

STAFF PRAYERS
30TH OCTOBER 2013

Last Sunday was kept as Bible Sunday in some churches.

For those of you who missed out I want to share some Biblical thoughts.

We have just heard the Lord say through (Deutero) Isaiah (the prophet so good they named him thrice) that:

My thoughts are not your thoughts; neither are your ways my ways.

And: *My thoughts are higher than your thoughts.* (Isa 55.8f)

When (Proto) Isaiah was called he said 'Here am I send me!' But he was commissioned with the unpromising words:

Go and tell people: However much you listen, you won't comprehend; However much you look you won't understand. (Isa 6.9)

So the Word of God – the Bible – is a mystery.

Surely Jesus is easier to understand. All those lovely parables, and stories of healing, and the drama of the Transfiguration and the Passion.

But how do we cope with Jesus' words?:

If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away (Matt 5.27)

I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! (Lk 12.49)

For salvation is from the Jews. (Jn 4.22)

And what do we make of

Jesus' family tried to restrain him because they said , 'he's gone mad'. (Mk 3.21)

And how are we with St Paul?:

You stupid Galatians! (Gal 3.1)

Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem (Gal 4.25)

And how many times have I heard Christians say they 'can't be doing' with the Book of Revelation!

Do not despair. The Bible is a mystery, but we can, at least, with suitable help, begin to see '*as in a mirror, dimly*' (1 Cor 13.12)

Having a suitable reverence for the Bible means using it not as an instruction manual, not as a scientific hypothesis, not as a source of 'put down' proof texts. But as a classic literary whole, as a spiritual poetic depository, as a disturbing manifesto bringing God in all his mystery into touching distance of our souls.

What are your thoughts?