

Never forget

Gillian Cooper *reflects on* Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9

Be careful, says Moses to the Israelites as they prepare to establish themselves as a settled people in the land of Israel. Watch yourselves. Do not forget.

They have been formed by escape from slavery and wilderness journeying, but soon they will be safe in a land where they will become farmers and tradespeople. They will stop travelling with the Ark of the Covenant. They will put the Ark in a house, and they will live in houses themselves. They will get to know their Canaanite neighbours, and they will trade with other nations. Time will pass. It will be easy to forget the past, to settle securely in the present, to worship the Canaanite gods of the land, to become complacent, to think they no longer need the God they met at Mount Sinai.

So Moses warns: be careful, do not forget. Tell the story to your children, and let them tell their children. Tell them what God has done, and tell them what God expects in return. Remind them of God's rules, because they have been given for your own good. Remember to whom you owe your salvation.

So we too tell our story, a story of death and new life, of body and blood, of salvation hard won. We take the bread and the wine in remembrance, because we too must never forget what God has done for us. ☺

You, Lord, are our God. You rescued us from sin and death, and promised us eternal life. Help us never to forget, and inspire us to tell our story, that the world may know the truth of your salvation, throughout all time and to all eternity. Amen.

St Paul Part II

by Becky Mynett

Despite opposing the Church, Paul never met the pre-resurrection Jesus. His teaching and message were rooted in a mystical experience of the risen Christ. According to Acts, this famously took place on the road from Jerusalem to Damascus. In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul says that he saw Jesus, while in Acts it says

that he saw a blinding light and heard Jesus' voice. Whatever form it took, this experience would lead Paul to travel around the north-eastern Mediterranean, taking the Gospel out through Asia Minor to Greece and Rome, visiting early Christian communities and founding new ones. It also led Paul to write numerous letters to those communities, some of which are in our Bibles today, and some of which are now lost. Next week we will look at which New Testament letters were written by Paul, and which of those traditionally attributed to him were probably written by later followers. ☺



Walking with Poppy Home

by Gillian Cooper

We are walking on the canal towpath. As usual we are greeted by people on the canal boats, and also occasionally by their dogs or cats, to Poppy's delight. Many of the boats are clearly homes. They have piles of logs, TV aerials, and places to hang washing. Others are hire

boats, holiday homes. But even the established boats are not fixed in place. The moorings are temporary, and their residents spend life on the move.

Poppy and I like our home to be fixed, with walls and a roof and familiar surroundings. But this too is temporary. We have not lived in our present home for long, and no doubt we will move on one day. There is one home, however, that is permanent. There is a place in God's house for each of God's children, where we can one day go home for all eternity. I hope Poppy will be there too! ☺

“Owe no one anything, except to love one another.”

Romans 13:8