

6th April 2022

Gateway

**“O enter then his gates with praise,
Approach with joy his courts unto;
Praise, laud and bless his name always,
For it is seemly so to do.”**

William Kethe, All people that on earth do well (Geneva Psalter 1561)

The words above, from the metrical version of Psalm 100, sung to the great tune, *Old 100th* from the “Geneva Psalter”, will be familiar to many of you. I’ve quoted them before, and I make no apologies if I’ve created an “ear-worm” such that the *Old 100th* is in your head for the rest of the day.

“O enter then his gates ...” These words – which I learned when I was 11 years old – came back to me on one of my Islay walks. The guidebook I use is well-researched, directing the walker to marked paths, landmarks, rough ground to be avoided and things to see. And it regularly references gates – “go through a kissing-gate”, “take the gate on the left”, and so on. There’s the “Country Code” to follow too, to ensure a gate’s closed behind you, as well as regular signs on gateposts, “please ensure the gate is securely fastened”. And what does this walker do with a gate? Go through it, of course, to discover the wonders of what’s on the other side.

There’s a website many of you will know: www.biblegateway.com. This incredible resource offers access to the Bible in 61 different versions. Searches can be done by words, verses, chapters or even random phrases. Passages can be copied to worship presentations and even the odd “Thought for the Day”. It’s a wonderful gateway *to* the Bible.

But isn’t the Bible a gateway *of itself*? I’ve never thought of the Bible as an instruction manual or a definitive set of resources. It’s not a destination or a conclusion on a journey of discovery. It’s a gateway, an amazing gateway, where going through a new or even a very familiar gate can lead to wonders, insights and joys that were never imagined. The Word of God isn’t an arrival. It’s a point of departure, the start of yet another part of a journey of learning, growing and developing in our faith.

So, let’s keep going through *that* gateway, “enter then his gates with praise”, and we’ll discover exciting and challenging things that even the best of guidebooks never thought to bring to our attention.

A prayer for today

“His truth at all times firmly stood, and shall from age to age endure.”

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>