

# Reflections



Bringing you news from the British Bible School

Summer 2020

## ‘Locked down’ but not shut up!

It has already become something of a cliché to say that we are living in extraordinary times, but it is nonetheless true. Of course, we should be careful not to exaggerate the novelty of our circumstances, understanding that humanity has overcome far worse over the centuries, but we are certainly living in times unlike those to which most of us have become accustomed.

We were in the midst of conducting a number of Study Events in Scotland when it became apparent that we were going to need to postpone the remainder until further notice. Having just completed a Study Day in Glasgow, the situation deteriorated so as to make the next weekend’s event in Aberdeen (the second of two

Study Weekends there) unviable due to government advice to restrict social contact.

The next Sunday we began to broadcast a weekly **Sunday Morning Message** on YouTube as congregations in the U.K. were no longer physically meeting. The following week, once an official ‘lock down’ was imposed, we began a number of **Online Bible Classes** using the Zoom platform. These are now nearing the end of a second twelve-week round of classes.

The tables below show which classes have been taught. Another series of classes are planned following these, taking us up to the end of the year, though we will be offering fewer classes as things begin to return to some sort of normality.

In addition to the Sunday Morning Message and Online Bible Classes, we have been holding a weekly Friday Evening Bible Quiz which is not only rather fun, but also rather educational too!

We have no idea how long these online activities will continue, but they are certainly serving a current need. It is interesting to see how quickly many have adapted to new circumstances and newly discovered technologies. Although some doors may have closed, other new doors have opened and many are learning to take advantage of these new opportunities.

Wherever you may be, do please feel free to join us at any time. In addition to our Sunday Morning Messages which stay up on our YouTube channel, we are also trying to add other content – so you might want to take a look there too. Thank you for your continued support.

### FIRST TWELVE-WEEK ROUND OF ONLINE BIBLE CLASSES

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Afternoon		Job			Galatians (rpt)
Evening	James	Ecclesiastes	Galatians	Ephesians	Quiz

### SECOND TWELVE-WEEK ROUND OF ONLINE BIBLE CLASSES

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Afternoon					Revelation (rpt)
Evening	Thessalonians	Romans	Revelation	Ezekiel	Quiz

# Looking back B.C. (before Covid)

Before this whole Covid business began, we had already conducted a number of events this year in various locations, both within the U.K. and abroad.

## Winter Family Retreat

Our recent Winter Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor in the northern Lake District was, yet again, fully booked. In fact we had the largest number of people present since records began. Being so full does present its own challenges, particularly in the area of assigning rooms and trying to keep couples together as much as possible. By and large it works out well, and hopefully not too much sleep is disturbed by the unidentifiable snoring in the chaps' shared room.

Teaching sessions were held for all, based around our theme: In the Steps of the Master. We were led in one session by Jon Galloway, who had recently returned from an excursion to Israel, and treated us to a pictorial tour of Galilee. Other



*The 'family' at our Winter Family Retreat at Bassenfell Manor in the Lake District.*

sessions encouraged us to explore the steps of Jesus today, and ways in which we can walk in his steps. The older children enjoyed the team challenges of crate stacking on the Saturday morning (this is actually more exciting than it may at first sound!).

We were very thankful for fine weather all weekend. This not only enabled us to enjoy the beautiful scenery in which the manor house is set, but it allowed us to enjoy a pleasant Saturday afternoon stroll, followed by the most delightful sunset across Bassenthwaite Lake. It is true that our Father paints so many beautiful pictures for us day by day, but

sometimes he lets us see some of his more special pieces, maybe saving those for more special occasions.

This year's Saturday evening event seemed to go down particularly well and involved a number of us leading groups in a variety of activities. There was cake decorating, songwriting, soap stone making, parable performing, harmony singing, advertisement making, mural making, and news presenting. All of these, in some way or another, allowed us to explore an aspect of the steps of Jesus as we

considered what it means to be his disciple today. At the end of the evening we all assembled in the lounge for a splendid family spectacle – the likes of which has never been seen before.

We had cakes decorated in scenes from the life of Jesus, stones made of soap – to be thrown first by

those with no sin, a large mural of Jesus walking on the water, singing of songs both old and very new, retelling of familiar stories, a TV advert featuring a raised Lazarus and a news bulletin from Jerusalem including an exclusive interview from the parents of the blind man healed near the Pool of Siloam.



*One of the group activities on the Saturday evening – decorating cakes with scenes from the life of Jesus.*

## Training Day in Reading

At the beginning of February we conducted a Leadership Training Day in Reading, Berkshire. This is an area of immense importance among congregations where there is a real need to incorporate leadership structures appropriate for each local situation.



*Those who attended our Leadership Day in Reading in February.*

We offer a number of In-House Training options including:

- Missional outreach
- Back to basics
- Congregational growth
- Leadership
- Good stewardship
- Praise and worship

If you think we could be of use to your congregation in any of these areas, please do get in touch.

## ABSS in Gemünden, Germany

We were back in Gemünden in February for the annual Advanced Bible Study Series. We have a regular spot on the programme and this year Patrick Boyns represented the British Bible School presenting lessons from the book of Judges on “The Deliverance of Israel.”

We are hoping to be back again next year once things have hopefully returned to some sort of normality. Watch this space!

## Other Recent Study Events

At the beginning of March we held our first Study Weekend of the year in Aberdeen. This was to be the first of two weekends, a fortnight apart, on the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

On the Saturday of the following weekend we conducted a Study Day for a group meeting in the West End of Glasgow. Patrick Boyns and Jon Galloway taught sessions on the New Testament Letter from James.

We were due to be back up in Aberdeen the following weekend but by then this

pandemic had hit – and this is where we came in, wasn't it?!

One moment we were just getting into our round of Spring study events, and the next moment everything came to a grinding halt as the nation shut itself down for the duration. And it had all started so well! Our return to Aberdeen was governmentally curtailed, leaving us all to enjoy the confines of our own homes and to share with one another through the likes of YouTube and Zoom.

## A new initiative

We have recently launched a new funding initiative in which we are looking for 100 individuals (or couples) to contribute at least £10 per month to the work of the School. This, we are confident, will help to bring us to a point where our outgoing no longer exceed our income. More on this later.

## Thank you

We thank you for your prayers and ask that you continue to remember the work of the School both in private and within your assemblies. And we thank you for helping with our funding too – for sharing with us in our work.



*Jon Galloway teaching at our Study Day in Glasgow at the beginning of March.*

**Reflections** is published by the British Bible School in the U.K.



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