

The most bought book – and the least read!

Yes - it's the Bible but nowadays, the question certainly arises as the title above suggests and maybe it is now not the most bought book. Times have changed and the Bible does present problems to people. Some might say it has been responsible for a lot of trouble just as the Koran might similarly be accused. Many Christians treat the Bible as a quarry where they find text "stones" to hurl at people they don't approve of! There are so many translations now as well, before you get to hardback or softback and it depends on what sort of Christian you are and what church you go to as to what you get out of the Bible. For example, if you call yourself a 'Protestant' Christian (though I hate titles and labels!) there will be 66 books in your Bible, if you are a Roman Catholic there are 73 books and if you are Eastern Orthodox the figure increases to 77 and all these Christians claim their Bible is divinely inspired. "Divinely inspired" – what does that mean? Dictated by God? Words inspired directly by God? And if we ask by what authority these claims are made we are told "Well. It's the Bible, it must be true" ... the argument goes round and round and is frustrating to many. The frustration is met amongst all believers with the current debate over homosexuality. Traditionalists, for whom the Bible is the only authority for human behaviour quote the texts that are critical of homosexuality and say "that's that" whereas liberals who give some authority to contemporary understandings of human nature hold that the Bible should be a partner in dialogue with humanity not at dictator over it.

We have to contend with the trouble (mostly in the USA) between Creationists who assert that the world and its inhabitants were established in 6 days 7000 years ago and Evolutionists asserting that living species on earth emerged over a long period of time by a process of experimental adaptation. There is a recent school of thought that has come between both of those groups and that is "Intelligent Design" who agree with the Creationists but believe God designed as Darwin discovered! Those who take the Bible as literally true are locked in a world view formed 2000 years ago while others read it in the light of the latest knowledge of science and human thought and having said that, one can understand why very few bother at all with the Bible. But why should the Bible be for believers only, with their own angle on it be that angle traditional or liberal? Why can't it be for anyone? everyone? I think that the Bible is too important to be left to the believers! The "believers" have done the most terrible damage to it and ever more damage with it! We must however ask whether the words we read in the Bible are living or dead and whether each story we read still carries meaning for us today, whether it has power to help us in search of wellbeing, of understanding ourselves and hopefully changing ourselves for the better. So whether one believes in God or not, the good book (the best of the good book) carries its own meaning and authority within itself whereas the "believers" way of reading the Bible imposes their own authority upon the texts from outside even though Traditionalists and Liberals come to different conclusions about it. So I suggest to you that your consideration should be the meaning within and understanding the meaning within when you read it, because the Bible is far too important to be left to the "believers".

Rev'd Freddy Denman, Vicar of Sparkwell and Cornwood with Luton (Plymouth)

PARISH NEWS

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SEDLSCOMBE with WHATLINGTON

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Trinity 8

20p

Sedlescombe School has now broken up for the Summer Holiday after an action-packed term full of contrasts and experiences. The School is very much part of the life of this community and the whole place seems to go quiet at every holiday time but specially with the Summer Holiday. It is such a good thing that members of the community are able to join in or attend many of the School activities remembering most recently the packed performances of 'Gel!' at the Village Hall – thank you to everyone for this great entertainment. End of term has also been a "good-bye and good luck" time to the 29 Year 6 leavers who are moving on to Secondary Schools in the area. Everyone will now wish the Teachers, children and support staff a very happy and safe holiday. Teachers and staff return at the beginning of September first for Training days then to get everything ready for the new School year and the children return on Wednesday 5th September when everything gets going in earnest once again.

COMING UP NEXT WEEK ...

Sedlescombe Church Mini-market – takes place in the Village Hall from 10am -12 noon next Thursday (2nd) when you can buy produce and an assortment of interesting goods, or just call in for a coffee and a chat.

Thursday Club meets in Committee Room 2 of the Village Hall on Thursday next (2nd) from 10.00am until 12 noon when the Speaker will be Christine Hayward on the subject of *'The History of Transport'*

Sedlescombe Football Club training continues each Tuesday and Thursday on the Sedlescombe Sports Field at 6.30pm; new joiners welcome - for further information please 'phone Bryan on 775159

The Readings:	Genesis :	18:	20 - 32
	<i>Psalm</i>	138	
	Colossians	2:	6 - 15
	St Luke	11:	1 - 13

Services and Meetings this week

**St John the Baptist,
Sedlescombe**

Trinity 8 [29]

10.00 am Parish Communion
with Junior & Youth Church

Please note that the Church is open from 8am every day until early evening for everyone to visit or to spend a little peaceful time away from the rush of daily life, in prayer or just in quiet contemplation;

Trinity 9 [5]

10.00am Parish Communion
with Junior and Youth Church

St Mary Magdalene, Whatlington

Trinity 8 [29]

8.30am Parish Communion

Trinity 9 [5]

8.30am Parish Communion

Chapel Hill Church – United Reformed

Sunday 29th 10.30am Morning Worship led by Revd Roy Cole

Wednesday 1st Coffee Morning 10.30 – 12noon in the Meeting Room

Sunday 5th 10.30am Celebration of Holy Communion
led by Revd Roy Smith

August 6th – 10th 10.00 – 12 noon each day
Holiday Club for Primary School age children

Obituary We sadly record the death of Archie Greenaway of Orchard Drive and send sincere condolences to all members of his family and friends. The funeral will take place at Sedlescombe Parish Church on Thursday 2nd August at 1.00pm.

2 Reminders ...

Found at Sedlescombe Surgery – two items have recently been found in and around the Surgery (1) a ladies' watch and (2) a bunch of keys. They may not necessarily be connected but each has distinguishing features; please call at the Surgery if either item may be yours and give us a description of them to claim

Sussex Fuchsia and Pelargonium Society the Society will be holding its annual Fuchsia Show in Brede Village Hall on Saturday 4th August from 1.00pm until 4.00pm.

News from Denmark ...

we have just learned that in the World Pony-Driving Championships, Sarah-Jane Cook came 3rd in her own individual event and that in the Team Carriage Event in which she was a member, Great Britain gained a highly creditable 7th place. We hope to have a more detailed report in next week's *Parish News* - perhaps even an exclusive interview with Sarah-Jane herself!

Summer Holiday Club '07 - Sedlescombe Churches Together the Holiday Club will run for 6th - 10th August (10am 'til 12 noon each day) with an evening 'show' for parents and friends on the Friday. All children who will be in Primary School in September '07 are invited to join at Chapel Hill Church – membership is free. There will be art, craft, cooking, singing, drama and Christian teaching. Parents are asked to bring their children along but there will be a car in Sedlescombe car park each day at 9.50am for anyone who cannot manage this. We look forward to seeing you.

Parish News following the appeal in last week's edition for some more people to join the proposed joint Editorial Team we are able to report that the response has been encouraging, sufficient that publication will continue while those people meet to discuss arrangements and gain some 'know-how' in order to ensure the long-term future; we do not claim to be professionals but are simply wishing to ensure that this form of communication with its long track record can continue for the good of the community. Perhaps some new ideas will be put forward - they always say that when you open the windows, fresh air comes in! We'll keep you informed, meantime every reader can help to increase the readership – pass your copy on to a friend and get them to buy one next week. If you are a member of one of the local societies that does not yet have its information in print, then let's have some details please. Get your copy in to the Post Office by 12 noon each Wednesday for publication at the week-end.