secretary,
Houses of Parliament Lodge

King William Dinner in Bolton

Victoria’s Pride L.O.L. 788 in Bolton held their annual King William Dinner at a Bolton restaurant on Monday November 5th where members of the lodge and friends celebrated the landing of William, Prince of Orange, at Torbay in 1688 and also the Bonfire Plot when the Roman Catholic attempt to blow up Parliament failed.

The Queen’s Diamond Wedding

The Ladies Grand Council held a social evening at the Liverpool Provincial Headquarters on November 24th to mark the anniversary of the Queen’s Diamond Wedding. The present Queen is the monarch who has been married for the longest.

Orange Order Pocket Guide

The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland have produced a folding pocket guide to educate people about our history and traditions. The guide illustrates the beginnings of the Orange Order with the Battle of the Diamond as well as covering the Battle of the Boyne. Nearly twenty thousand schoolchildren in Northern Ireland are to be given this new guide.

The pocket guide can be downloaded from the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland website.

Dunloy Accordion Band

On Saturday November 24th the Dunloy Accordion Band from Northern Ireland took part in the Lord Mayor's Show in London. The band also took part in the parade in 2005.

Because of the Parades Commission the band cannot parade in its own town, but it can through the streets of London!

Downing Street Petition

We have been notified by Bro. Greg Thompson the Chaplain of Queen Victoria Memorial Temperance L.O.L. 700 in No. 3 District Clifton Street, Belfast of an online petition to publicise the ongoing attacks on Orange halls in Northern Ireland.

The number of attacks on Orange halls in Northern Ireland has been rising in recent years even when there is meant to be an ongoing peace process and that there is supposed to be political stability in the Province. In the year covering 2006-2007 there were over fifty attacks on Orange halls.

The petition states,

“We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to ensure Sinn Fein publicly condemn ongoing attacks on Orange Culture.

Following the so-called historic period of power sharing between the DUP and Sinn Fein in the Northern Ireland Assembly, we call upon the Government to apply pressure on Sinn Fein to publicly condemn the ongoing attacks on Orange Halls, marches and members of the Loyal Orange Institution of Ireland.

This step must be taken by Sinn Fein, as they start such attacks by establishing anti-Orange “resident groups” in various parts of Northern Ireland over ten years ago as a part of a wider campaign against the Orange Order, in order for them to show that they are fully committed to shared future in Northern Ireland like the rest of the people of this part of the United Kingdom.”

The petition can be viewed and signed by going to: -

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/orangeculture/>

Grand Lodge of Ireland Calendar 2008

The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland calendar for 2008 is based on the Williamite Trail and it shows photographs of scenes that show the route taken by King William as he travelled to the Battle of the Boyne. The calendar idea may well be developed into a tourist map. The photographs were originally part of the Williamite Archive exhibition from earlier in the year.

Copies of the calendar can be obtained from Schomberg House, 368 Cregagh Road, Belfast BT6 9EY or via the Grand Lodge of Ireland internet shop on www.grandorangelodge.co.uk.

Drumcree

The Parades Commission have for many years condemned the Portadown Orange District LOL No 1 for not engaging in face-to-face dialogue with the Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition with regard to attempting to overcome the ongoing dispute about Orange parades on the Garvaghy Road. The last time the Portadown District walked the Garvaghy Road after their annual service at Drumcree Parish Church was in 1997 even though an application to walk is submitted on a weekly basis.

It was interesting to note that in early November the Parades Commission actually criticised the Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition for not replying to offers of mediation with Portadown District. It has been them who have demanded such dialogue, but now it appears that they are having cold feet and this has now been highlighted.

The minister of Drumcree Parish Church, the Revd John Pickering, has recently retired and as a mark of their respect for him the Portadown Orange District presented him with a Bible.

Banners of Freedom

A pictorial history of Orange banners in Belfast has recently been published and it is called "Banners of Freedom" by Bro. David Jamison and it has a recommended price of £5 with profits of the book going to Orange charities.

The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Sixteen

Lord's Day 26

Question 69 - How does holy baptism signify and seal to you that the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross benefits you?

Answer - In this way: Christ instituted this outward washing^[1] and with it gave the promise that, as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body, so certainly His blood and Spirit wash away the impurity of my soul, that is, all my sins.^[2]

[1] Matt. 28:19. [2] Matt. 3:11; Mark 16:16; John 1:33; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3, 4; 1 Pet. 3:21.

Question 70 - What does it mean to be washed with Christ's blood and Spirit?

Answer - To be washed with Christ's blood means to receive forgiveness of sins from God, through grace, because of Christ's blood, poured out for us in His sacrifice on the cross.[1] To be washed with His Spirit means to be renewed by the Holy Spirit and sanctified to be members of Christ, so that more and more we become dead to sin and lead a holy and blameless life.[2]

[1] Ez. 36:25; Zech. 13:1; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:5; 7:14. [2] John 3:5-8; Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; Col. 2:11, 12.

Question 71 - Where has Christ promised that He will wash us with His blood and Spirit as surely as we are washed with the water of baptism?

Answer - In the institution of baptism, where He says: Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:16). This promise is repeated where Scripture calls baptism the washing of regeneration and the washing away of sins (Titus 3:5; Acts 22:16).

Lodge Cards

LORD CARSON MEMORIAL LOL 20 meets at the Ash Centre, Ash Hill Road, Ash, Surrey, at 2.30pm on the third Saturday of each month (DV). New members and visitors are most welcome. For further details contact the Lodge Secretary Rory Mackay at ruairidh57@hotmail.com.

NORTH ESSEX MARTYRS MEMORIAL L.O.L. 45 meets on the third Saturday each month in Harlow. Membership enquiries and visiting Brethren warmly welcomed.

STAR OF HALEWOOD BISHOP J.C. RYLE MEMORIAL L.O.L. 66 meets the first Thursday of every month at 8pm from February to December at the Orange Hall, Heald Street, Garston, Liverpool. Further details can be obtained via e-mail: -
ianthompson@orangenet.org.

THE IVY L.O.L. 783 meets at 6:30pm on the second Saturday in each month at the Provincial Headquarters, Everton Road, Liverpool. New members welcome.

VICTORIA'S PRIDE L.O.L. 788 meets the third Thursday of each month in the centre of Bolton. New members and visitors welcome.

CITY OF CHESTER L.O.L. 375 meets second Monday of each month in the centre of Chester. Visiting Brethren always welcome. Membership enquires from Cheshire and North Wales please phone Dave Reynolds on 0151 3563358.

BLACKPOOL FAITH DEFENDERS L.O.L. 2001 meets the first Tuesday of every month in Blackpool. Telephone 07787858614 for further details.

QUEEN ELIZABETH L.L.O.L. 2001 meet on the third Saturday of the month in Corby. Visitors are always welcome. Any new member enquiries please contact by phone 01536 205450 or by e-mail to Secllo12001corby@aol.com.

Wm ALEXANDER MEMORIAL L.O.L. 1689 London meet on the second Saturday in central London.

New members and visitors welcome. For more details contact T. Parkinson on 078 1581 0763 or tomparkinsonuk@yahoo.co.uk.

BLACKPOOL FIRST FLUTE BAND – for further details see www.freewebs.com/blackpoolfirstflute.

LONDON PROTESTANT FLUTE BAND require new and experienced musicians. Practice regularly in central London. For more details contact T. Parkinson on 078 1581 0763 or tomparkinsonuk@yahoo.co.uk.

For further details of membership and the Biblical principles of Orangeism please contact the editor of The Orange Banner.

Banner Pulpit: -

The Healing of a Blind Man

In Mark chapter eight we initially find the miracle of the feeding of the four thousand people in the wilderness and this is a reminder to us that the Lord Jesus Christ is the bread of life and if you go to him with spiritual hunger then you will be spiritually fed and you will find the salvation of God in him.

From the wilderness the Lord Jesus Christ and disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee by ship to the western side and went to Dalmanutha, a place thought to be near Magdala. In this place and not for the only time in his earthly ministry the Pharisees tempted the Saviour by asking him for a sign, but none was given.

From this the Lord Jesus Christ warned his disciples to “Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod”. This is a warning for you to be aware of hypocrisy in false religious teachers and leaders. The Pharisees were very religious people, but it was in the tradition of the Jewish religion of the day that they placed their emphasis instead of the plain teaching of the word of God.

“And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.” (Mark 8:22-25)

In these verses of Mark chapter eight we find another healing miracle of the Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, another vivid illustration or picture of the work of grace in the salvation of a lost sinner. May the Lord open our eyes as we ponder this passage of holy scripture and may each of us see in the Lord Jesus Christ a Saviour who can save to the uttermost all that come unto our heavenly Father by him.

Now this particular healing miracle performed by our blessed Redeemer is a reminder to us that people come to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ by a number of different processes and different means. Now in the pages of the gospel narratives you will find that one is found by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, that another comes to the Lord Jesus Christ, another is carried by four men and lowered through a roof, and this blind man is led. The way in which an individual person comes to the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't really matter, so long as you come to him for salvation and eternal life.

Have you been to the Lord Jesus Christ and asked for a new heart?

Have you asked to be born again of the Spirit of God?

Now this blind man was led to the Saviour, and the act of bringing people to the Lord Jesus Christ is always a most commendable and creditable undertaking. It shows that you have a true feeling for those people who are without God and so without hope in the world. It shows that you know that unbelievers will be lost eternally and that you have a concern for their spiritual welfare.

It also shows that you have a practical faith in the power of the Son of God. You believe that the Lord Jesus Christ alone has the power to save sinners from their sins. He has saved you and, consequently he has the power to save others that you may bring to him. In effect this is an act of true wisdom for salvation is only to be found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and it would be pointless in taking them anywhere else. This act of bringing people to the Lord Jesus Christ is also acceptable to him, and it is sure to prove to be effectual when that person willingly comes to him.

But when was the last time that you invited a person to come to the Lord Jesus Christ?

When was the last occasion that you invited a person to come under the sound of gospel?

What does it say in Acts 4:12?

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Yet in this case before us in Mark chapter eight there was something faulty in the bringing of this blind man to the Lord Jesus Christ for healing as there was a measure of presumption as to the method that the Lord and Saviour should perform.

“And they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.” (Mark 8:22)

So let us take notice in the first place that it is a common weakness in believers to expect the blessing of God to be only in a fixed and certain way. Yes the Lord has his usual ways, and that is not to be denied, but he is not always bound to them as in chains so to speak. For example, the preaching of the word of God is the usual way in which God speaks to lost sinners and brings them in repentance and faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, but it is not the only way in which he speaks to lost sinners. Sometimes it may be through the reading of the Bible or through reading a gospel tract. Too often the people of God act and think as if God will only ever act in a certain way.

The friends of the blind man thought that he needed to be physically touched by the Saviour to be healed, but this was a wrong presumption for the Lord Jesus Christ had the power to heal him in any way in which he wanted.

There are some people who have known deliverance from trouble by the power of God who then always expect to be delivered in exactly the same manner and who look for no other way to be delivered. They expect that God will always deliver other people in the same way in which they were delivered, but that is not always the case.

People may have found a particular book helpful in building them up in the Christian life and then they always anticipate the same result and they look no further for help with the spiritual needs of other people. The fact that a specific book has helped one person is no guarantee that it will necessarily help another.

Some people look on their own conversion experience and then assume that everybody else will have to have a similar one. Some people know the salvation of God when they first hear the gospel preached, but

with others there may be a long period of conviction of sin before finding salvation in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It may be with some people a favourite ministry to where they expect people to be saved. But God works in mysterious ways, and his ways are not our ways, and he works according to his own divine purposes and not according to our sinful ways.

Secondly let us note from this passage of holy writ that the Lord Jesus Christ honours faith, but he does not acquiesce or he doesn't assent to its weakness. In other words he simply would not consent to work in the manner that had been proscribed by them.

The Lord Jesus Christ took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town, but though he certainly touched the blind man, no healing came with the touching. In this way the Lord and Saviour proved that the miracle of healing was not attached to any special form of operation such as touching. We are not told the reason as to why the Redeemer led the blind man out of the town and we are also not told who went with them out of the town.

One thing, however, is clear and that is that the Lord Jesus Christ did not heal the blind man immediately as they had expected, and he also used a means of healing that was not suggested by them.

And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. (Mark 8:23-25)

Even when the Lord Jesus Christ touched the blind man, and this he did twice, it may have been in compliance with their wish, but by doing it twice it vindicated in his own freedom in the matter. The Lord used spittle in the healing of the blind man and this was not the only occasion that he did this as he used spittle and clay in healing a blind man in John chapter nine.

“When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay” (John 9:6)

So in this healing miracle our blessed Saviour refused to foster any superstition that limited his divine power in any way and therefore he used a method that was more suited to the case before him. The people who saw this miracle would go away, knowing that the Lord Jesus Christ was not limited in the way in which he could perform these mighty miracles of healing.

The healing itself was of a personal nature and it was in two stages. Initially the man could partially see and he could see men walking as if they were trees. Finally he could see men clearly and he was fully healed. The work of salvation is often in stages and each conversion is an individual conversion, and so the Lord Jesus Christ work is completed in a variety of different ways.

In the third place let us take note that whilst the Lord Jesus Christ rebukes the weakness of faith, he honours faith itself.

The blind man had consented to be led out of the town by the Lord and Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ led him further in his healing. The Lord Jesus Christ refuses nobody because their coming to him was not their own act, but the yielding to the persuasion of others.

The friends of the blind man asked the Lord Jesus Christ for sight, and the Lord gave sight. If you have praying faith then the Lord Jesus Christ will not refuse. The man and his friends had shown confidence in the Saviour, and he gave them more than they expected. If you confide in him then you shall likewise

receive. The cure of the blind man was perfect and the method used by the Lord Jesus Christ displayed the completeness of it. The Lord Jesus Christ gives perfect gifts to our imperfect faith.

Faith always honours the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore, the Lord honours faith. If faith was not so rewarded, then the Lord Jesus Christ himself would suffer dishonour. The person who has faith shall surely see, but the person who demands signs shall not be satisfied. Do not limit methods to the Lord Jesus Christ. He will surely heal those who believe in him, and he knows the best method and in this he is to be trusted.

Have your eyes been opened by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Will you not go to him today for spiritual healing?

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” (Acts 16:31). Amen.

Book Review

The Orange Order by Mervyn Jess

This paperback book of over two hundred and fifty pages and published by The O'Brien Press has been written by Mervyn Jess, a senior broadcast journalist within the BBC in Northern Ireland.

It is an easy book to read and it was refreshing to read a book about Orangeism where the author didn't have an axe to grind. It covers the historical formation of the Orange Order up to Drumcree, and it includes a number of interviews with people on both sides of the sectarian divide.

This book would ideal to give people who were interested in Orangeism and it would give them a good introduction to what the Orange Order is about.

The Early Life of King William III

Reared from his very cradle amid the animosities of contending factions, the young Prince learned early those four lessons of statecraft, - to conceal his designs, to watch his opportunities, to choose his instruments, and to bide his time. His education, other than that which he was receiving daily in the stern school of circumstances, he owed to his mother alone. Under her care he acquired a good knowledge of mathematics and military science, and learned to speak English, French, and German almost as fluently as his native tongue. The chiefs of the municipal party, who became his official guardians, would have willingly stunted his instruction, if by so doing they might have checked his aspirations but the ambition to emulate the fame of his great predecessors, and to secure the power which they had wielded, took root within him from his boyish years, and grew steadily with his growth. Weak and ailing from his childhood, for he shared the too common lot of those infants who are brought into the world before the appointed months are run, he took no pleasure, as he possessed no skill, in the ordinary pastimes of the boy; and, with a mind thus tuned inward upon itself, from an age at which other children have no care or thought but for the thousand novel interests and attractions of the world without them, he acquired habits of reserve and thoughtfulness beyond his years. The religious faith in which he was nurtured was a Calvinism of the strictest sort. His firm hold of the grim doctrine of predestination stood him in much the same stead as Napoleon's belief in his destiny, long before he arrived at man's estate he had in all probability convinced himself that the inscrutable counsels of Providence had designed him for great things.

(Taken from WILLIAM THE THIRD by H.D. Traill and first published in 1888)

Daily Bible Readings

January 2008

2 Chronicles

1. Ch.34:1-13
2. Ch.34:14-33
3. Ch.35:1-27
4. Ch.36:1-23

Ezra

5. Ch.1:1-11
6. Ch.2:1-35
7. Ch.2:36-70
8. Ch.3:1-13
9. Ch.4:1-24
10. Ch.5:1-17
11. Ch.6:1-22
12. Ch.7:1-28
13. Ch.8:1-20
14. Ch.8:21-36
15. Ch.9:1-15
16. Ch.10:1-44

Nehemiah

17. Ch.1:1-11
18. Ch.2:1-20
19. Ch.3:1-32
20. Ch.4:1-23
21. Ch.5:1-19
22. Ch.6:1-19
23. Ch.7:1-73
24. Ch.8:1-18
25. Ch.9:1-38
26. Ch.10:1-39
27. Ch.11:1-36
28. Ch.12:1-26
29. Ch.12:27-47
30. Ch.13:1-14
31. Ch.13:15-31

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Luke

1. Ch.19:1-27
2. Ch.19:28-48
3. Ch.20:1-19
4. Ch.20:20-47
5. Ch.21:1-28
6. Ch.21:29-38
7. Ch.22:1-20
8. Ch.22:21-53
9. Ch.22:54-71
10. Ch.23:1-25
11. Ch.23:26-56
12. Ch.24:1-27
13. Ch.24:28-53

John

14. Ch.1:1-28
15. Ch.1:29-51
16. Ch.2:1-25
17. Ch.3:1-36
18. Ch.4:1-26
19. Ch.4:27-54
20. Ch.5:1-23
21. Ch.5:24-47
22. Ch.6:1-27
23. Ch.6:28-71
24. Ch.7:1-39
25. Ch.7:40-53
26. Ch.8:1-29
27. Ch.8:30-59
28. Ch.9:1-23
29. Ch.9:24-41