

Christians Against All Animal Abuse

Pastor James, & Doreen Thompson, 'Peace Haven', The Fron Park Road., Holywell. Clwyd, CH8 7UY

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'Bring up a child in the right way, and when grown up (s)he will never depart from it'
Such was the saying of Solomon, and dear animal activist Catriona Short lives daily by it

Making The Most Of A Free Press!

Many letters appear in the readers section of the Chester & Flintshire Chronicle – a newspaper that has never once belittled me and, unlike an occasional past Scottish counterpart – appears always anxious to give fair and accurate accounts concerning readers and their personal priorities. Indeed, I consider such a newspaper to be a credit to British journalism. However, that is but personal comment in passing. What I'm here out to do is to highlight an abridged form of a letter published last month by a local stalwart for our animal cause. Please read on:

HOW CAN PEOPLE IGNORE THEIR PAIN?

THIS is some rotten world we live in! When Governments ignore the suffering of animals destined for live exports, vivisection, intensive farming, the slaughterhouse and the obscene fur trade. Even killing for sport has been allowed to continue because of the lack of law enforcement.

However, I blame the public for not caring enough in the first place. Collectively we have the power to force change, but most lack the willpower to do anything. You leave it all to people like me who are often ignored and reviled by the media because they think we are too radical. They think we are bonkers for giving our time to try to stop the awesome suffering of animals, which really do feel pain and suffer mental anguish. But what do you care? So long as you have your soap operas to watch and your fast food outlets to take the kids to.

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Then there are those of you who just don't care anyway and would probably say what right have I to criticise? What does it matter if animals are screaming out in agony and despair so long as you can't hear them? Well some of you will have seen the terrified faces of dogs and cats in China being prepared for skinning and the heartbreaking screams - if you watched Paul and Heather McCartney's TV programme about China's horrific fur trade.

But do you really think animals don't suffer in this country? Well dream on, because they do. If any of you feel the slightest guilt about how animals are being mistreated in this God forsaken world, then do something about it. For a start boycott any product made in China. Stop eating meat and on the plus side you might just avoid some of those diseases connected to a meat diet. Write your own protest letters to the Press and tell them how you feel about the cruelty going on in your name. But for goodness sake do something!

Judi Hewitt,

North Wales animal rights campaigner

Those Letters Make A Difference

Yes, Judi, you certainly know how to stir some feathers. I congratulate you on your militance even if it makes some editors quake concerning repercussions that might follow. Nevertheless, Readers Views are frequently the first page to which many turn to out of personal interest. They want to know what members of the rank and file think, And both news editors as well as an en enlightened readership realise: all that is necessary for evil to succeed is that 'respectable' folk do nothing Indeed, for our future humanity, our unborn children – yes, and the animals: our brothers and sisters with whom we share this planet – folk must learn to put their pens to paper. Each newspaper worth its salt welcomes readers' views, and their effect can be nothing short of astronomic.

I've had the honour to appear on TV four times since January. What an honour. Yet each time – being only human – I ask myself: 'I wonder how it came across! I only wish I'd said this and left that out!' Yes, and especially when – like the last interview on the Heaven & Earth Show it happened to be live. Admittedly, on such occasions I think of Christ's words of comfort to the apostles: "Fear not for it shall be given you in that very hour just what you must say". But even then, being truly human a spirit of doubting Thomas can so easily creep subtly within. Consequently, to receive totally unexpected letters of encouragement from dedicated animal activists – not least, Joan Court of Cambridge - saying: "you came across wonderfully" – seemed as if such correspondence had been penned by a messenger from Heaven.

Then, my brothers and sisters, let us write letters to the press and politicians; or, at the very least, let us write letters of encouragement to the many Judi Hewitts of our region as they stick their necks out high for such a noble and altruistic cause. Yes, and how about one to dear Wetherspoons whose food and ale are considerably reasonable. I found that on a recent menu they are proud to tell customers that all the eggs they use are free range; and all the milk they use is organic. Well, 'three cheers for Wetherspoons' where I'm always happy to purchase a veggie meal and a pint of 'The Reverend James' with which to wash it down. Incidentally, I think they should give me a discount on the latter ale brewed in Wales, but they never do!

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A Most Relevant Gospel Passage To Ponder

The last Church service I officiated at, and preached in was Holy Trinity Parish Church, Greenfield. By pure coincidence the gospel reading appointed concerned two differing personalities, and the appalling punishment that confronted one of them. It was not that he was damned because of what he did but rather for what he failed to do; and the moral behind this should concern all of us. Consequently, what follows on – and we **are** a Christian animal group! – was the appointed gospel passage worthy of consideration by all of us.

There was a certain rich man who dressed habitually in wealthiest attire and who feasted in affluence each day. Meanwhile a poor fellow called Lazarus was brought and placed within the entrance of his residence who was full of sores and desirous to satisfy his hunger from bread that fell from the rich person's table. Indeed, the dogs used to come along and lick this poor man's sores. However, the time arrived when this beggar died and angels came and carried him away to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and he was buried! But in hell where he was in torment, he saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus at his side. . So he cried out: "Father Abraham have pity on me and send Lazarus to tip his finger in cool water and come and cool my tongue for I am tormented in this fire". Abraham replied: " Son, remember that you in your lifetime received good things and Lazarus bad; but now he is comforted while you are being tormented. Yes, and above all this a great chasm is placed whereby those who would go to you from here, or from you to here, simply cannot".

Well, obviously, this figurative tale told by Jesus is not referred to as a parable. And however we wish to interpret it, certain implications are worthy of note. There is no hint of unconsciousness when we leave this present life. The doctrine of 'soul sleep' as well as the non-existence of a hell, cannot by any stretch of imagination be equated with the New Testament. Consequently, sects such as those of the Jehovah Witnesses, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Christadelphians, and some others, is shown to be clearly off beam. Indeed, the implication is also that once in Hell one cannot ultimately arrive in Heaven, for there is an unsurpassable gap between the two.

Such a passage has, undoubtedly, been used to promulgate hell as a place of literal hell fire; and it becomes far too easy with scripture to take allegorical language as literal. However, the moral of this passage is clear: the sin of the rich man, traditionally referred to as Dives - Latin for Rich! - was not one of commission but rather of omission. He had not turned the beggar away from his entrance. He'd merely chosen to ignore Lazarus's plight. Indeed, the very sores that the street dogs noticed - and were probably led by compassion to lick! - the rich man chose to completely ignore. And, as a consequence Dives ultimately ended up tormented in hell. Indeed, worse than any physical burns must surely be the mental torture of an awakened conscience which one has stifled throughout one's earthly life until it reawakens after death!

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Tormented In Hell Because, Seeing Need, He Refused To Act!

Yes, there is surely a hell that those who ignore the plight of weaker and more vulnerable life than their own must one day face. Not only wretched humans but wretched and abused animals and birds will surely rise up at the judgment day to confront them. While these end up in figurative bliss within 'the bosom of Abraham' their past exploiters, tormenters – *and all who chose to ignore such evil* - will have an eternity to consider what they could have done but preferred to switch off from noticing. Selective compassion is never enough implied Jesus. "If you only do good to those who are good to you, then you are no better than the hypocritical Pharisees and the corrupt tax collectors!"..

Mind you, it takes guts to show love and compassion to those who oppose you!. Consequently, as animal activists we must reflect compassion towards Vivisectors too! This is not to compromise or show weakness but, indeed, to reveal true spiritual strength. Our Heavenly Father showers rain as well as sunshine on the just as well as the unjust, and we must endeavour to reflect His image. What is more, few ever won an argument through heated argumentation 'out shouting' or seeking to stamp upon the opposing side. Indeed, there is also truth in the saying: *'a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still'*.

Of equal significance, any truly successful salesman will tell us that all the reasoning to get a prospective buyer to accept one's offer does not matter half as much as in selling ones self first. Psychology comes to a similar conclusion when it tells us that how we communicate is 10% through words but 90% body language. Yes, and the success or failure of the 10% expressed in words will depend on how they touch the client's emotional makeup. Cold and calculated reasoning may well get us top marks in examination papers, but we are fools if we think that our opponents to our cause of animal activism are to be 'conquered' solely by statistics and logic. Not, of course, that the latter are without some significance..Jesus made it clear, "Seek to be as wise as serpents yet as harmless as doves".

Indeed, we can prove statistically that the fourth top cause of death in the UK as well as the USA is adverse reaction to medically prescribed drugs – all animal tested! And this does not include drastic side effects that may last a lifetime! But try and tell this to those clutching on to straws as they, or a loved one, is dying of some deeply developing cancer and they'll hardly hear you, should they hear you at all!

While Ever Society Abuses Animals For Food It Will Support Vivisection

Our opponents in the multibillion animal based cancer research charities realise that emotive language is far more influential than any juggled statistics they could choose to use and – I'll say this for them – they know how to use it. That there are sadists in our opposing camps – I do not doubt.! But most of the animal abusers - be they vivisectors, intensive cattle farmers, poultry breeders or live exporters – are primarily the fruits of a desensitising educational system. Yes, and so are the consumers who chose battery eggs or intensively bred fowl in preference to free range. And – horror of horrors! - these are the majority!

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Of more relevance still, these are not concerned one jot about the fowl enduring a lifetime of hell - provided that one solitary meal is the end product for them! Then are you to wonder that they support vivisection rather than oppose it? The former lifetime's incarceration of a bird is 'justified' by them because such a living hell will ultimately provide a 'human's!' solitary meal. As for the end product of vivisection, it could – they believe - 'possibly' save them or their dearest from a life time of appalling suffering. Consequently, while ever any society condones the abuse of animals for unnecessary 'food', it will - far more so - condone animal abuse within medicine..

Over the centuries – and recent decades as well – animal cruelty has been allowed to evolve because the moral leaders of our nation refused to nip it in the bud. Yes, and the rank and file – for reasons stated above - just couldn't have cared less! As for the church leaders, more horror has been displayed over women becoming priestesses, or the prayer book being updated, than over birds being crammed in batteries or calves being exported for future incarceration in veal crates. And, of course, church leaders are but a reflection of what they were during Christ's earthly life. They haven't changed one iota in their moral priorities Christ denounced them for picking out moral gnats as they swallowed moral camels whole and then – when He liberated the birds and animals being sold by the money changers for ritual slaughter - thereby hitting them in their pockets - they began to plot His demise.

The present Bishop of Southwark's recent stunt is a typical example of leaning backwards to please influential power groups. Indeed, on an exceedingly hot morning last month he blest sheep gasping for air on their way to ultimate slaughter. Many appeared on the verge of collapse due to the heat. Indeed, it had also been planned for the Salvation Army to play, and possibly sing, 'The lord's my Shepherd' as the sheep were planned to pass their headquarters. However, due to forceful complaints from others – and not least from Lillian & Jim Buckner of NOWALE! – this Army for the Lord had a change of heart. No doubt, reminded of their Vegetarian founders they graciously backed out. But, sadly, the many requests for Tom Butler, Bishop Of Southwark, to do likewise fell on deaf ears. His prime concern was, obviously, to support the 'worshipful' association of butchers in their inhumane gimmick!

Well, I sense we all have our shortcomings, (and none more so than myself!). One only hopes that he will think differently in two years time when a repeat stunt is planned. Indeed, Holy Scripture makes a vast contrast between faithful shepherds who cared a tremendous deal for their flock – who reared them for wool - and false shepherds destined for God's wrath – who bred them for slaughter. See, e.g. Ezekiel 34 & Zechariah 11 (Both passages, though written for an allegorical purpose, reveal the literal distinction that existed between good and false shepherds): I would also refer you to my delightful friend across the waters: Reverend Regina Hyland! In academic depth and simple clarity – the marks of a worthy theologian – she has contrasted those who bred sheep for wool with those who bred them for ritual slaughter and the carnivorous palate. For those happy to look up biblical passages of relevance to this subject here are but a few: Hosea 8:12-13; Micah 6:6-8; Isaiah 1: 11-17; Psalm 40:6-8; & Micah 6:6-8. Yes, and there are others too which highlight the contrasts that then existed between true shepherds and false ones. Yes, and between true worship of the heart and false worship entailing ritual slaughter of poor, helpless beasts!

Rev Regina's book GOD'S COVENANT WITH ANIMALS deserves a place in each public library! Would you ask your librarian to stock both it (ISBN 1-930051-15-8), and also my own latest book: YOUNG SPIRITUAL TRAMP (ISBN 0-9523022-3-3)? I'll be most grateful

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A Most Inspiring Letter From Two Stalwarts:

We loved your butterfly story, (published in last quarter's newsletter) and have one of our own. Here it is:

Richard my nephew was a Downs lad and much loved. Shortly before he went in to hospital, we were visiting him and he was quite excited, because he told us that soon the geese would fly by his window – as they did each evening. A few weeks later (because of heart problems) he was taken in to hospital and quietly stepped into the Spirit world. On the day of his cremation, as his Mum and Dad left the crematorium the geese flew overhead. His Mum was very tired through looking after Richard for so many years, and we suggested that she come on holiday with us. At first she said “no” as Richard loved his holidays and ‘studied’ maps and leaflets connected with their destination, but eventually she and her husband agreed to come with us. At the last minute she nearly ‘chickened out’ but not wanting to let us down, packed her bags and came. As they were leaving the house, once again the geese flew overhead. Both these occasions were not the usual fly-past time. Richard was letting her know – all was well!

Betty and Maurice Swift have another moving account which - God willing - will appear in next quarter's newsletter. Meanwhile, may you be blest further by an incident that occurred when I was so very young. A little fellow, hardly eight years of age, left this earthly life and, as his Mum and Dad stood round his bed his face began to shine with a gorgeous radiance and he uttered these words: “Mummy I can see the angels!”; and then he obviously passed into their world. Several people verified the words uttered and the radiance that little fellow portrayed. And I, for one, am so glad to have learned about it. Dear reader, whose testimony do you prefer to accept: that of some puffed up scientific sceptic with the eyes and slither ness of ‘a cold fish’, or that of a young eight year old whose truthfulness is radiated from his face?

Indeed, I'm reminded of another young fellow who once answered the door to the rent collector at the door of his humble home. “Come in Mister and sit down. Mummy will come down the stairs soon. She is busy talking to Jesus. You'll know it when she comes down. Mummy's face always shines after she's been talking to Jesus” Yes, was it any wonder that after Moses had been in the presence of God on Mount Sinai for forty days that he needed to wear a veil to cover the shekinah glory reflected in his face?

Amongst the paintings I admire is that of the dying vegetarian, philanthropist and revivalist John Wesley. The song on his lips were these: *'I'll praise my maker while I've breath'*, Then, with utter resignation and blessing he said: *'The best of all is that God is with us!'* I full well know how off putting some over enthusiastic and quite arrogant preachers of the gospel can be Those of you who've read my early autobiography will know that I had first hand experience of them. Nevertheless, how much sadder still to be an infidel, a sceptic, or a non believer. Yes, to have no sense of assurance; no knowledge of what it is to walk with God and know Him as a Person, rather than a mere abstract possibility. Indeed, the birds and the beasts know of the presence of God – with them He made covenants as well as with us. Here are two of Catriona's rescued creatures; living so peaceably side-by-side as one could ever hope for!

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Judi Hewitt (photographed below with Scooter) wrote the following beautiful lines the day after Scooter had passed over in to the Glory land. Scooter was a rescued cat who'd never been known to chase a bird or a mouse!

Although I miss you so much more than words could ever say;
And though my heart is broken on this dark and gloomy day;
At least I know you're out of pain and free to roam at will;
No more the shackles of the house; just endless fun and thrill.

Just don't forget me Scooter scamp, when you and Ted* take flight:
Or when I'm sleeping in my bed and you are out at night;
Though my heart aches, I know you'll give me comfort in my grief;
But in the blinking of an eye, so it will seem to you;
We'll be together once again, with all the love we knew.

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***Ted, Scooter's pal, had died a while previous**

Yes, Sweet Jesus: 'Thy Kingdom Come!'

For those who can make it

: Animal Blessing service In Holywell Baptist Church, 13th of August at 3.pm.

Pets will be blest!. The sick and exploited will be remembered in prayer

All ages are welcome! (Chapel location is on street to the right of Somerfield's Entrance..

Free parking available on supermarket car park)